



## No change

The FATF must ensure that the investigation of Pakistan comes to an effective conclusion soon

In a repetition of its decisions over the past three years, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) said that members of the 39-member grouping voted to retain Pakistan on its 'grey list' of jurisdictions under increased monitoring. The FATF, which evaluates countries on efforts to check terror financing and money laundering, also placed Turkey on the grey list and cleared Mauritius from it. The FATF found that Pakistan had cleared 30 of a total of 34 tasks assigned in two batches, and would face another review in February 2022. In particular, the FATF President, Marcus Pleyer, said that Pakistan had failed to resolve the single task that remains from the first batch, of demonstrating that effective investigations and prosecutions are being pursued against the senior leadership of United Nations-designated terror groups. From New Delhi's perspective, the most significant of these are Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) chief Masood Azhar, Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) chief Hafiz Saeed, Dawood Ibrahim and other command and control chiefs of terror groups that target India, that have yet to be brought to justice for the 26/11 Mumbai attacks in 2008, the IC-814 hijacking in 1999 and several major attacks and bombings in Jammu and Kashmir. It is indeed disappointing that the increased monitoring by the FATF of Pakistan – from 2008-2009, 2012-2015, and 2018-2021 – has failed to ensure that while some of these leaders have been tried and convicted for terror financing charges in Pakistani courts, none of them has been effectively prosecuted for violence in India. These much-delayed outcomes speak as much to Pakistan's lack of credibility on terrorism as to the FATF's own lack of effectiveness.

Despite Pakistan's failure to fulfill its task list, the FATF President has made it clear that they are not considering placing Pakistan on the 'black list', as they say it "continues to cooperate". On the other hand, the FATF has also said that it will not remove Pakistan from the grey list, despite the country completing 26/27 of the original tasks it was assigned. The actions open the world body to accusations of 'politicising' the process, both from those who would like to see tough action for non-compliance by Pakistan, and from Pakistan itself, which has accused India of turning the technical process into a political one by "targeting" Pakistan. As a result, the FATF must stop kicking the proverbial can down the road. It must ensure that the investigation of Pakistan is not an open-ended process, and is brought to a credible and effective conclusion at the earliest. In light of the developments in Afghanistan, and concerns over the growth of transnational terror groups such as al-Qaeda and ISIL, as well as JeM and LeT taking advantage of the Taliban takeover to build new safe havens and financing networks, it is particularly important that the FATF keep its commitment from 2001 (when it added terror financing to its mandate) to prevent all terror groups from accessing these funding networks.

## Mitigating a crisis

The COP can at best incentivise adaptation that aids a transition towards clean energy

In a week, heads of state from at least 120 countries are expected to convene in Glasgow for the 26th meeting of the United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP). The annual two-week-long exercise was disrupted last year due to COVID-19. The year 2020 was to have been an important year in the COP calendar as most of the major economies were expected to review the actions undertaken so far in meeting voluntary targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Paris Agreement of 2015. However, the disruption has meant that these discussions will now move to Glasgow. Following the exit by former U.S. President Donald Trump from the Paris Agreement, the Biden administration is making a concerted effort to commemorate the country's return. To this end, it has sent emissaries and multiple delegations to several countries to coax them into committing to some sort of a deadline or a 'net zero' timeline by when their emissions would peak and eventually abate.

To limit global warming to 1.5°C, net zero emissions would have to be achieved by 2050 and emissions would need to be drastically cut by at least 45% from 2010 levels by 2030. India and China are the major emitters of the world that haven't committed to any 2050 deadline. Their argument, which has been consistent for many years, is that the climate crisis exists because of excess emissions by the developed West for more than a century. Any attempt at solving the crisis would involve the western countries doing much more than what they have committed to and, at the very least, making good on promises already enshrined in previous editions of the COP. As years of COP negotiations have shown, progress is glacial and the effort is more on delivering a headline announcement rather than genuine operationalisation of the steps that need to be taken. In real terms, for developed countries, complying with the demand by developing countries to pay reparations means shelling out sums of money unlikely to pass domestic political muster. And for developing countries, yielding to calls for 'net zero' means that governments such as India will appear as having caved into international bullying. The COP, despite all the media interest it generates, can at best incentivise adaptation that aids a transition to clean energy. But even without immediately retiring fossil fuel assets, the world needs to frame a meaningful response to a warming globe.

# In Glasgow, all eyes on 2030

COP26 must focus sharply on reducing emissions till 2030, rather than on net zero 2050, which is too distant a goal



D. RAGHUNANDAN

The stage is set for the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow, starting October 31. Major preparatory conferences and bilateral meetings have been held to persuade countries to raise their emission reduction commitments from the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) under the Paris Agreement. Some positive outcomes have been achieved. Yet, many high-emitter countries are woefully short of the emissions reductions required by 2030 to restrict global temperature rise to "well below 2°C" or the now de facto goal of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The loudest buzz now, however, is around net zero emissions by 2050 i.e., greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions equalling absorption by sinks such as forests, even though the substance is much less than the slogan suggests.

### Net zero mirage

Media reports and commentary in India and abroad greeted the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released in August 2021 with shock and awe, but the revealing scientific data were glossed over. Far from emphasising net zero alone, AR6 emphasised that to keep temperature rise within 1.5°C, global emissions should be reduced by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, on the way to net zero 2050.

Importantly, in the net zero drumbeats spurred on by the U.S. and the UN Secretary General, the foundational principle of the UN

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR), has been forgotten. Developed countries, responsible for over 75% of accumulated atmospheric GHGs causing climate change, should shoulder most of the burden for reducing emissions, while developing countries should do what they can, with technological and financial assistance from the former. So, if the goal is global net zero emissions by 2050, all countries cannot be obliged to reach that goal by the same year. CBDR would imply that developed countries should reach net zero by, say, 2035-40, while developing countries can get there later.

Net zero 2050, as currently posed, is at best a distracting message and at worst deliberately diverts attention away from the urgent 2030 target that COP26 should focus on. The net zero 2050 target is also no proverbial silver bullet, as clearly shown by numbers put out in the UNFCCC Synthesis Report on the updated NDCs, released in September 2021.

### 2030 targets critical

One hundred and thirteen parties out of 194 submitted updated NDCs by end-July 2021. The UN NDC report tells us that even accounting for these, global emissions in 2030 are expected to be 16.3% above the 2010 level, whereas the IPCC has called for 2030 emissions to be 45% less from 2010 levels for the 1.5°C goal. The report therefore calls for "a significant increase in the level of ambition of NDCs" till 2030.

Several large emitters have announced deeper emission cuts than in the Paris Agreement. The U.K. and the European Union have raised their targets to a significant 68% and 55%, respectively, compared with 1990 levels by 2030. The U.S. is still lagging behind,



even as U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry tours the world pushing other countries for deeper emission cuts. The U.S. has now promised net zero emissions by 2050 compared to the 80% reduction that it had promised earlier. The Biden administration has also promised to reduce emissions by 50-52% below 2005 levels by 2030. This is grossly insufficient as the U.S. is the world's second largest emitter, and the 2005 baseline makes its commitment considerably lower than those of the EU, the U.K. and others using the Kyoto 1990 baseline. Others standing in the way of rapid reductions are Russia, Brazil under Jair Bolsonaro ravaging the Amazon forests, and China, the world's largest emitter, whose relentless push to add maximum infrastructure, industrial and power-generation capacities before peaking in 2030, may use up much of the cumulative global emissions available for 1.5°C.

The gravity of the situation may be better appreciated through the more scientific metric of carbon budgets, as highlighted in AR6 and AR5. Carbon budgets represent the quantum of CO<sub>2</sub> the atmosphere can hold for a given global temperature, best assessed through cumulative emissions and not annual flows. The report of updated NDCs states that "the cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2020-2030 based on the latest NDCs would likely use up 89% of the remaining carbon budget, leaving a post-2030 carbon budget of around 55 Gt CO<sub>2</sub>,

which is equivalent to the average annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2020-2030." Although negotiators and analysts are steeped in using annual flows, estimates based on carbon budgets should be used at Glasgow, if only to assess flows-based arrangements arrived at. As the NDC report says, reaching net zero is necessary to stabilise global temperature rise at a particular level, "but limiting global temperature increase to a specific level would imply limiting cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to within a carbon budget."

### Whither Glasgow COP26?

To reiterate, COP26 must focus sharply on reducing emissions till 2030, rather than on net zero 2050, which is too distant and with possibilities of gaming the system. If COP26 does not focus on achieving the 45% emission cuts from 2010 levels required by 2030 for limiting temperature rise to 1.5°C, and continues with geopolitics as usual, then the world may well have squandered away one of its last chances to avert disastrous climate impacts. Pressure will undoubtedly come from Africa, Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island States and others, but will that tilt the scales against the powerful status quo? It was suggested some years ago that the COP ensures that Parties iteratively raise their commitments till they add up to the requisite 45% reduction by 2030. But who will hold their feet to the fire? Or will the U.S. and others succeed in focusing on the false net zero 2050 solution, escaping their own obligations for 2030 and dangerously kicking the can down the road?

As usual, India is in its own double-edged position. The country emits 7% of global emissions, has extremely low per-capita emissions that are far below the global average and yet ranks as the world's third largest emitter. It is a

G20 member and reputed economic and industrial power. India has so far resisted pressures to raise its Paris Agreement emission reduction commitments. But it has not yet submitted its updated NDC as required and may face difficulties at Glasgow, especially from LDCs and most vulnerable countries feeling existentially threatened even as powerful nations wheel and deal. The well-known website Climate Tracker has now placed India in its second-worst performing category of countries regarding conformity with global 1.5°C goals, down from the top category for 2°C just after the Paris Agreement. India can, without much difficulty, raise its NDC pledge of reducing Emissions Intensity (ratio of emissions to GDP) by 33-35% from 2005 levels by 2030 to 38-40%. This is quite achievable since India has been averaging around 2% p.a. reduction in EI as per its own NDC. Given the net zero chorus, India could also offer to achieve that by 2070-75, invoking CBDR and comparing well with China's 2060 pledge. If pressed on a peaking year, a 2040-45 guesstimate may not be far off the mark, especially if increasing forest and tree cover are stepped up instead of undermined. For India to convert its ambitions of installing 450GW of renewable power by 2030, adding green hydrogen or increasing electric vehicles into commitments may require more homework than done so far. Will India have the gumption to leverage these offers to push the U.S. and other developed country laggards to step up their commitments and actions towards the 2030 goal, without trade-offs on promises of financial assistance? Only time, of which the world has little left, will tell.

D. Raghunandan is with the Delhi Science Forum, a constituent of the All-India Peoples Science Network

# The only way to halt the BJP juggernaut

A united opposition alone can pose a formidable challenge to the BJP in the coming Assembly elections



SANJAY KUMAR

The stakes are high for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has to ensure that it retains power in four (Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur) of the five States which go to the polls early next year. In Punjab alone, the Congress is in power, albeit in a mess.

### Nature of contest

This will be the first Assembly election after the second wave of COVID-19, which resulted in the loss of thousands of lives and attracted a lot of criticism of the BJP government. The ongoing farmer's agitation and the recent incident in Lakhimpur Kheri, where four farmers were crushed to death allegedly by the son of the Union Minister of State (Home), seems to have only added trouble for the BJP. But if anyone believes that these reasons will cause the BJP's defeat in these elections, they would be mistaken.

In these four States, the BJP may not be as popular as it was during the 2017 Assembly elections, but the nature of the electoral contest could give the party an advantage.

A possible multi-cornered contest in these States could result in fragmentation of anti-BJP votes, which will give the BJP an edge. The Congress will find it hard to attract all the anti-BJP votes and defeat the BJP, but it could emerge as the main opposition party in many States after the 2022 Assembly elections. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Trinamool Congress (TMC), which are making serious efforts to contest elections in some of these States, could damage the prospects of the Congress as they may be able to corner some votes. This will be enough for the BJP to retain power even if its vote share declines. Therefore, what the opposition parties need in order to minimise splitting of the anti-BJP votes is an alliance.

### The BJP's dominance in U.P.

Those who think that Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's protest against the Lakhimpur Kheri incident and her announcement that 40% of the tickets in U.P. will be given to women candidates can be a game-changer for the party are mistaken. It will be impossible for the Congress, which has performed miserably in the State in recent years, to bounce back merely through protests and symbolism. The party's decision of giving 40% tickets to women is a bold step, but it is too late and too little to mobilise women voters. The Congress may be able to increase



its vote share, but it may still be far from posing any challenge to the BJP if it contests the election alone.

The challenge to the BJP can come neither from the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) nor from the Samajwadi Party (SP) if these parties contest against each other. Both these parties command roughly 20% each of the vote share in U.P. The SP's core supporters are Yadavs, while Dalits, especially Jatavs, constitute the BSP's core support base. Both these parties compete against each other for the Muslim votes, which results in a split in these votes with the SP gaining an upper hand. At least these two parties need to form an alliance to minimise the splitting of anti-BJP votes in U.P. This alliance should ideally also rope in the Congress and the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) to mobilise additional votes. Only a united opposition can defeat the BJP in U.P. in 2022. An alliance of the SP and

RLD will not be enough.

In order to defeat the BJP, which polled 39.6% of the votes in the 2017 U.P. Assembly elections, about 7-8% votes need to be pulled away from it. This can be accomplished only by the largest opposition party, but there is a very remote possibility of the SP, the largest opposition party during the 2017 Assembly election, gaining about 8-9% votes on its own at the cost of the BJP. Only a united opposition can achieve this.

In Uttarakhand, despite getting a massive majority in 2017, the BJP government has been unstable. The State has seen three Chief Ministers since that election. If the 2022 Assembly election becomes a bipolar contest between the Congress and the BJP, the Congress has a good chance of defeating the BJP. But things do not seem so simple for the Congress with AAP's entry in the electoral contest. The AAP may not be able to win the election on its own, but may poll enough votes to damage the prospects of the Congress, thus giving an advantage to the BJP by default.

The entry of the TMC and AAP in the electoral fray in Goa might result in a multi-cornered contest in the State. A divided opposition will again give the BJP an advantage. Also, the Congress in Goa is no longer the Congress of 2017 as many leaders have left the party and joined other parties, mainly the BJP.

In Manipur, a lot depends on how the BJP manages to form an alliance before or even after the election. The BJP has been ahead of the Congress in forming post-poll alliances in many States, even with a lower number of seats.

### Lessons from history

In India, whenever a political party has become extremely dominant, it has been challenged only by a united opposition or by pre-poll or post-poll alliances of opposition parties. The Congress received a setback in the 1977 Lok Sabha election when the Janata Party defeated it. In the 1998 and 1999 Lok Sabha elections, the Congress was challenged by the BJP which had formed alliances with various regional parties; the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) won both these elections. The NDA government was challenged by the Congress in the 2004 and 2009 Lok Sabha elections when the Congress formed alliances with regional parties. Thus, the dominant party of the present times, the BJP, can only be challenged by a united opposition. Nothing else can push back the BJP in an electoral race given the current political mood of the people of India.

Sanjay Kumar is Professor and Co-Director of Lokniti, a research programme at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

### Valley of disquiet

More than two years since restrictions were imposed in Jammu and Kashmir, the aim of restoring peace has not met with success ("Curfews, Internet curbs a 'bitter pill' to save Kashmiri lives: Shah", October 24). Civilian killings have complicated the issue. Terrorists never want peace; their intention is to create fear. By imposing restrictions for longer periods, what kind of signals are we sending? The Home Minister's approach is laudable but he should also consider talking with families that have been demanding lifting of the curfew. Visits, meetings and discussions should be more

frequent to gain the trust of the people of the Valley. BALASUBRAMANIAM PAVANI, Secunderabad

Terrorism has not been wiped out and there is no democratically elected government yet in J&K. Curfews and Internet curbs continue. Ahead of the Home Minister's visit, about 700 people were detained. How long can the administration be run with the help of security forces and by enforcing restrictions without taking local people and leaders into confidence? D. SETHURAMAN, Chennai

The targeted killings of

minorities and migrant workers by terrorist groups in the Valley have pushed the besieged territory into new heights of despair. These incidents have the potential to deepen the communal divide and create conditions for an exodus. After every incident, the government announces that it has dealt firmly with the terrorists and will continue to do so. Notwithstanding these security operations, the way to check this alarming situation is by restoring the statehood of J&K, resuming political dialogue with mainstream parties and giving freedom to the press. S.K. KHOSLA, Chandigarh

The Home Minister indicted three families for the state of affairs in J&K. He seems to have forgotten that the BJP joined hands with one of them to form the government. DEEPAK SINGHAL, Noida

### Increase vaccination

This is a time to plan and introspect, not celebrate ("Gap between first, second doses is the starkest in India", Oct. 24). The one lesson that India does not seem to have learned from the recent past is that it cannot afford to celebrate or that even if it does, it needs to do so with some caution. And while

celebrating, the government is also wrongly claiming that the vaccine was made available free for everyone. The fact is that many had to pay for the vaccine. M. JAMEEL AHMED, Mysuru

With cases rising in other countries and more variants of the virus emerging, India cannot afford to let its guard down. The latest report proves that there are still a few issues to address. Some people are under the illusion that they are fully protected after taking one dose. Periodical reminders need to be sent on the need to take the second dose.

When the pandemic was at its peak, health workers went door to door to trace cases. However, once the cases dropped, this stopped. While this practice is hard to sustain, it is important to renew this for a while so that these workers can persuade those who are unvaccinated to get their doses. Information provided by them would also help authorities identify areas where more attention is required in terms of vaccination coverage. V. SUBRAMANIAN, Chennai

MORE LETTERS ONLINE: www.hindu.com/opinion/letters/



To read more letters online, scan the QR code