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Quality of journalism

Kuldip Nayar

**Negotiating with
undeclared Emergency**

Pushkar Raj

**Ecological protection
and justice**

Bharat Dogra

M.M. Thomas and Emergency

Varughese George

The idea of India - II

Irfan Habib

**BJP/RSS icon
was a collaborator**

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Avoidable distraction

Sandeep Pandey

On 21 June, International Yoga Day was celebrated with much fanfare utilizing the popularity of Yoga which already existed worldwide before the present BJP government came to power. The Prime Minister may have just consolidated the self-motivated separate efforts and has been able to market it as of uniquely Indian origin. The United Nations has also acknowledged it by agreeing to dedicate June 21 for this cause since the last year. It definitely holds a great symbolic value. Its main attraction is its offer of mental and physical well being, which are increasingly becoming scarce in the modern society globally. Otherwise it is like any other stream of spiritualism which offer solace at an individual level. But what is the achievement beyond that? How is celebrating Yoga internationally going to solve any of our international or national problems? Does it even have a collective value? Most people take it up for purely individual health reasons.

India's Permanent Mission to the UN organised an event titled, 'Yoga

for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals' this time. SDGs were adopted by UN General Assembly on 19 July 2014 as a desirable set of 17 goals which the countries around the world would like to achieve by 2030. These goals mainly include ending of poverty and hunger, achievement of food security, promotion of sustainable agriculture, ensuring healthy lives, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, achievement of gender equality, ensuring availability of water and sanitation for all, promoting inclusive and sustainable economic development, ensuring work for all, reducing inequality, ensuring sustainable production and consumption, combating climate change, conserving oceans and forests and providing access to justice for all. It is not clear how Yoga is going to achieve this ambitious set of agenda. From among the above set of objectives it has a direct role in 'ensuring healthy lives' only and that too only for a very restricted section of population as we'll shortly see. The danger is Yoga can give us a sense of complacency. Most of the

Between The Lines

abovementioned problems require serious policy making exercise based on concrete research followed by strong political will for implementation of right kind of policies and programmes. In spite of best of our efforts we're going to fall ruefully short of the declared goals by the time 2030 arrives. Creating confusion that Yoga has any role in solving these problems will only be an avoidable distraction. This is a typically Narendra Modi programme - high on publicity, low in content.

90 percent of Indians and significant population around the world which is engaged in hard labour to earn its living doesn't need Yoga nor will you see them in any of the high profile collective organisation of Yoga sessions or any of the paid or unpaid Yoga classes. It is only the educated class, and only 10 percent of Indian students make it to college level education beyond their schooling, which constitutes the middle class still dominated by upper caste, which willingly or unwillingly becomes part of the ruling elite, who have been cut off from physical labour because of the nature of education that s(he) has received, who need Yoga to keep themselves fit. Most of the people belonging to this category have sedentary jobs or jobs involving little physical work. Or their nature of job is too mundane. Therefore they need to take time out to engage in physical activity or an activity which can be mentally refreshing. Some of them play some sports or do jogging in the morning or evening. Some prefer cycling or swimming. With increasing prices of fossil fuels now more bicycles can

(Continued on Page 4)

Quality of journalism

Kuldip Nayar

When I was studying in a journalism school abroad, I was told by my professor that a news story should be like a skirt: long enough to cover the subject and short enough to be attractive. Over the years, the story has assumed the shape of pontification and inevitably padded.

When senior journalists are kicking the bucket, the question that stares at us is what kind of journalism will be there in future. Of course this is not confined to India. All countries, whether in the West or the East – barring the totalitarian regimes – are asking the same question: which is the Lashman rekha that journalists should not cross? Or should there be any Lakshman rekha at all?

Individuals are increasingly posing the question why journalists are prying into their private affairs. Journalists in turn defend themselves on the grounds that if they were not to probe, the skeletons would not come out of the closet. The government has a standard reply: some things cannot be disclosed in the public interest. In this way even big scandals are covered up.

I recall that when I wrote against the supersession of three Supreme Court judges, Hegde, Grover and Shalat, I was criticized by the then prime minister, Indira Gandhi, who argued that journalism did not mean preaching about the "commitment" of judges. She did not elaborate what that "commitment" was. I can

understand the judges having commitment to the Constitution, but not to a person however high he or she might be.

What Indira Gandhi was demanding from the judges was a commitment to follow her way of thinking. That is the reason she appointed Justice Ray, a junior judge in the Supreme Court, as the Chief Justice, ignoring the seniority of three others. She did not show even the courtesy of informing them beforehand. They heard the news on All India Radio.

This kind of political manipulation runs contrary to the transparency that a democratic system cherishes. Indeed the structure of democracy stands on the pillars of both the division and limitation of power. For example, the army does not interfere in the affairs of government because it is a force under the civil administration. Some countries like Pakistan have gone under because the military, although it has recently gone back to the barracks, is still very much there. The same is true of Bangladesh, although in that country some journalists do dare to criticize the armed forces.

Democracy expects all its wings to function independently but still in a way that sovereignty stays with the people. It is another matter that rulers themselves become authoritarian and behave like the worst of the Mughal emperors.

Those who ensure that democracy functions in the interests of the people are the judges who even have power to go into the pronouncements of the legislature. The debate about whether the judiciary is supreme or the executive is an ongoing discussion.

If there is criticism of what judges do, or even the manner in which the legislature functions, that comes from journalists. It is the duty of journalists to do so. If they are afraid of carrying out what is expected from them, it is unfortunate for the system. I have experienced how during the Emergency, which completed forty-one years this week on June, 26, the entire Press caved in. Initially, there were protests and a large number of journalists – including editors – assembled at the Press Club in Delhi to pass a resolution that Press censorship, an integral part of the Emergency, was not acceptable to them. Yet, as days went by, fear gripped them and they became part of the system, even accepting the orders of Mrs Gandhi's son, Sanjay Gandhi, an extra-constitutional authority.

I recall that as a member of the Press Council of India, I went to its then chairman, Justice Iyer, to urge him to summon a meeting of the Press Council, an apex body. I did not know by then that fear had also made him subservient. He told me there was no use of summoning a meeting of the Press Council because there would be no publicity about its proceedings. My argument was that if there were no protests then many years later, when the archives would be opened of this shameful chapter, there wouldn't be any record about any protest by the Press Council, the journalists. After

(Continued on Page 7)

Negotiating with undeclared Emergency

Pushkar Raj

Last month, Hyderabad police registered a case against Prof. Kancha Ilaiah for writing an article in a Telugu daily, entitled 'Is God not a democrat'? The article questioned inequality in society and discussed concept of god. For doing so the professor was reproached for insulting sentiments of a community and charged for promoting enmity between different religious groups under section 153 (A) and 295 (A) of Indian Penal Code.

This is an example of hundreds of incidents that take place in different parts of the country revealing absurdity to which a law in India could be interpreted and applied to target an individual or civil society organization (CSO) holding a dissimilar view on an issue or advocating a different narrative of history and society.

Last week, Prof. Mahesh Chandra Guru of Mysore University was charged for insulting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Human Resource Development Minister Smriti Irani and god Rama on two different occasions. The professor was arrested when he appeared before a Mysore district court in the second case when his bail application was rejected and he was sent to jail (Hindustan Times, 21 June, 2016).

Though the previous governments have not been admirers of civil liberties in any ways, the present administration seems to have

a condescending view of them. According to a US based democracy advocacy group, Freedom House's 2015 report, after the 2014 elections, at least 18 people were arrested and questioned for anti-Modi posts on online forums such as Twitter and Facebook.

Arundhati Roy has rightly said that one is unable to say things that Dr. Ambedkar could say in 1936 as one risks being put into jail (Janta ka reporter, 31 May 2016). It is apparent that there is an atmosphere of fear, where journalists, writers, artists, intellectuals feel defenseless and dispensable leading to engaging in what Human Rights Watch terms 'self-censorship' (Human Rights Watch Report release press statement, 24May, 2016).

At the same time, the government is not secretive about its resolve to suffocate and persecute the CSOs that oppose its ideology, policies or actions. The suspension and cancelation of license of Sabrang Trust and Lawyers Collective to receive foreign funding is in line with the series of actions against those CSOs that the government considers opposed to it. Earlier, organizations like INSAF, People's Watch and Green Peace have also experienced similar actions based on deliberate misinterpretation of vague terms such as 'political activity' and 'public interest' under the Foreign Contributions (Regulation) Act, 2010.

It is ironic that while the Prime Minister goes around the world soliciting foreign funding for country's economic development, his home ministry ensures that select civil society organizations are prevented from receiving foreign funding which is critical to assisting millions of Indians in pursuing their legal, cultural and social development. Besides, as the UN repertoire on human rights noted that the ability to access foreign funding is vital to human rights work and is an integral part of the right to freedom of association (The Wire, 17 June 2016).

Apart from a direct attack on individuals and organizations, a more sinister 'hunt' (social) movement of conformity by coercion is in operation under the broad banner of Hindutava with scores of its regional organizational varieties mushrooming in the country. The Hindu right organizations are using what the peace activist Scilla Elworthy describes political and physical violence to intimidate and emotional and mental violence to undermine. One of such organizations have allegedly killed writers and intellectuals such as Dr Dabholkar, Dr Panasare and Prof Kalburgi for holding views on religion that displeased certain Hindu fanatics (The Indian Express, 22 June 2016).

The present administration has forced withdrawal of some history books (Wendy Doniger's, The Hindus: An Alternative History) and is busy rewriting history in other parts where it can (Christophe Jaffrelot, The Indian Express, 7 June 2016). Meanwhile a process is on to saffronise education as indicated by

the union minister of education's veiled statement that saffronisation of education would take place as (if) it is good for the country (The Indian Express, 20 June, 2016). It is a blinkered understanding of contemporary history and politics as talibanisation and islamisation of education in Afghanistan and Pakistan has not done any good to those countries.

The challenge before the civil society today is to confront this saffron mindset replacing secular

values embedded in Indian history, culture and constitution. This might be easier when there are alliances across movements and groups and sharing of experiences of constructive and non-violent methods to assert democratic rights by engaging and organizing people through education. In the words of investigative journalist Will Potter, like sunlight education is an activist's best weapon. (Will Potter, Ted.com).

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(Continued from Page 2)

be seen on road. Even the government is promoting cycle tracks.

Mahatma Gandhi used to spin a Charkha. While the important reason was the 'Swadeshi' ideology but another reason might have been to associate oneself with production activity in at least one of the three areas of primary economy - food, clothing, shelter - which fulfill basic needs of human being. Mahatma Gandhi's idea of education was to involve learning some useful production activity too along with reading, writing and mathematics. However, this idea could not become part of our education system and we adopted an essentially British model which was meant only to produce people who could help run the administrative system of the government. It is not surprising that Civil Services remains such an active proposal for educated youth, especially in north India, whereas a very small number of students go for higher education and research careers.

People who have figured out some method of keeping themselves physically engaged will not feel the need of doing Yoga. It is only a very small section of our and international society which doesn't do anything to keep themselves physically fit who need to do Yoga. Its importance must not be overemphasized and its role must not be exaggerated. People will do it voluntarily and at an individual level.

The PM and the government have more pressing problems to worry about, like price rise, rather than be part of some kind of international jamboree with only a symbolic value. The timing of announcement of opening up of civil aviation and defence sectors for 100 percent Foreign Direct Investment, on the eve of Yoga day, also raises certain doubts about government's intention. This move is definitely not in national interest and it is quite possible that the time was so chosen that any criticism would be drowned in the mood of jubilation on Yoga day.

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Ecological protection and justice cannot be postponed any longer

Bharat Dogra

The most critical question of our times is that our world, our planet is on the brink of a survival crisis - an unprecedented situation in the history of earth when human made factors threaten the life creating conditions on earth. All important decisions have to be taken against the background of this overwhelming reality.

If this appears like an exaggeration then consider this statement released by as many as 1575 of the world's most distinguished scientists way back in 1992: "We the undersigned, senior members of world's scientific community, hereby warn all humanity of what lies ahead. A great change in our stewardship of the Earth and the life on it is required if vast human misery is to be avoided and our global home on this planet is not to be irretrievably mutilated."

This statement signed by more than half of all living scientists who were awarded the noble prize further warned against "the irreversible loss of species, which by 2100 may reach one-third of all species now living."

The reason for quoting this very significant 24-year old statement is that the evidence of something approaching a survival crisis was available as early as 1990 or so. By this time enough evidence of the seriousness of climate change was available and it was also clear that any efforts for doing away with nuclear weapons were not

succeeding. Around the same time an MIT study titled 'Imperilled Planet' by Edward Goldsmith and others stated, "we are now disrupting the very processes that keep the Earth a fit place for higher forms of life."

However such warnings—and there were quite a few of these—were ignored and instead of urgent united action to tackle the emerging crisis the world got embroiled in such monumental follies as the invasion of Iraq. In fact following the accumulation of enough evidence regarding the emergence of a survival threat at least a quarter of a century has passed which can be called the wasted years as no actions coming even close to tackling the serious threats were taken. In fact in some contexts the situation was allowed to go from extremely bad to even worse. According to UN data, annual global carbon dioxide emissions from fuel combustion grew by about 38 per cent between 1990 and 2009, with the rate of growth faster after 2000 than in the 1990s.

The result of the inaction and follies of these wasted years is that the crisis has worsened during the last 25 years or so. In its recent report Global Outlook 5 the United Nations Environment Programme warned that urgent changes are needed "to avoid exceeding critical thresholds beyond which abrupt and generally irreversible changes to the life support functions of the planet could occur."

Several senior scientists have been concentrating on this work of critical importance at the Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC). According to Johan Rockstrom, director of SRC, the human pressure on the Earth System has reached a scale where abrupt global environmental disaster can no longer be excluded".

The scientists at SRC first identified the Earth System processes and potential biophysical thresholds, which, if crossed, could generate unacceptable environmental change for humanity. They then proposed the boundaries that should be respected in order to reduce the risk of crossing these thresholds. The nine boundaries identified were: climate change, stratospheric ozone, land use change, freshwater use, biological diversity, ocean acidification, nitrogen and phosphorus inputs to the biosphere and oceans, aerosol loading and chemical pollution. The study suggests that "three of these boundaries (climate change, biological diversity and nitrogen input to the biosphere) may already have been transgressed". In addition, it emphasizes that "the boundaries are strongly connected — crossing one boundary may seriously threaten the ability to stay within safe levels of the others."

There is enough evidence regarding the emergence of a very serious environmental crisis which can be called a survival crisis. The world leadership has mounds of

evidence available to it regarding the reality of the emergence of such a very serious crisis and yet nothing very effective has been done about it. The general tendency has been to carry on with a business as usual approach. Of course very big conferences on issues like climate change and some international agreements have been reached but the total impact of all such efforts is still far from achieving success in checking this fast drift towards disaster.

This is not to say that solutions are not available. To make a very promising beginning world leadership can work overtime to minimise the possibility of war and to reduce the production of weapon by perhaps as much as 80 per cent or so.

The wider challenge is to link the required reduction in greenhouse gas emissions with the fulfillment of basic needs of all people. Working out this equation in all its details will reveal how curbing all wasteful consumption and production is not just desirable but even unavoidable in the new situation. Hence a much stronger case emerges for reducing inequalities in a big way.

The overall need emerging very strongly now is for a new development paradigm based on a balanced combination of environment protection, justice and peace. The need for such a basic change in the development paradigm has always been there but it was never so pressing as it is now in the times of climate change and a survival crisis.

On RSS

A few days ago, the Times of India reported that the Modi regime is all set to repeal 1966 law, reiterated subsequently in 1975 and 1980, requiring those joining government service, to declare that they are not affiliated to either Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) or Jamaat-e-Islami.

This design or model, implemented already in BJP-run states like Gujarat, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh subverts governance at the very basic level, affecting the neutrality of the civil services.

An RSS-ridden civil service cannot work, that is implement, a secular constitution.

The parliamentary system is based on a professional, politically neutral civil service. The RSS is embarked on a major exercise to subvert the present constitutional order.

The news report in The Times of India also stated that the department of personnel and training now plans to hold consultations with the home ministry on the need to do away with this "unreasonable and absurd" norm, with a senior government functionary pointing out how RSS had always maintained that "it is a cultural and non-political organisation". This will be part of the government's drive to repeal defunct and archaic laws. "The present government has not issued this circular (on debarring RSS members from taking up government jobs). It does not expect anybody joining government service

to declare whether or not he/she is a member of RSS," minister of state Jitendra Singh told TOI last Thursday, June 9.

This present move, it is reported, to withdraw the standing order issued in 1966 after Indira Gandhi assumed office as PM, and reiterated in 1980 and 1975, when RSS was banned comes after reports that a central government department had cited it to ask new recruits in Goa to declare they didn't belong to RSS. According to the 1966 order, anyone who holds membership of RSS or Jamaat-e-Islami would not qualify for any central government job. However, the order was not followed strictly and these facts came to light recently with the Goa episode. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and home minister Rajnath Singh and other Union ministers have always taken pride in their primary allegiance to RSS.

It may be reassuring for some to hear that Narendra Modi, a RSS pracharaks (full-time propagandists), first and foremost, recently said in his much-lauded speech to the US Congress that "the Indian Constitution is a holy book". Though he occupies a prime Constitutional position at present, his grooming was in an organisation, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) that views the Indian Constitution with ambivalence at best and antipathy at worst.

Rejecting the modern foundation of Bharat as laid down in Article 1 of the Indian Constitution, one of the foundational documents of the Sangh, Bunch of Thoughts by M S

Golwalkar (at Page 119), rejects and debunks 'the absurdity of the concept of territorial nationalism'. Golwalkar says, "They (we presume by this the RSS means the Leaders in the Constituent Assembly) forgot that here was already a full-fledged ancient nation of the Hindus and the various communities which were living in the country were here either as guests, the Jews and Paris, or as invaders, the Muslim and Christians. They never faced the question how all such heterogeneous groups could be called as children of the soil merely because, by an accident, they happened to reside in a common territory under the rule of a common enemy. "

The RSS is also unashamed about its aim :

"....We have been sufficiently fooled upto now by their exhortation that we Hindus, who are having a great philosophy of human brotherhood, catholicity of spirit and so on, should not narrow ourselves by the talk of Hindu Nationalism and all such 'communal', 'medieval' and 'reactionary' ideas! We must be able to see through the game and revert to the truth of our nationalism as an ancient fact and the Hindus being the national society of Bharat, so clearly restated by our revered founder when he decided the word 'Rashtriya' for our organisation. We must once again stand up in our true and full stature and boldly assert that we shall elevate the Hindu National Life in Bharat to the peak of glory and honour, which has been its birthright since hoary time. (Page 127, Bunch of Thoughts, MS Golwalkar)

Importantly, on April 27, 1948, Vallabhbhai Patel, India's first home minister, in a letter to Prime

Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, said: "I need hardly emphasise that an efficient, disciplined and contented service ... is a sine qua non of sound administration under a democratic regime even more than under an authoritarian rule. The service must be above party and we should ensure that political considerations either in its recruitment or in its discipline and control, are reduced to the minimum, if not eliminated altogether." "An RSS-ridden civil service cannot work a secular constitution. For, "it is perfectly possible to pervert the constitution,

(Continued from Page 3)

hearing me, he reluctantly convened a meeting of local Press Council members. To my horror I saw in the white paper issued after the lifting of the Emergency that he had written to the then information minister, V.C. Shukla, explaining how he (Justice Iyer) was able to stall the effort by Kuldip Nayar to convene a meeting of the Press Council.

The same question about the independence of journalists comes before us again and again in different situations. And I find that increasingly we, the journalists, are failing in the standards required from us. None of this has been helped by the new digital technology that promotes very short stories or sound bites. In fact things have deteriorated to such an extent today that news columns can be bought. It is an open secret that several stories are nothing more than paid news. Some leading newspapers feel no shame in selling the space to whoever wants to buy it. For them it is purely a question of revenue.

How low have we sunk from the

without changing its form, by merely changing the form of the administration and to [sic] make it inconsistent and opposed to the spirit of the constitution".

Given the overt moves to severely affect the neutrality of the civil service, a Platform for Constitutional Rights has been launched. We invite one and all to become part of the campaign.

–Ravi Nair, Tapan Bose,
Dr Sunilam, Teesta Setalvad

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heights that we once enjoyed? There was a time when we were able to bring before the public such scandals as the Mundhra insurance scam during the time of Finance Minister T.T. Krishnachari. Jawaharlal Nehru, then the prime minister, forced him to resign from the cabinet. But even when I subsequently met TTK, he did not seem to realize the harm he had done to the polity.

India is oblivious to the privations of individuals. In contrast the UK media has in the past been prepared to take up the cudgels on behalf of innocent victims from different walks of life. For example, the Sunday Times, for which I was a stringer, is still remembered with affection and gratitude for the work it did on behalf of those parents whose children were born handicapped because of the Thalidomide drug prescribed to the patient. Public pressure eventually forced the drug manufacturing company to pay out the needed compensation. Can we emulate those examples today when our very integrity as journalists is being questioned, not to speak of the high standards we once followed?

M.M. Thomas and Emergency

Varughese George

When M. M. Thomas returned from Geneva after completing his term as central committee chairman of WCC, national Emergency had been in existence in India. The national committee of Peoples Union for Civil Liberties chaired by V. M. Tharkunde invited M. M. to be the chairman of the Kerala state unit of PUCL. The former parliamentarian P. Visambharan was its secretary. M. M. also took initiative in forming the Detenues Family Distress Relief Fund to help the families of political prisoners. The committee used to meet at the Legislators' hostel at Trivandrum in the presence of EMS Namboothiripad. Rev. M. J. Joseph was its Secretary. M. M. was also careful in organizing a number of civil liberties groups in and around Tiruvalla, his hometown. It included Clergy for Human Rights led by Rev. V. T. Kurian and Rev. A. P. Jacob. The Students for Human Rights was led by this writer and Yesudas Athyal. A women's movement had already been working there to mobilise village women under the dynamic leadership of Annamma Joseph. A group of knowledge workers including M. P. Joseph, George M. Philip, Mammen Varkey, John M. Itty, V. C. John, K. M. Thomas and Roy Nellicala helped in the mobilisation of resources against Emergency and Ravi and Chandran helped in the distribution of literature. M. M. along with freedom fighter C. Narayana Pillai and Gandhian M. P. Manmadhan started a journey from Trivandrum speaking against Emergency in crowded halls

without amplifier for police refused to allow it. The government did not dare to arrest these elder statesmen fearing the national repercussions it might have created.

To give a philosophical and theological basis of his activism against national Emergency M. M. wrote regularly deploring Emergency in the weekly Guardian, despite the press censorship, from July 1975 to February 1977, from the very first month of declaration of Emergency till its relaxation. When the Guardian weekly was proscribed by the censors, M. M. started a regular cyclostyled newsletter and distributed it. I remember a policeman from the state intelligence to have been to M.M.'s house every week to collect a copy of it! These writings were later compiled by George Mathew and published as a book titled, 'Response to Tyranny'. The Head of the Mar Thoma Church, metropolitan Yuhanon Mar Thoma, who was close to M. M. had written a letter to Indira Gandhi requesting her to lift the Emergency and free the political prisoners, and an authenticated copy of this letter was handed over to M.M. by metropolitan. The CSI youth movement also in its annual general meeting held at Changanacherry affirmed its solidarity with the campaign to restore civil liberties taking a cue from M. M.

After the lifting of Emergency in March 1977, general elections were declared to the Lok Sabha. E. M. S. Namboodiripad came to Tiruvalla

and urged M. M. to contest from Mavelikara Parliamentary constituency, for M. M. had by then become a symbol of resistance to authoritarianism. M. M. politely refused. He continued his involvement with the civil liberties movement. By then PUCL was reorganized and M. M. was re-elected as President of the state unit. The naxalites had then assassinated a landlord, Madathil Mathai in Wayanadu. Since then police excesses were reported on CPI(ML) activists in Wayanadu and a fact finding team including M.M., M.J., V.G.K.M.T and Vincent Panikulanghara visited the area and police stations. Police excesses were exposed in a press conference to the utter embarrassment of the then left front government in Kerala. That was M. M. He was true to his cause and had the courage of conviction.

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By

B. Vivekanandan

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The idea of India - II

Irfan Habib

They were mostly poor. Unlike the Non-Cooperation Movement of 1921, Civil-Disobedience movement was the movement largely of the poor and that was the new thing. Once the movement took this form it became increasingly difficult for British rule to continue. I want here to bring to your attention something which appeared in the Dawn, the Muslim League organ from pre-1947 days which comes out daily from Karachi. There was an article abstracted from it in that article, the writer said that "we have a problem in Pakistan our movement for Pakistan as a nation has no martyr, no hero. Because it never opposed the British rulers, it only opposed our fellow subjects (the Hindus). What shall we look to"? Indeed those went to prison against British rule in what became Pakistan, they were Khudai Khidmatgars, Congressmen of the Punjab, nationalists of Sindh, and not the Pakistan leaders. Pakistan is, however, not alone in this problem. It shares it with those who are now in power in India. The Hindu Mahasabha, and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) have the same psychological problem. The RSS was founded in 1925 and if you ask them what did you do for twenty two years [till 1947]? Why didn't you join the National Movement and go to the prison? Why don't you do something against the British if you are such great patriots? You ask the Hindu Mahasabha the same question. Savarkar in the Andamans gave an apology thus washing away

his whole patriotic past saying he will not oppose British government. He never did so, he only opposed Muslims, propounding a two-nation theory even before Mohammad Ali Jinnah. What is RSS doing now? It is looking for other figures like Bhagat Singh to count among its heroes! What Bhagat Singh has to do with the RSS, the man who in the night before execution wrote Why I am An Atheist, the man who said that if there can be any leader from the Congress he supports, it is Jawahar Lal Nehru. The man who wrote that Hindu communalism is worse than any other opponent of the National Movement, how can he be your hero! As for Vallabh Bhai Patel, do not you know that he always said that he was a close follower of Mahatma Gandhi? Another hero—they claim—is Subhash Chandra Bose. Did Subhash Chandra Bose ever say that there should be Hindu Rashtra? He even made Iqbal's poem "Sare Jahan Se Achcha Hindostan Hamara" the National Anthem of the Indian National Army. He made Urdu and Hindi official languages of Azad Hind Fauj.

Look at the name—Azad Hind Fauj! He said—Jai Hind, he never said Hindu Rashtra! RSS men never say 'Jai Hind', nor 'Inquilab Zindabad', the slogan Bhagat Singh used to employ. Before 1947, I was present at many Congress meetings and I remember that the meetings always started with the audience shouting—Inquilab Zindabad in

homage to Bhagat Singh. So, it is wrong when our newspapers say that Bhagat Singh had been forgotten by the Congress or that Subhash Bose once praised the RSS. Serious biographies of Subhash Chandra Bose show that he never had any dealings with the RSS. RSS heroes like Shyama Prasad Mukherjee or Deen Dayal Upadhyay did nothing against British rule. Why are you exhibiting the latter's photographs in the JawaharLal Nehru Museum? What did he do in the national movement? Where was he? Nowhere! Shayama Prasad Mukherjee was a minister in Bengal along with the Muslim League at the time of the Quit India movement (1942). He remained a minister. He never lifted his finger against British rule but only against Muslims. So the Hindutva forces can claim no hero in the National Movement. Their entire theory and entire beliefs are totally opposed to those of the National Movement. Who in the National Movement ever said "Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan"? None, It was only Hindu Mahasabha! Who in the National Movement said "Hindu Raj Amar Rahe"? None, It was only RSS! So, you had those slogans, then you say that you actually opposed the British government! Or is it that you really supported the British government because you tried to divide the National Movement, you tried to separate the Hindus and Muslims and so weaken the National Movement. You always raised the issue of communalism! The RSS

men have not changed, they are the same! People say why does not the Prime Minister Modi issue a statement [on Akhlaq's lynching]? I say: what is the use that would be always hypocritical, so let him remain silent about Dadri!

I now turn to two things. Fight for Secular India and Fight for Prosperous India. These are the two objects for people of the nation. Since you are students of Aligarh Muslim University, I want you to remember August 1947. Aligarh had been described as the fortress of the Muslim League. We had insulted Abul Kalam Azad when he passed through the Aligarh railway station. What was to be our fate now? The first thing was that Nehru sent the Kumaon Regiment to protect the Aligarh Muslim University. But could it protect the whole district, when the whole of what is now Haryana was in flames?

In Tappal, there was a massacre of Muslims. Muslim corpses were coming, to the morgue in our neighborhood from somewhere. All the time the Kumaon Regiment was trying to protect the city and the university with huge flares by which they could see a crowd at a distance at night. Any time the crowd could come. Only one man seemed to stand forth to prevent the destruction of this University and massacres of Muslims in western Uttar Pradesh, and that was Mahatma Gandhi. He was insulted when he went to Muslim refugee camps at Jama Masjid and he was insulted when he went to Hindu refugee camps! Day in and day out, he suffered insults. He went to Panipat trying to protect Muslims. On 13th January 1948, he went on fast. And what were the

demands of the fast? One was that Muslims must be protected and those people who had been leading mobs against Muslims must sign that they would not do such thing again. And there were names of RSS and Hindu Mahasabha leaders in his list. And Muslims should be allowed as have not gone to Pakistan to return to their homes so that refugees from Pakistan were being asked to vacate for Muslims. This was the first demand and you can see what a huge demand it was in the circumstances. The second demand was that Rs. fifty five crores, an immense amount at that time, should be paid to Pakistan because Pakistan officials had not received salaries for a month and India had withheld that pledged amount. Can you imagine a man going against his own government in favour of a foreign government? And when he was asked, he said I am as much an Indian as I am Pakistani. I belong to both countries! When the fast began on 13 January all through Delhi the slogan was 'Gandhi Murdabad'. There was a procession marching with such slogans towards Gandhi Ji's prayer meetings. But on the third day of the fast JawaharLal Nehru addressed a meeting of ten thousand people in front of the Red Fort. I always ask who called that meeting? Did Patel call that meeting? Did Rajendra Prasad call it? Who had the courage to call it and face the crowd? And yet by the time Nehru had spoken the crowd was with him. And then within two further days there was a procession of a hundred thousand people in Delhi. Peasants of Aligarh, peasants of Meerut, peasants also from Muzaffar Nagar—perhaps fathers and grandfathers of some of those who participated the riots recently— were in that procession

along with sweeper unions, tongawalas and factory workers.

Thereafter crowds surrounded the houses of Hindu Mahasabha and RSS leaders forcing them to agree to sign pledges and bringing them practically by force to Gandhi Ji's site of fast until all of them had so submitted. And when Gandhi Ji ended his fast, and the government paid fifty five crores of rupees to Pakistan, violence was over, almost simultaneously in both countries. So, you are not speaking of an ordinary man when you speak of Gandhi. We are speaking of a man of immense courage who didn't care for his personal status or dignity for the larger cause. He was always walking barefoot in total dirt among the homeless victims but he never minded it. He would go again and again to both Hindu and Muslim refugee camps for giving his message that Hindu and Muslims should be brothers and sisters. So, it has been such people who have made us a nation. Things didn't fall of themselves from the heavens. What happened after independence, I would not go into in great details but shortly one must remember—to a Muslim audience it may not sound very great, but for India, it was an immense thing that the Hindu Code was legislated in 1955-56. Hindu women had no right to inheritance, they have now. They had now equal rights except in very few matters. It represented a total overthrow of Dharma Shastra and not through a coup but through a general election. The Congress went into that election saying that women should have equal rights with men. Jan Sangh and Ram Rajya Parishad stood up for the Dharmashastra, and surely need to be asked today, why did you

oppose the Hindu Code bill in 1950s? Don't you think men and women should have equal rights? But they were totally rejected by the electorate—Jan Sangh, the precursor of the BJP as well as Hindu Mahasabha and Ram Rajya Parishad. So, India became a democracy, it changed civil laws where men and women, at least 80 percent of population, were made equal though unfortunately unfavorable social customs, like dowry, continue. And simultaneously came the agrarian reforms. Millions of peasants throughout India got land. UP once had of the most radical Zamindari Abolition Acts besides Kashmir but every state had such Acts. Finally came the ceilings legislations of 1960s and the construction of the Indian public sector. The basis of new India, with all its weaknesses that still remain, was thus laid in the 1950s and 1960s. It's all the nation's gift! Well, the real thing is how the poor have fared? They haven't fared very well.

If you read an essay by Utsa Patnaik, *The Republic of Hunger*, you will see that until 1989 the per capita calorie intake continuously increased. Even in years of drought this was maintained by Food Corporation's operations, subsidies and so on. Do you know what has happened after 1991? Calorie intake per capita declined! By 2003, it reached the level that it was under British rule. When Mr. Modi and Co. speak of capital inflow, or go to various countries where, they can give away billion dollars, as in Mongolia, they are only supporting the corporations. The RSS and Hindu Mahasabha, very much like Muslim League, never had an

(Continued on Page 15)

BJP/RSS icon was a collaborator of British rulers and Muslim League

Shamsul Islam

Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee (1901-1953) is a prominent Hindutva icon for the RSS/BJP brigade. It was he who, on the advice of M.S. Golwalkar, the second chief of RSS and its most prominent ideologue, founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), precursor of present BJP, in 1951 and became the first president of the political arm of the RSS. He died in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, on 23 June 1953, when he was under arrest. His death is mourned every year as 'End Article 370 Day' and 'Save Kashmir Day'.

The Hindutva brigade is fond of declaring Dr. Mookerjee as great nationalist and patriot who laid down his life for the unity of the nation. Modi described him as "a statesman, thinker and a patriot who devoted his life towards strengthening national integration". The Hindutva rhetoric about patriotism of Dr. Mookerjee needs to be cross-checked with the contemporary documents available even in RSS and Hindu Mahasabha archives. Perusal of these documents clearly shows that the claim that Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee was a 'selfless patriot' and a great patriot right from his birth is a white lie. Dr Mookerjee never participated in the anti-colonial freedom struggle. If patriotism means being part of the freedom struggle and making sacrifices, Dr Mookerjee not only kept aloof from it but also betrayed it by collaborating with the British rulers and the Muslim League in order to crush and communally

polarize the anti-British liberation movement.

In pre-Independence times he was a prominent leader of the Hindu Mahasabha, which was led by V.D. Savarkar. When in 1942 Congress gave a call to the British rulers to leave India immediately by launching Quit India Movement, the rulers responded to this mass movement by unleashing a reign of terror. Congress was banned, its provincial governments were dismissed, whole of India was turned into a jail and thousands died in the repression unleashed by armed forces of the British and native rulers. The crime of many of those who were killed was that they were carrying a Tricolour. Hindu nationalist organizations namely, Hindu Mahasabha and RSS with Muslim nationalist organization, Muslim League not only boycotted Quit India Movement but also decided to support the British government in its repressive campaign.

The Hindu Mahasabha president 'Veer' Savarkar chronicled this ganging up of Hindu Mahasabha with the Muslim League in his presidential speech to the 24th session of the Hindu Mahasabha at Kanpur in 1942 in the following words:

"In practical politics also the Mahasabha knows that we must advance through reasonable compromises. Witness the fact that

only recently in Sind, the Sind-Hindu-Sabha on invitation had taken the responsibility of joining hands with the League itself in running coalition Government. The case of Bengal is well known. Wild Leaguers whom even the Congress with all its submissiveness could not placate grew quite reasonably compromising and sociable as soon as they came in contact with the Hindu Mahasabha and the Coalition Government, under the premiership of Mr. Fazlul Huq and the able lead of our esteemed Mahasabha leader Dr Syama Prasad Mookerji, functioned successfully for a year or so to the benefit of both the communities."[i]

Later this coalition arrangement was extended to NWFP also.

Following the Hindu Mahasabha directive to co-operate with the British, the Hindutva icon, Dr. Mookerjee assured the British masters through a letter dated July 26, 1942. Shockingly, it read:

"Let me now refer to the situation that may be created in the province as a result of any widespread movement launched by the Congress. Anybody, who during the war, plans to stir up mass feeling, resulting internal disturbances or insecurity, must be resisted by any Government that may function for the time being" [ii]

His letter to Bengal governor that the Fazlul Haq led Bengal Government, along with its alliance partner Hindu Mahasabha (Mookerjee being Deputy CM in this ministry) made concrete suggestions for crushing the QIM. He wrote:

"The question is how to combat this movement(Quit India) in Bengal? The administration of the province should be carried on in such a manner that in spite of the best efforts of the Congress, this movement will fail to take root in the province. It should be possible for us, especially responsible Ministers, to be able to tell the public that the freedom for which the Congress has started the movement, already belongs to the representatives of the people. In some spheres it might be limited during the emergency. Indian have to trust the British, not for the sake for Britain, not for any advantage that the British might gain, but for the maintenance of the defense and freedom of the province itself. You, as Governor, will function as the constitutional head of the province and will be guided entirely on the advice of your Minister.[iii]

A prominent historian R.C. Majumdar who is also regarded as a 'Hindu' historian by the Hindutva brigade commenting on this letter wrote:

"Shyam Prasad ended the letter with a discussion of the mass movement organised by the Congress. He expressed the apprehension that the movement would create internal disorder and will endanger internal security during the war by exciting popular feeling and he opined that any government in power has to suppress it, but that according to him could not be done only by persecution.... In that letter he mentioned item wise the steps to be taken for dealing with the situation..."[iv]

The Hindu Mahasabha decision to betray Quit India Movement

resonated with the RSS also. MS Golwalkar, the then chief of RSS admitted:

"In 1942 also there was a strong sentiment in the hearts of many. At that time too the routine work of Sangh continued. Sangh vowed not to do anything directly. However, upheaval (uthal-puthal) in the minds of Sangh volunteers continued. Sangh is an organization of inactive persons, their talks are useless, not only outsiders but also many of our volunteers did talk like this. They were greatly disgusted too."[v]

Nowhere in pre-Partition RSS literature have we found references to any work which RSS might have done 'indirectly' for Quit India Movement.

In a more shocking development, the Hindu Mahasabha of Dr Mookerjee decided to help the British rulers in World War II. It was the time when Subhash Chandra Bose, known as Netaji, was organizing the INA (Azad Hind Fauj) in a military campaign to force the British out. The extent to which the Hindu Mahasabha was willing to help the British masters is clear from the following directive issued by Savarkar as President of the Mahasabha:

"So far as India's defence is concerned, Hindudom must ally unhesitatingly, in a spirit of responsive co-operation, with the war effort of the Indian government in so far as it is consistent with the Hindu interests, by joining the Army, Navy and the Aerial forces in as large a number as possible and by securing an entry into all ordnance, ammunition and war craft factories.... Again it must be noted

that Japan's entry into the war has exposed us directly and immediately to the attack by Britain's enemies. Consequently, whether we like it or not, we shall have to defend our own hearth and home against the ravages of the war and this can only be done by intensifying the government's war effort to defend India. Hindu Mahasabhaites must, therefore, rouse Hindus especially in the provinces of Bengal and Assam as effectively as possible to enter the military forces of all arms without losing a single minute." [vi]

Despite all these shocking facts being available in the Hindutva archives, the Hindutva brigade continues to falsify history. The Hindutva juggernaut is in full steam demolishing the great, heroic and selfless sacrifices of thousands of Indian who laid down their lives for the freedom of India against the colonial masters and their stooges like Princes and Muslim League. The Hindutva gang is trying to replace the braves and heroes of anti-colonial history with stooges and collaborators. It makes one fact very clear that BJP/RSS do not have a single person to be presented as freedom fighter. However, it is terribly sad that those who love martyrs of the great anti-colonial struggle and respect glorious liberation struggle are not there to encircle places in protest where the Hindutva denigrates the real martyrs and freedom fighters and attempts to establish collaborators as patriots.

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(Continued on Page 15)

Goa camp

A study camp for the activists of the Socialist Party(India) was held at Azad Bhavan, Parvari, Goa on 24th and 25th Jun 2016. 72 from Maharashtra, 4 from Goa and 10 from Kerala attended There were 26 women. Age-wise breakup was: below 30 yrs—24, between 30 and 60—50, above 60 yrs-22.

After Vinayak Naik, president of Goa state unit, welcomed the gathering, Baban D'Souza, senior leader inaugurated by lighting a lamp. Bharat Latkar and Baba Nadaf, RSD activists led two inspiring chorus songs, one of the conveners recalled long association of the socialists with Goa.

As news of the Brexit came in the morning, a short discussion was held on it. It was pointed out that formation of European Union (EU), after the end of the second world war, was welcomed by many countries. It was recalled that it was the imperialist rivalry of a few European countries like Britain and France on the one hand and Germany and Italy on the other that forced the people of many countries to face great loss of life and dislocation of normal lives of the millions. As all those countries, 28 in all, came under one umbrella, the world heaved a sigh of relief hoping that no more war would be thrust on them. Ordinary people can lead their life well only if there is peace. Formation of EU was welcomed with the expectation that one currency would come to be accepted by all countries sooner or later. All those hopes were dashed by the Brexit.

In the first session collective reading of the Policy Statement of

the Socialist Party(India) with every participant having its copy in hand, was conducted by Prof. Nutan Malavi (Wardha) and Santosh Thakur (Tara). Many questions were asked and discussed threadbare.

In the second session, discussion on gender equality was initiated by Kamal Parulekar, president of the statewide organization of Anganwadi sevikas. She said that in 1991, there were only 917 female to 1000 male. After the first World Women's Conference at Beijing in 1975, mass awakening campaign was conducted on the issue as a result of which the ratio improved to 992:1000 in 2011. A woman never cooks to satisfy her likes and dislikes but does so for others. Girls' education is generally neglected because people feel that only son will look after them in old age. Due to spread of education and women getting gainful employment, daughters are increasingly shouldering that responsibility. So people should stop discriminating as between sons and daughters. Women should be treated on equality basis in all walks of life. Anita Nawale of Asu, explained the problems and hardships faced by single women like widows, deserted and spinsters and gave information about the movement carried by those women. Prod. Benzir Tamboli (Pune) discussed problems of Muslim women and narrated how nationwide movement is being carried on for abolition of oral talaq for which first morcha was organized by the great reformer Hamid Dalwai long back in 1967. Yashodhara Potanwar gave information about gender equality movement in Vidarbha.

In the next session, Prof. Shamsuddin Tamboli, president of the Muslim Satyashodhak Mandal, discussed how fundamentalism of the Hindus and Muslims are mutually encouraged by each other. Communal riots were started under the British Rule and are increasingly indulged into by the Hindu fanatics while a handful of Muslim youths are resorting to terrorist activities. Sober elements in both the communities should join hands to negate the atmosphere of mutual suspicion and hatred and concentrate on promoting programs for the betterment of all the countrymen. The Prophet had specifically stated that his commands that there is only one Allah and the believers should pray for him are mandatory. In regard to worldly matters, decisions be arrived at by mutual discussion and dictates of the conscience. Shri Tamboli informed that Muslim Satyashodhak Mandal has started organizing blood donation camps to observe Eid.

Next, Dr. T.S. Patil (Kolhapur) who has done his Ph.D. on the history of Socialist Party in Maharashtra (1934 to 1977), focused on main achievements like participation in freedom struggle, struggles of peasants and workers in many industrial centres. In the realm of ideology, socialists emphasized the importance of avoiding violence and carry on mass movements peacefully and uphold sanctity of fundamental rights of the citizens and how the socialists participated in Sanyukta Maharashtra movement and anti-Emergency struggle 1975 to 1977. In Parliament, the performance of socialist MPs like Nath Pai, Madhu Limaye, S.M.Joshi., N.G. Goray, Madhu Dandavate and George Fernandes used to be quite effective. Konkan

Railway is a standing tribute to the socialists' exemplary work. Socialist MLAs had also raised many important issues related to the common people. Pannalal Surana added that socialists should feel proud about the fact that the Indian polity accepted (1) use of regional languages in the administration of all the States, (2) appointment of Mandal Commission for the OBCs and implementation of its recommendations and (3) need for abolition of caste system along with pursuit of economic rights of the toiling masses.

In the final session, Shri Surana spoke on capitalism, globalization and Socialism. He observed that as the capitalists are interested only in maximizing their profits, they exploit both the labourers and the consumers at large. They cause heavy pollution of air and water thereby enhancing the menace of global warming. Establishment of World Trade Organisation ushered in the globalisation which asks for free flow of capital and goods from rich countries to the poor ones but debar that of labour from the poor to the rich countries. It is a fact that globalization process has achieved only jobless growth thereby aggravating unemployment problem in many countries besides enhancing inequality as between classes as also between nations. Insistence of WTO on a particular kind of Patent Act, increased prices of seeds and insecticides, and declining prices of agricultural produce like cotton due to throwing open the markets of the underdeveloped countries to the imports from the advanced ones were responsible for large number suicides by the farmers. The rich countries refuse to lower the rates of subsidy which they pay to their farmers but force the poor countries

not to increase subsidy to local farmers. The large corporates are trying to grab natural resources like land, water, forests and minerals by denying the traditional commons rights of the local communities.

Shri Surana asserted that the Socialist Party is totally opposed to capitalism and globalization. It asserts that the American model of development must be discarded and indigenous one, with primary objective of full employment be evolved. Primacy must be accorded to agriculture, dairy, fishery and forestry which can generate employment at a much faster pace besides producing goods that can upgrade standard of living of the common people. Consumers' goods be produced through diffused small scale industries. Capital goods be produced only in public sector units. No foreign capital be allowed in Defence production, insurance, and banking. India can finance its development projects because its rate of saving is 34 per cent which is quite good. We should strive to be self-reliant.

In the last session devoted to organizational matters, it was decided to undertake the following programs to be completed by 30 November, 2016: Enrolment of 10,000 party members; Organising study camp one each in Marathwada and Vidarbha; Organising debates on Electoral Reforms in 44 colleges; To dispel the sense of insecurity amongst the fellow-brethren belonging to minority communities and strengthen the bonds of solidarity organize Hindu-Muslim Bhaichara Meets at 34 places.

—Kamalakar Subhadar
Hasan Desai

(Continued from Page 15)

economic programme. The poor mean nothing to them; only the rich fund-givers are important. Therefore, in order to rule they must continue to raise the communal issues, which is the only way in which they can continue to get votes. They are not the first to do so, the Nazis did it by raising the racial question in Germany. Golwalkar, the RSS guru, actually praised Hitler for his policy towards the Jews saying that same policy should be resorted to in India against Muslims. So, to keep up the anti-Muslim fervor is now the RSS watchword. No

opposition to religious fanaticism i.e. Hindutva can be tolerated. Even an ordinary history text book which says that the Rigveda was compiled in 1500 BC—and by implication not in 8000 BC—is unacceptable. Therefore, what is happening today—the murders of Dabholkar, Pansare, and Kalburgi—is part of a pre-determined pattern: by threats they want to silence people. The Congress didn't much care who served in the ICHR, ICSSR, JawaharLal Nehru Museum but RSS cares! Everywhere they are filling places with fanatics. Everywhere they are giving a totally wrong

picture of Indian history and of Indian Constitution. Therefore, on the shoulders of the educated people in India or those who can answer them in print, on paper, in speech, a great responsibility rests today. A massacre of Muslims is not just an attack on Muslim community, it is an attack on India and large number of people are realizing it. Read newspapers, the realization is amply there on their pages every day. This is the time for us to forget our small grouses and grievances and stand up against the conspiracy of the BJP and RSS against the very "Idea of India".

(Continued from Page 13)

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—countercurrents

Country's borders in jeopardy

By allowing a 100 percent foreign direct investment in many key sectors, including the defence, the BJP government at the center has put the borders of the country in danger. According to this decision, the responsibility of the security of the country's borders has been snatched away from the Indian government and the forces and given to the American-NATO network. Now even the defence sector has become the profit-making business of the national and international corporate houses. With this decision of the government, the truth of swadeshi ideology of the RSS has completely unravelled in front of the people of the country. On the one hand, RSS breaks the internal integrity and strength of the nation through communal

discord and on the other, it has decided to break the security system around the country's borders. Decision has proved that the RSS, who was not concerned for the independence of the country during the freedom struggle, does not care for it even today.

The Socialist Party believes that our constitutional pledge is to make the nation independent and self-reliant and not the 'the biggest open economy for the foreign direct investment in the world' to be looted by the corporate houses.

The Socialist Party calls for a countrywide resistance on this serious matter.

—Abhijit Vaidya
General Secretary Socialist Party (India)

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Is UP turning Right ?
Varughese George

Indo-Pak War 1971—
Field Marshal Manekshaw
Rajindar Sachar

The meaning of Brexit
Jeffrey D. Sachs

Saving crony capitalists from
Raghuram Rajan
M. K. Venu

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Bloodbath at Dhaka

Kuldip Nayar

The killing of dozens of people by terrorists at Dhaka is not an aberration, but the product of a committed mind that has been brainwashed by fanaticism. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is quite right when she says that this is not Islam, yet the Muslims all over must introspect why their co-religionists are striking all over and at regular intervals. Dhaka's Information Minister Hasanul Haq has blamed Pakistan for the attack. This may well be true, but there has to be evidence. Otherwise, the criticism will be considered a part of inimical attitude by Dhaka towards Islamabad.

First in Paris, then Brussels and now Dhaka, the message is always the same. Non-believers have no space if they do not accept Islam as the one religion nearest to God. True, this mocks at ideologies like secularism and democracy. But if the discipline of Islam is to be accepted, there is no place for dissent. The madrassas all over the world teach the tenets of Islam and make you remember the Koran by heart. But

there is little place for science or technology.

India is probably the only country which has compulsorily introduced science in madrassas. But the mullahs and maulvis are not happy with this and wherever they can—in remote parts of the country—they do away with teaching in science. Of course, there are exceptions like former President Abdul Kalam and Pakistan's A.Q. Khan. They represent the brilliant mind behind the finished product they brought before the wider world. But the weapon they are able to anvil can be lethal and destructive.

I recall when I interviewed the Bihar-born Dr A.Q. Khan he warned me that “if you ever drive us to the wall,” as was the case when East Pakistan seceded, “we will use the Bomb straight away.” In fact, I have heard some people saying in Pakistan that they would use the Bomb first and destroy India. But I argued with Khan that “you might destroy Northern India but that would also be the end of Pakistan.

India would still be able to rebuild the country with the resources available in the south.”

It is strange that A.Q. Khan remains a hero in Pakistan, although he has sold the nuclear knowhow at an exorbitant price to countries from North Korea to Iran. It is a frightening scenario, but thanks to Khan, a dirty nuclear Bomb is a possibility anywhere in the Islamic world. Imagine also some terrorists getting hold of the Bomb. They can hold the world to ransom.

What happened at Dhaka was indiscriminate killing at the posh Gulshan restaurant in an exclusive part of the city earmarked for diplomats. Suppose those same terrorists had at their disposal a dirty Bomb? What could have been the consequences? Instead of a few dozen casualties the numbers of those killed would have been in hundreds of thousands and stretching across the border.

This should make the governments in South Asia conscious of the fact that terrorism is not now confined to distant places in Syria and Yemen. ISIS is already present and it claims to have local support. To build a dirty Bomb it is not necessary to hijack finished nuclear weapons. All that is required is access to any civil nuclear facilities, either power reactors like Kanupp in Karachi or research centres at Trombay near Mumbai. There cannot be any foolproof ban on the procurement of key strategic materials needed for the Bomb.

Countries in South Asia have to come together on this specific issue and devise suitable steps so that this region doesn't become a hunting

ground for nuclear adventure. This will also involve a concerted drive against the fundamentalists. For example, persons like Hyderabad-based Owaisi who are trying to win headlines by taking a stand which is palpably wrong but probably acceptable in the eyes of fanatics.

I wish the media wouldn't give him the publicity he is getting because his eyes are fixed on the space he gets in the media. But then it is also understandable the media cannot ignore the provocative statements he makes. If we look back at the subcontinent's history the seeds of separation were sown by two Lahore-based newspapers, Zimidar representing the Muslims, and Pratap, the Hindus. They incited both communities and made Hindus and Muslims feel they belonged to two separate nations.

I recall that the feeling of being different came to be cultivated at Law College, Lahore, where I was studying. The common kitchen eventually was divided into Hindu kitchen and Muslim kitchen, just like they started selling Hindu paani and Muslim paani at the railway station. Fortunately, most students were not affected by this. At the Law College dining room Muslim students would get food from their kitchen, Hindu students would in turn get food from their kitchen. But we all sat and ate together.

I feel that even though we did not bother about the separation of the kitchen, yet it gave birth to the idea of division and this ultimately led to partition of the subcontinent. But we never imagined that there would be forced migration of populations. We who decided to stay in Sialkot city, now part of Pakistan, thought

that we would be in a minority, just as Muslims would be in India. But both will be living peacefully. This did not happen because the bureaucracy on both sides was also divided on the basis of religion.

We in Sialkot experienced how the Muslim police connived at the looting and killing of non-Muslims because similar was the case in East Punjab. In the process we killed one million people of each other's communities. Till today there is no accountability and I personally think that non-Muslims in India should offer an apology to the Muslims on the other side, just as they should do the same to us.

This may not make amends for the horrors, but at least it might begin a new chapter of healing. The terrorists who are the product of those terrible times may then be condemned by the people themselves and they would not be able to get the backing they need. Then the happening in Dhaka will be recalled with horror and humiliation.

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Is UP turning Right ?

Varughese George

The Uttar Pradesh politics since mid-sixties was dominated by the Lohiaite discourse of caste as class and consolidated further by the Mandal issue of 1990s. The backward classes and Dalits used caste as a means of political mobilization and seized power in UP which had once been a citadel of Congress politics. The majoritarian communal party, BJP emerged as a major contender in UP politics in the aftermath of Mandir politics marginalizing the Grand Old Party, Congress and in the midst of splits among the socialists. The split among the secular votes and the search for good governance helped BJP to secure a landslide victory in UP in the Lok Sabha elections of 2014.

The Samajvadi Party that largely represented the socialists in UP had suffered fatal backlash in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. The nature of the Samajvadi Party has been changing for sometime as the present author noted in an article in *Mainstream* as early as March 20, 2010. It said, 'the entry of corporate captains and Bollywood stars as parliamentarians on behalf of Samajvadi Party caused revulsion in the party... The party's taking sides with Reliance brothers' dispute with the oil ministry was not to its core spirit, though the cadres silently endured it with discipline and dignity... Mulayam Singh also cannot be absolved of the shift in party's ideological orientation. He

was a mute witness of the transition of the socialist party to a party of Bombay socialites".¹

After the exit of Amar Singh who was mainly responsible for the drift of the party along the corporate lines Mulayam Singh steered clear the party and brought it to its old moorings. There had been much criticism in the socialist groups about the dithering of the party's commitment to socialist principles. Surendra Mohan called the mainstream socialists a thousand suns away from Lohia. In the ensuing year that celebrated Lohia's birth centenary Mulayam addressing many meetings reconnected SP's legacy to Lohia. The people elected Samajvadi party in the Legislative Assembly elections of 2012 and gave it a resounding victory. The party got 206 seats in the 400 member strong House and Mulayam's son Akhilesh became the Chief Minister.

That might be a generational change. But the Muzafarnagar riots turned everything upside down. A fact team of civil society activists including Nivedita Menon, Harsha Mander and Kamal Chitra Chenoy who visited Muzafarnagar reported such: 'the state government was unable to contain the violence after it broke out... the police was absent with not a single incident being reported by the villagers of police intervention to either arrest leaders making provocative statements or to

help those being attacked by the mobs. There is not a single shred of evidence to prove that police acted against the mobs that freely attacked and killed their neighbours and looted and burnt homes'.²

In spite of the inept handling of the communal riot, the Muslim community stood solidly behind the Samajvadi Party in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. They were still loyal to Mulayam Singh who stood with courage of conviction at the time of Babri masjid. Though it won only five seats it was able to secure 22 percent votes and the main reason was Muslim support even while Yadav support showed a decline.³

But the party's debacle in electoral terms was devastating. The brilliant victory by BJP has been interpreted from many angles, but the most extensive and excellent study seemed to be that of Prof. A.K. Varma published in EPW as part of NES of CSDS on 27 September 2014. Prof. Varma attributes many factors that helped the unprecedented BJP victory including peoples urge for transcendence from caste to good governance, clinical organization of election campaign, Modi's decision to contest from Varanasi, Amit Shah's deft and dexterous handling of election machinery, thorough support of RSS in the campaigns and Modi's rapport with the people

(Continued on Page 5)

Indo-Pak War 1971— Field Marshal Manekshaw

Rajindar Sachar

Some inside facts of Indo-Pak war of 1971 are not so well known in public. Broadly, one knows of Anti-India slant of President Nixon but recently some declassified documents throw a fresh and interesting light on this crucial war.

The hostile aggressive stand taken by Nixon was sought to be justified by the false premise that Indira Gandhi was, right from the beginning, determined to attack East Pakistan. This however was a lie and Nixon above all the people knew that on the other hand she tried her best to avoid confrontation with Pakistan. As a matter of fact Indira Gandhi tried her best to persuade Nixon to intervene at an early stage to help her do so.

In July 1971 Kissinger had a stop over in India on his secret visit to China. At that time mass fleeing from East Pakistan and terror by Pakistan army were creating havoc in West Bengal and rest of the country. Mrs. Gandhi, was obviously under a big strain. She therefore invited Kissinger for a private breakfast to be able to discuss the matter urgently.

However, on the evening before, Indira Gandhi telephoned General Manekshaw, our Army Chief and told him that she would like him to come and meet her at breakfast next morning. She did not disclose as to who her other guests were. She

further told General that when he comes for breakfast, he should come in Army uniform. Naturally, General felt surprised and asked whether he had heard rightly that she wanted him to come in the uniform at the breakfast because it was naturally a very strange suggestion. Mrs. Gandhi was straightforward and told him “yes, she wanted him to come for breakfast but in uniform. So, General Manekshaw went for breakfast in full uniform and soon they were joined by Kissinger.

At that meeting Indira Gandhi was persistent in asking Kissinger to plead with Nixon that he should try to restrain Pakistan for what was being done in East Pakistan because the conditions there were becoming intolerable and it was almost becoming impossible for India to remain silent. Kissinger however, went on prevaricating and would not really give a straight answer. Rather he tried to underplay the situation. Mrs. Gandhi, however, still insisted, but to no avail. Kissinger would not give any assurance that Nixon would do something about it.

Obviously rattled, Mrs. Gandhi said if that was the position she may have to do something herself which she was reluctant to do. At this Kissinger again expressed his inability on his and Nixon’s behalf to do anything and asked her rather ironically as to what she intended to do. At that time she stood up and

pointing towards General (who was in full military uniform) told Kissinger that if USA Government, USA President cannot control the situation then I am going to ask him (meaning the General) to do the same.

There was stunning silence for a minute and the sharp message was conveyed to Kissinger in a very stark manner. As a matter of fact, General was himself surprised and suddenly understood the purpose as to why he had been asked to come in uniform rather than in civilian clothes at apparently, a harmless function of breakfast. Obviously, Nixon and Kissinger had their egos deflated and were not going to forgive Mrs. Gandhi for such an attitude.

It is to the credit of General Manekshaw that as a strategist he opposed immediate attack and waited to make full preparations till December, 1971.

Mrs. Gandhi had no other course but to create world opinion in favor of India. She requested J.P., the socialist and legendary hero of freedom struggle, to go on world tour to explain India’s case, which the patriot that he was he willingly undertook. But still the matters were getting worse, yet India could not directly intervene. Refugees were continuing to pour in from East Bengal. Sidharth Shankar Ray was in charge of borders. On one of the

usual visits by Mrs. Gandhi to border where a public meeting was being held to reassure the public that the matter was being looked after properly. On this visit to West Bengal she told Ray that after public meeting she would go back to Delhi, and Ray should stay for some days in Calcutta and come later.

At the public meeting while Mrs. Gandhi was addressing, one of her aides handed her a small paper – she read it and put it in her pocket and continued as usual with her speech. After the meeting ended when going to the airport she told Ray that he should come along with her to Delhi. Ray was a little surprised at this sudden change of his programme. But her followers did not ask questions of Indira Gandhi – there was implicit compliance. After about 15 minutes of flight onward to Delhi Mrs. Gandhi leaned back in her seat, a bit relaxed, took out paper given to her at public meeting and told Ray who was sitting next to her, here is the information “Pakistan has attacked”. At first blush it would seem strange that Mrs. Gandhi should seem relaxed on knowing about Pak attack. But there was obvious logic – India was reeling under refugee’s influx and yet it dared not attack East Bengal, because then the world opinion would call it the aggressor. An excuse was necessary and Pakistan had now conveniently provided it. Of course, let us be objective: war on East Bengal front was all weighed in favor of India – as General Arora told me, though to start with some hard knocks were taken it was smooth march – the whole population of East Bengal was against Pakistan.

The movements of Pak army were leaked in detail by Mukti Bahni and their volunteers to Indian army whose task was made smooth (though no doubt India lost quite a few thousand of armed forces). To make matters still easier Indian air force had no opposition and bombard General Niazi’s official bangalaw. As one of the Air Chiefs told me “you can’t imagine the panic, the utter helplessness at being bombarded from above by enemy planes, knowing fully well that you can’t even send one plane to stop them. It was inevitable that Niazi surrendered without much delay.

Again General Manekshaw showed grace and gentlemanly

temperament that even when 100,000 Pakistan soldiers were in the custody of India, he did not boast but publically said ‘Pakistani soldiers fought well’ – that shows grace and self-confidence even in victory.

I, must however, caution against using this unfortunate Indo-Pak history as a glorious victory. We should, rather feel sorrow at this unfortunate aspect of history and rather work whole-heartedly for a future Indo-Pak friendship and harmony. In this alone, lies the future prosperity of both our countries.

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(Continued from Page 3)

with his rallies and speeches. Though I am in conformity to Prof. Varma in finer details mentioned above I totally disagree with his analysis in the core aspects. The most important factor seems to be that there was no credible national alternative to BJP. The Congress was in shambles. The non-Congress non-BJP parties spoke about only a post-poll alliance. They were not willing to come to a joint platform and every one contested on their own. These parties secured more percentage of votes than BJP. The BJP’s vote share was 42.3 while SP got 22.2 per cent, BSP 19.6 per cent, RLD 0.9 per cent and Congress 7 per cent. The secular votes were divided and BJP could romp home with 71 Lok Sabha seats. Its alliance with Apna Dal was a brilliant masterstroke, as Prof.

Varma says, since through this the upper caste dominated BJP made a link with the most backward castes. Thus while BJP consolidated its base, the secular parties let themselves disintegrated by disunity. Mayavati seemed to have helped transfer of votes to BJP by her low profile campaign in the constituencies where her party contested, with the ultimate aim of cornering SP to a tight spot. Though BSP contested in all 80 seats and secured one fifth of total votes polled, it could not win a single seat. That not a single Muslim candidate won this time from Uttar Pradesh proves a point: Is UP turning towards Right?

¹ *Mainstream 20 March 2010*

² *Centre for Policy Analysis*

³ *EPW 27 September UP turning Right 2014*

The meaning of Brexit

Jeffrey D. Sachs

The Brexit vote was a triple protest: against surging immigration, City of London bankers, and European Union institutions, in that order. It will have major consequences. Donald Trump's campaign for the US presidency will receive a huge boost, as will other anti-immigrant populist politicians. Moreover, leaving the EU will wound the British economy, and could well push Scotland to leave the United Kingdom – to say nothing of Brexit's ramifications for the future of European integration.

Brexit is thus a watershed event that signals the need for a new kind of globalization, one that could be far superior to the *status quo* that was rejected at the British polls.

At its core, Brexit reflects a pervasive phenomenon in the high-income world: rising support for populist parties campaigning for a clampdown on immigration. Roughly half the population in Europe and the United States, generally working-class voters, believes that immigration is out of control, posing a threat to public order and cultural norms.

In the middle of the Brexit campaign in May, it was reported that the UK had net immigration of 333,000 persons in 2015, more than triple the government's previously announced target of 100,000. That news came on top of the Syrian refugee crisis, terrorist attacks by Syrian migrants and disaffected children of earlier immigrants, and highly publicized reports of assaults

on women and girls by migrants in Germany and elsewhere.

In the US, Trump backers similarly rail against the country's estimated 11 million undocumented residents, mainly Hispanic, who overwhelmingly live peaceful and productive lives, but without proper visas or work permits. For many Trump supporters, the crucial fact about the recent attack in Orlando is that the perpetrator was the son of Muslim immigrants from Afghanistan and acted in the name of anti-American sentiment (though committing mass murder with semi-automatic weapons is, alas, all too American).

Warnings that Brexit would lower income levels were either dismissed outright, wrongly, as mere fearmongering, or weighed against the Leavers' greater interest in border control. A major factor, however, was implicit class warfare. Working-class "Leave" voters reasoned that most or all of the income losses would in any event be borne by the rich, and especially the despised bankers of the City of London.

Americans disdain Wall Street and its greedy and often criminal behavior at least as much as the British working class disdains the City of London. This, too, suggests a campaign advantage for Trump over his opponent in November, Hillary Clinton, whose candidacy is heavily financed by Wall Street. Clinton should take note and distance herself from Wall Street.

In the UK, these two powerful political currents – rejection of immigration and class warfare – were joined by the widespread sentiment that EU institutions are dysfunctional. They surely are. One need only cite the last six years of mismanagement of the Greek crisis by self-serving, shortsighted European politicians. The continuing eurozone turmoil was, understandably, enough to put off millions of UK voters.

The short-run consequences of Brexit are already clear: the pound has plummeted to a 31-year low. In the near term, the City of London will face major uncertainties, job losses, and a collapse of bonuses. Property values in London will cool. The possible longer-run knock-on effects in Europe – including likely Scottish independence; possible Catalonian independence; a breakdown of free movement of people in the EU; a surge in anti-immigrant politics (including the possible election of Trump and France's Marine Le Pen) – are enormous. Other countries might hold referendums of their own, and some may choose to leave.

In Europe, the call to punish Britain *pour encourager les autres* – to warn those contemplating the same – is already rising. This is European politics at its stupidest (also very much on display vis-à-vis Greece). The remaining EU should, instead, reflect on its obvious failings and fix them. Punishing Britain – by, say, denying it access to Europe's single market – would only lead to the continued

unraveling of the EU.

So what should be done? I would suggest several measures, both to reduce the risks of catastrophic feedback loops in the short term and to maximize the benefits of reform in the long term.

First, stop the refugee surge by ending the Syrian war immediately. This can be accomplished by ending the CIA-Saudi alliance to overthrow Bashar al-Assad, thereby enabling Assad (with Russian and Iranian backing) to defeat the Islamic State and stabilize Syria (with a similar approach in neighboring Iraq). America's addiction to regime change (in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria) is the deep cause of Europe's refugee crisis. End the addiction, and the recent refugees could return home.

Second, stop NATO's expansion to Ukraine and Georgia. The new Cold War with Russia is another US-contrived blunder with plenty of European naiveté attached. Closing the door on NATO expansion would make it possible to ease tensions and normalize relations with Russia, stabilize Ukraine, and restore focus on the European economy and the European project.

Third, don't punish Britain. Instead, police national and EU borders to stop illegal migrants. This is not xenophobia, racism, or fanaticism. It is common sense that countries with the world's most generous social-welfare provisions (Western Europe) must say no to millions (indeed hundreds of millions) of would-be migrants. The same is true for the US.

Fourth, restore a sense of fairness and opportunity for the disaffected working class and those whose

Saving crony capitalists from Raghuram Rajan

M. K. Venu

Sometime ago I had asked a highly reputed economist advising the Modi government what he thought of a piquant observation made by Sanjay Subrahmanyam, one of India's foremost historians, that the government was more easily able to accept globally trained economists but not historians or sociologists who mostly reject the culturally fixed views of the Sangh parivar. The foreign trained economist reflected on the matter for a few seconds before responding, "It is not necessary that we economists endorse all the policies of the government, whether UPA or NDA. For instance, I strongly feel the government must structurally move away from a pro-business policy framework to a genuinely pro-market one where the benefits are more evenly spread. This is a continuing problem with the Indian policy regime". Put simply, India's economic policies are often tailored to benefit big business houses in the name of "development and employment creation."

The economist in question had expressed this opinion to Prime Minister Narendra Modi too but probably did not see much change on the ground. The reason why I am recounting this story is because it has a lot to do with the way RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan has chosen to leave his job even before hearing from New Delhi about his possible extension for another two years, making it a five year tenure – something that all RBI governors have got since 1991. Rajan completes three years at the helm of

the central bank on September 6 and has expressed his desire to go back to teaching economics at the Chicago University. His decision will disappoint the global investing community at large as he was seen as a big stabilising influence on monetary policy and financial market functioning in India.

Rajan too has strongly believed that for sustained growth, India had to move away from a big business-oriented policy framework to a much more broad based, pro-market one. His first public remarks against the entrenched big business came around end 2014 when he said many big business houses in India enjoyed "riskless capitalism"; in good times they enjoy profits and in bad times they are bailed out by the banks. Incidentally, such remarks had directly targeted some of the top indebted business groups whose names were listed by reputed independent research institutions as defaulting on loans. Credit Suisse India had been regularly putting out the names of the top ten business groups that owed about Rs 7.5 lakh crore to the banks and nearly 50 per cent of this was close to default status as per private credit rating agencies.

Rajan had begun to turn the heat on some of these powerful business houses, including the controversial Essar Group, Vedanta, Jindal Steel, Anil Ambani-led companies, Adani Group, JP Associates, GMR, GVK, Lanco and Bhushan Steel. Many of these entities had already got their loans restructured – a euphemism for

(Continued on Page 15)

postponement of interest and principal repayment — during the UPA regimes, especially after the global economic slowdown deepened post 2012. But how long could the banks postpone receiving interest and principal back from the companies without declaring them bad loans? This problem is still to be resolved except that PSU banks have begun to make heavy provisions against these loans over the past six months and have shown huge losses in their books. Rajan also instructed the banks to tighten the screws on the big business houses that had not repaid interest and principal for a considerable period. The banks, which had been lax for some years, suddenly started pressuring these groups to sell their profitable assets to pay back the debt on projects that had not taken off, especially in the infrastructure sectors. So Essar, with a total loan exposure of over Rs 1.15 lakh crore, has been negotiating to sell its profitable refinery project to pay back its debt in steel and power, while the Anil Ambani group and JP Associates have sold some businesses to pay back their massive loans

In the past, Essar, politically connected to both national parties, never felt compelled to sell its assets to pay back loans. In 1999-2000, at the peak of the downcycle in business after the Asian financial crises, Essar had nearly defaulted on its debt obligations. But it managed to retain all its assets and ride through the downcycle, of course with some help from the banks and their political masters. This does not seem to be happening now as, under Rajan's supervision, the PSU banks have been quite emboldened and have refused to even meet some of these promoters to negotiate deals. Modi has supported this upto a point.

But when the pain exceeds a certain limit, these businesses begin to forcefully encash their IOUs for past political funding. One has recently heard murmurs from senior ministers like Nitin Gadkari that the 'CBI, Central Vigilance Commission and judiciary cannot run the administration'. Gadkari has also said banks will have to be more pragmatic about dealing with bad loans. This too is a euphemism for adopting a softer policy on loan defaults by big business houses. When Rajan made a caustic remark against Vijay Mallya's lavish display of wealth, some official ventriloquists in New Delhi tried to counter the RBI governor by saying personal lifestyle should not be dragged into business dealings. Last fortnight Rajan retorted that personal lifestyle must certainly be commented on if the promoter has given personal guarantees against the bank loans. The public has a claim on the promoter's personal wealth in such situations.

Obviously, Rajan's attitude has not gone down well with the big business interests, which have run a subterranean campaign against him. Some powerful ideological advisors of the Sangh parivar have been carrying out a strong campaign against Rajan's policies for over a year. The campaign is couched politically correctly as a dire need for lower interest rates for small businesses but clearly there are multiple agendas at work. It must also be noted that prominent industrialists running their business well with modest debt from banks have supported Rajan fully and endorsed a second term for him.

Some of the business groups in Credit Suisse's top indebted companies' list are also known to have strong historical links with the

RSS leadership. Rajan may not have fully understood the complex nexus between business and politics when New Delhi encouraged him to nominally go after the big loan defaulters. The politicians in Delhi are known to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. Look at the ease with which Mallya, declared a proclaimed offender, attended a function co-sponsored by the Indian High Commission in London.

Modi too tries to project himself as a crusader against crony capitalism, but the circumstances surrounding Rajan's exit shows that entrenched interests have struck back successfully. In public perception the Modi government appears more and more compromised now. How else do you explain no action being taken on the elaborate investigative findings of the economic enforcement agencies, which have reported massive over-invoicing of power equipment imports by the very top business groups that are struggling to pay back bank loans? By unduly inflating the value of imports, these companies have reportedly diverted excess bank funds out of the country, and put them away in tax havens in Dubai and the British Virgin Islands. This is a classic case of funds diversion and qualifies to be described formally as wilful default if these companies are unable to pay back their bank loans. Will Modi ever take action on these reports? With someone like Rajan supervising banks at such a critical juncture, the political class might have even felt a bit uncomfortable and insecure. So it was best to send Rajan back to Chicago with a thank you note. Rajan must realise it is not so easy, after all, to rescue capitalism from capitalists in real life.

Should RSS Volunteers be permitted to join government services?

Ram Puniyani

An old controversy resurfaced lately. After the alleged denial of government jobs to candidates linked to the RSS, Minister of State in the PMO, Jitendra Singh, said last week that “the central government has not issued any such order (prohibiting government staff from joining RSS activities) recently”, and “if any old order exists, we will review it.” (16 June, 2016) RSS Prachar Pramukh Manmohan Vaidya had already stated that, “Banning RSS members from joining government service; is unjust and undemocratic. Such bans hardly affect RSS work and morale of swayamsevaks.” (*Indian Express* 11 June 2016)

As such civil servants are banned from participating in the political organizations. RSS calls itself cultural organization, and that’s what has been used as a ruse by the state governments on couple of occasions to permit the civil servants in joining RSS. In Gujarat when this permission was granted (Jan 2000), the President on receiving the protests intervened, and the Mr. Vajpayee prevailed upon the state BJP and got this permission revoked. Later in Madhya Pradesh Chouhan Government lifted the ban; thereby the government servants could join and carry on the RSS work openly(2006).

The basic premise of Indian constitution and parliamentary democracy is that the civil service should be neutral. Already RSS has infiltrated into various wings of the

state apparatus by sending its trained swayamsevaks to work in different areas of bureaucracy in states as well as at Center. In addition to these elements the ‘social common sense’ is so doctored that in the times of violence a big chunk of police and other state officials aid and abet the violence against minorities, putting aside the norms of constitution and even the civic decency. Thus far many a reports on the communal carnage have indicated the role of RSS and the complicity of police and other officials in the anti-minority pogroms. Such permission to the civic service opens the flood gates for the total communalization of the civil service which is the backbone of the state apparatus.

What about the argument that RSS is not a political organization; it is an organization which is cultural, committed to build a Hindu nation. This claim itself gives the game away; building a nation is a political process so how can this organization claim to be merely a cultural one? After seeing the actions of RSS and its role in the political arena, its role in dictating its political progeny, the BJP, any doubt about it’s being a cultural organization vanishes into thin air. RSS is a political organization which operates through its different progeny, some of which claim to be non-political to achieve its political goal.

Initially, it was just training the political volunteers, swayamsevaks, and from 1952 it started floating the

direct political organizations, first Bharatiya Jana Sangh and then BJP (after earlier floating Rashtra Sevika Samiti in 1936 and ABVP in 1948). It acted as controller of Jana Sangh and whosoever disagreed with its polices was removed from being the office bearer, Balraj Madhok, the President of Jana Sangh who was removed from his post for disagreeing with RSS line. Many more examples abound. In 1998 one saw it dictating the process of cabinet making, the allotment of portfolios, like wanting to have Yashwant Sinha as Finance minister, instead of Jaswant Singh. It came out openly against Lal Krishna Advani, when he stated that Jinnah was a secular.

In one of the affidavits filed, miscellaneous application No 17 of 1978, two of its functionaries, Deoras and Rajendra Singh, stated, “The work of RSS is neither religious nor charitable, but its objects are cultural and patriotic as contra-distinguished religious or charitable. It is akin to political purposes, though RSS is not at present a political party as much as RSS constitution...bans active participation by the RSS as such, as a policy...Tomorrow the policy could be changed and RSS could participate even in day-to-day political activity as a political party because policy is not a permanent or irrevocable thing.”

How do we assess the nature of organizations, by their own claims or from the outcome of their

activities? One has to note the claims of RSS being a cultural organization is a pure make believe. It operates in the political arena by remote control, by mechanisms which are direct as well as indirect. Its swayamsevaks have been involved in Gandhi murder, murder of Pastor Stains, demolition of Babri Masjid and running of political parties. Two noteworthy incidents are: one, when the Jana Sangh component of Janata Party broke away from Janata Party since their double membership, of RSS and of Janata Party was challenged; second, when Vajpayee himself claimed with pride that he was first a swayamsevak and then the prime minister of India. Recently faced with similar criticism Home Minister Rajanath Singh said 'we are RSS'.

Different progenies of RSS have been allotted the work in diverse social arenas to be able to control the basic thought process of society, starting from Saraswati Shishu Mandir right up to RSS shakha where through the bauddhiks the indoctrination into political ideology is carried on. It does monitor all its progeny and coordinates their activities through All India Pratinidhi Sabha (All India Representatives Association) which meets regularly to coordinate their activities. Its goal is political, its actions are political and its outcome is political through and through.

Even without being in power it is able to control the politics through various mechanisms. Currently through the compliant Government its agenda runs exponentially faster, the way Gujarat and many other states have demonstrated. Now its agenda is running from bottom to top and top to bottom both ways since the BJP is the ruling party at the centre. With the employees being

openly participating in RSS the divisive processes will move faster and running the administration on the lines of Indian Constitution will become all the more difficult. Despite knowing that such a provision is not legally tenable, many in the seat of power are asking for government servants be

permitted to be part of RSS and vice versa.

The present opinions being articulated by RSS leaders should neither be legally permissible nor are in tune with the principles of Constitution of India.

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Lessons from Brexit

The results of the referendum in Britain that signaled the exit of this leading member from the European Union have been extensively regretted. In Britain the short and medium term implications are a decline in the value of the pound and also a decline in the exports to the biggest market of the European Union. Then there is the very real possibility of the secession of Scotland and possibly even North Ireland, regions that voted strongly for remaining in the European Union.

It has been discussed that the longer term harm to the entire European Union project can be even more serious if the demand is taken up even more strongly by the rightist parties of other nations like France, Holland and Austria that have been gaining strength rapidly. Perhaps the fear voiced by George Soros may be closer to reality than what many people believe today. In a much discussed comment he said recently, "All of Europe, including Britain, would suffer from the loss of the common market and the loss of common values that the EU was designed to protect. Yet, the EU truly has broken down and ceased to satisfy its citizens' needs and aspirations. It is heading for a disorderly disintegration that will leave Europe worse off than where

it would have been had the EU not been brought into existence."

Yet the basic idea of the EU of eliminating the possibilities of war within a region and creating conditions of peace, stability and cooperation which are likely to enhance the possibility of prosperity of all member nations cannot be faulted. However basically sound or even noble this project was, it was administered within the overall framework of inequality based and inequality enhancing globalization led capitalism. This created several contradictions as the EU remained very much an important part and a pillar of an unjust and unequal global system and never challenged it in any basic way. Hence several conflicts were bound to appear sooner or later within its stated aims and the real situation.

Such unions of many nations in various regions are certainly needed but these need a wider vision of justice, equality, environment protection, peace and compassion for all forms of life. In addition these efforts should be very conscious of the need to think up and evolve alternatives to capitalism and globalization dominated by multinational companies.

–Bharat Dogra

Castes in India: their mechanism, genesis and development

B. R. Ambedkar

The paper by Dr. Ambedkar was presented at an Anthropology Seminar taught by Dr. A. A. Goldenweizer at Columbia University on 9th May 1916 and was first published in Indian Antiquary Vol. XLI (May 1917)

[1] Many of us, I dare say, have witnessed local, national or international expositions of material objects that make up the sum total of human civilization. But few can entertain the idea of there being such a thing as an exposition of human institutions. Exhibition of human institutions is a strange idea; some might call it the wildest of ideas. But as students of Ethnology I hope you will not be hard on this innovation, for it is not so, and to you at least it should not be strange.

[2] You all have visited, I believe, some historic place like the ruins of Pompeii, and listened with curiosity to the history of the remains as it flowed from the glib tongue of the guide. In my opinion a student of Ethnology, in one sense at least, is much like the guide. Like his prototype, he holds up (perhaps with more seriousness and desire of self-instruction) the social institutions to view, with all the objectiveness humanly possible, and inquires into their origin and function.

[3] Most of our fellow students in this Seminar, which concerns itself with primitive versus modern society, have ably acquitted themselves along these lines by giving lucid expositions of the various institutions, modern or primitive, in which they are interested. It is my turn now, this evening, to entertain you, as best I can, with a paper on "*Castes in*

India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development."

[4] I need hardly remind you of the complexity of the subject I intend to handle. Subtler minds and abler pens than mine have been brought to the task of unravelling the mysteries of Caste; but unfortunately it still remains in the domain of the "unexplained," not to say of the "un-understood." I am quite alive to the complex intricacies of a hoary institution like Caste, but I am not so pessimistic as to relegate it to the region of the unknowable, for I believe it can be known. The caste problem is a vast one, both theoretically and practically. Practically, it is an institution that portends tremendous consequences. It is a local problem, but one capable of much wider mischief, for "as long as caste in India does exist, Hindus will hardly intermarry or have any social intercourse with outsiders; and if Hindus migrate to other regions on earth, Indian caste would become a world problem." Theoretically, it has defied a great many scholars who have taken upon themselves, as a labour of love, to dig into its origin. Such being the case, I cannot treat the problem in its entirety. Time, space and acumen, I am afraid, would all fail me, if I attempted to do otherwise than limit myself to a phase of it, namely, the genesis, mechanism and spread of the caste system. I will strictly observe this rule, and will dwell on

extraneous matters only when it is necessary to clarify or support a point in my thesis.

[5] To proceed with the subject. According to well-known ethnologists, the population of India is a mixture of Aryans, Dravidians, Mongolians and Scythians. All these stocks of people came into India from various directions and with various cultures, centuries ago, when they were in a tribal state. They all in turn elbowed their entry into the country by fighting with their predecessors, and after a stomachful of it settled down as peaceful neighbours. Through constant contact and mutual intercourse they evolved a common culture that superseded their distinctive cultures. It may be granted that there has not been a thorough amalgamation of the various stocks that make up the peoples of India, and to a traveller from within the boundaries of India the East presents a marked contrast in physique and even in colour to the West, as does the South to the North. But amalgamation can never be the sole criterion of homogeneity as predicated of any people. Ethnically all people are heterogeneous. It is the unity of culture that is the basis of homogeneity. Taking this for granted, I venture to say that there is no country that can rival the Indian Peninsula with respect to the unity of its culture. It has not only a geographic unity, but it has over and

above all a deeper and a much more fundamental unity—the indubitable cultural unity that covers the land from end to end. But it is because of this homogeneity that Caste becomes a problem so difficult to be explained. If the Hindu Society were a mere federation of mutually exclusive units, the matter would be simple enough. But Caste is a parcelling of an already homogeneous unit, and the explanation of the genesis of Caste is the explanation of this process of parcelling.

[6] Before launching into our field of enquiry, it is better to advise ourselves regarding the nature of a caste. I will therefore draw upon a few of the best students of caste for their definitions of it:

1) Mr. Senart, a French authority, defines a caste as “a close corporation, in theory at any rate rigorously hereditary: equipped with a certain traditional and independent organisation, including a chief and a council, meeting on occasion in assemblies of more or less plenary authority and joining together at certain festivals: bound together by common occupations, which relate more particularly to marriage and to food and to questions of ceremonial pollution, and ruling its members by the exercise of jurisdiction, the extent of which varies, but which succeeds in making the authority of the community more felt by the sanction of certain penalties and, above all, by final irrevocable exclusion from the group.”

2) Mr. Nesfield defines a caste as “a class of the community which disowns any connection with any other class and can neither

intermarry nor eat nor drink with any but persons of their own community.”

3) According to Sir H. Risley, “a caste may be defined as a collection of families or groups of families bearing a common name which usually denotes or is associated with specific occupation, claiming common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine, professing to follow the same professional callings and are regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogeneous community.”

4) Dr. Ketkar defines caste as “a social group having two characteristics: (i) membership is confined to those who are born of members and includes all persons so born; (ii) the members are forbidden by an inexorable social law to marry outside the group.”

[7] To review these definitions is of great importance for our purpose. It will be noticed that taken individually the definitions of three of the writers include too much or too little: none is complete or correct by itself and all have missed the central point in the mechanism of the Caste system. Their mistake lies in trying to define caste as an isolated unit by itself, and not as a group within, and with definite relations to, the system of caste as a whole. Yet collectively all of them are complementary to one another, each one emphasising what has been obscured in the other. By way of criticism, therefore, I will take only those points common to all Castes in each of the above definitions which are regarded as peculiarities of Caste and evaluate them as such.

[8] To start with Mr. Senart. He draws attention to the “idea of pollution” as a characteristic of Caste. With regard to this point it may be safely said that it is by no means a peculiarity of Caste as such. It usually originates in priestly ceremonialism and is a particular case of the general belief in purity. Consequently its necessary connection with Caste may be completely denied without damaging the working of Caste. The “idea of pollution” has been attached to the institution of Caste, only because the Caste that enjoys the highest rank is the priestly Caste: while we know that priest and purity are old associates. We may therefore conclude that the “idea of pollution” is a characteristic of Caste only in so far as Caste has a religious flavour.

[9] Mr. Nesfield in his way dwells on the absence of messing with those outside the Caste as one of its characteristics. In spite of the newness of the point we must say that Mr. Nesfield has mistaken the effect for the cause. Caste, being a self-enclosed unit, naturally limits social intercourse, including messing etc., to members within it. Consequently this absence of messing with outsiders is not due to positive prohibition, but is a natural result of Caste, i.e. exclusiveness. No doubt this absence of messing, originally due to exclusiveness, acquired the prohibitory character of a religious injunction, but it may be regarded as a later growth. Sir H. Risley makes no new point deserving of special attention.

[10] We now pass on to the definition of Dr. Ketkar who has done much for the elucidation of the subject. Not only is he a native, but he has also brought a critical acumen and an open mind to bear on his

study of Caste. His definition merits consideration, for he has defined Caste in its relation to a system of Castes, and has concentrated his attention only on those characteristics which are absolutely necessary for the existence of a Caste within a system, rightly excluding all others as being secondary or derivative in character. With respect to his definition it must, however, be said that in it there is a slight confusion of thought, lucid and clear as otherwise it is. He speaks of *Prohibition of Intermarriage* and *Membership by Autogeny* as the two characteristics of Caste. I submit that these are but two aspects of one and the same thing, and not two different things as Dr. Ketkar supposes them to be. If you prohibit intermarriage the result is that you limit membership to those born within the group. Thus the two are the obverse and the reverse sides of the same medal.

[11] This critical evaluation of the various characteristics of Caste leave no doubt that prohibition, or rather the absence of intermarriage—endogamy, to be concise—is the only one that can be called the essence of Caste when rightly understood. But some may deny this on abstract anthropological grounds, for there exist endogamous groups without giving rise to the problem of Caste. In a general way this may be true, as endogamous societies, culturally different, making their abode in localities more or less removed, and having little to do with each other are a physical reality. The Negroes and the Whites and the various tribal groups that go by name of American Indians in the United States may be cited as more or less appropriate illustrations in support of this view. But we must not confuse matters, for in India the situation is different. As

pointed out before, the peoples of India form a homogeneous whole. The various races of India occupying definite territories have more or less fused into one another and do possess cultural unity, which is the only criterion of a homogeneous population. Given this homogeneity as a basis, Caste becomes a problem altogether new in character and wholly absent in the situation constituted by the mere propinquity of endogamous social or tribal groups. Caste in India means an artificial chopping off of the population into fixed and definite units, each one prevented from fusing into another through the custom of endogamy. Thus the conclusion is inevitable that *Endogamy is the only characteristic that is peculiar to caste*, and if we succeed in showing how endogamy is maintained, we shall practically have proved the genesis and also the mechanism of Caste.

[12] It may not be quite easy for you to anticipate why I regard endogamy as a key to the mystery of the Caste system. Not to strain your imagination too much, I will proceed to give you my reasons for it.

[13] It may not also be out of place to emphasize at this moment that no civilized society of today presents more survivals of primitive times than does the Indian society. Its religion is essentially primitive and its tribal code, in spite of the advance of time and civilization, operates in all its pristine vigour even today. One of these primitive survivals, to which I wish particularly to draw your attention, is the *Custom of Exogamy*. The prevalence of exogamy in the primitive worlds is a fact too well-

known to need any explanation. With the growth of history, however, exogamy has lost its efficacy, and excepting the nearest blood-kins, there is usually no social bar restricting the field of marriage. But regarding the peoples of India the law of exogamy is a positive injunction even today. Indian society still savours of the clan system, even though there are no clans; and this can be easily seen from the law of matrimony which centres round the principle of exogamy, for it is not that Sapindas (blood-kins) cannot marry, but a marriage even between Sagotras (of the same class) is regarded as a sacrilege.

[14] Nothing is therefore more important for you to remember than the fact that endogamy is foreign to the people of India. The various Gotras of India are and have been exogamous: so are the other groups with totemic organization. It is no exaggeration to say that with the people of India exogamy is a creed and none dare infringe it, so much so that, in spite of the endogamy of the Castes within them, exogamy is strictly observed and that there are more rigorous penalties for violating exogamy than there are for violating endogamy. You will, therefore, readily see that with exogamy as the rule there could be no Caste, for exogamy means fusion. But we have castes; consequently in the final analysis creation of Castes, so far as India is concerned, means the superposition of endogamy on exogamy. However, in an originally exogamous population an easy working out of endogamy (which is equivalent to the creation of Caste) is a grave problem, and it is in the consideration of the means utilized for the preservation of endogamy against exogamy that we may hope to find the solution of our problem.

[15] *Thus the superposition of endogamy on exogamy means the creation of caste.* But this is not an easy affair. Let us take an imaginary group that desires to make itself into a Caste and analyse what means it will have to adopt to make itself endogamous. If a group desires to make itself endogamous a formal injunction against intermarriage with outside groups will be of no avail, especially if prior to the introduction of endogamy, exogamy had been the rule in all matrimonial relations. Again, there is a tendency in all groups lying in close contact with one another to assimilate and amalgamate, and thus consolidate into a homogeneous society. If this tendency is to be strongly counteracted in the interest of Caste formation, it is absolutely necessary to circumscribe a circle outside which people should not contract marriages.

[16] Nevertheless, this encircling to prevent marriages from without creates problems from within which are not very easy of solution. Roughly speaking, in a normal group the two sexes are more or less evenly distributed, and generally speaking there is an equality between those of the same age. The equality is, however, never quite realized in actual societies. At the same time to the group that is desirous of making itself into a caste the maintenance of equality between the sexes becomes the ultimate goal, for without it endogamy can no longer subsist. In other words, if endogamy is to be preserved conjugal rights from within have to be provided for, otherwise members of the group will be driven out of the circle to take care of themselves in any way they can. But in order that the conjugal rights be provided for from within, it is absolutely

necessary to maintain a numerical equality between the marriageable units of the two sexes within the group desirous of making itself into a Caste. It is only through the maintenance of such an equality that the necessary endogamy of the group can be kept intact, and a very large disparity is sure to break it.

[17] *The problem of Caste, then, ultimately resolves itself into one of repairing the disparity between the marriageable units of the two sexes within it.* Left to nature, the much needed parity between the units can be realized only when a couple dies simultaneously. But this is a rare contingency. The husband may die before the wife and create a *surplus woman*, who must be disposed of, else through intermarriage she will violate the endogamy of the group. In like manner the husband may survive his wife and be a *surplus man*, whom the group, while it may sympathise with him for the sad bereavement, has to dispose of, else he will marry outside the Caste and will break the endogamy. Thus both the *surplus man* and the *surplus woman* constitute a menace to the Caste if not taken care of, for not finding suitable partners inside their prescribed circle (and left to themselves they cannot find any, for if the matter be not regulated there can only be just enough pairs to go round) very likely they will transgress the boundary, marry outside and import offspring that is foreign to the Caste.

[18] Let us see what our imaginary group is likely to do with this *surplus man* and *surplus woman*. We will first take up the case of the surplus woman. She can be disposed of in two different ways so as to preserve the endogamy of the Caste.

[19] First: burn her on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband and get rid of her. This, however, is rather an impracticable way of solving the problem of sex disparity. In some cases it may work, in others it may not. Consequently every surplus woman cannot thus be disposed of, because it is an easy solution but a hard realization. And so the *surplus woman* (= widow), if not disposed of, remains in the group: but in her very existence lies a double danger. She may marry outside the Caste and violate endogamy, or she may marry within the Caste and through competition encroach upon the chances of marriage that must be reserved for the potential brides in the Caste. She is therefore a menace in any case, and something must be done to her if she cannot be burned along with her deceased husband.

[20] The second remedy is to enforce widowhood on her for the rest of her life. So far as the objective results are concerned, burning is a better solution than enforcing widowhood. Burning the widow eliminates all the three evils that a *surplus woman* is fraught with. Being dead and gone she creates no problem of remarriage either inside or outside the Caste. But compulsory widowhood is superior to burning because it is more practicable. Besides being comparatively humane it also guards against the evils of remarriage as does burning; but it fails to guard the morals of the group. No doubt under compulsory widowhood the woman remains, and just because she is deprived of her natural right of being a legitimate wife in future, the incentive to immoral conduct is increased. But this is by no means an insuperable difficulty. She can be degraded to a condition in which she is no longer

a source of allurements.

[21] The problem of the *surplus man* (= widower) is much more important and much more difficult than that of the surplus woman in a group that desires to make itself into a Caste. From time immemorial man as compared with woman has had the upper hand. He is a dominant figure in every group and of the two sexes has greater prestige. With this traditional superiority of man over woman his wishes have always been consulted. Woman, on the other hand, has been an easy prey to all kinds of iniquitous injunctions, religious, social or economic. But man as a maker of injunctions is most often above them all. Such being the case, you cannot accord the same kind of treatment to a *surplus man* as you can to a *surplus woman* in a Caste.

[22] The project of burning him with his deceased wife is hazardous in two ways: first of all it cannot be done, simply because he is a man. Secondly, if done, a sturdy soul is lost to the Caste. There remain then only two solutions which can conveniently dispose of him. I say conveniently, because he is an asset to the group.

[23] Important as he is to the group, endogamy is still more important, and the solution must assure both these ends. Under these circumstances he may be forced or I should say induced, after the manner of the widow, to remain a widower for the rest of his life. This solution is not altogether difficult, for without any compulsion some are so disposed as to enjoy self-imposed celibacy, or even to take a further step of their own accord and renounce the world and its joys. But, given human nature as it is, this

solution can hardly be expected to be realized. On the other hand, as is very likely to be the case, if the *surplus man* remains in the group as an active participator in group activities, he is a danger to the morals of the group. Looked at from a different point of view celibacy, though easy in cases where it succeeds, is not so advantageous even then to the material prospects of the Caste. If he observes genuine celibacy and renounces the world, he would not be a menace to the preservation of Caste endogamy or Caste morals as he undoubtedly would be if he remained a secular person. But as an ascetic celibate he is as good as burned, so far as the material wellbeing of his Caste is concerned. A Caste, in order that it may be large enough to afford a vigorous communal life, must be maintained at a certain numerical strength. But to hope for this and to proclaim celibacy is the same as trying to cure atrophy by bleeding.

[24] Imposing celibacy on

(To be Concluded)

(Continued from Page 7)

livelihoods have been undermined by financial crises and the outsourcing of jobs. This means following the social-democratic ethos of pursuing ample social spending for health, education, training, apprenticeships, and family support, financed by taxing the rich and closing tax havens, which are gutting public revenues and exacerbating economic injustice. It also means finally giving Greece debt relief, thereby ending the long-running eurozone crisis.

Fifth, focus resources, including additional aid, on economic development, rather than war, in low-income countries. Uncontrolled

the *surplus man* in the group, therefore, fails both theoretically and practically. It is in the interest of the Caste to keep him as a Grahastha (one who raises a family), to use a Sanskrit technical term. But the problem is to provide him with a wife from within the Caste. At the outset this is not possible, for the ruling ratio in a caste has to be one man to one woman and none can have two chances of marriage, for in a Caste thoroughly self-enclosed there are always just enough marriageable women to go round for the marriageable men. Under these circumstances the *surplus man* can be provided with a wife only by recruiting a bride from the ranks of those not yet marriageable in order to tie him down to the group. This is certainly the best of the possible solutions in the case of the *surplus man*. By this, he is kept within the Caste. By this means numerical depletion through constant outflow is guarded against, and by this

migration from today's poor and conflict-ridden regions will become overwhelming, regardless of migration policies, if climate change, extreme poverty, and lack of skills and education undermine the development potential of Africa, Central America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Central Asia.

All of this underscores the need to shift from a strategy of war to one of sustainable development, especially by the US and Europe. Walls and fences won't stop millions of migrants fleeing violence, extreme poverty, hunger, disease, droughts, floods, and other ills. Only global cooperation can do that.

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Enlightenment in education
Sandeep Pandey

Castes in India
B. R. Ambedkar

**Justifying crime,
order of the day**
Valson Thampu

Dr. Zakir Naik's "Peace TV"

On Kashmir

**Looting of public funds
in day light**

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Death be not proud

Kuldip Nayar

As the memory of the massacre at Dhaka recedes, examples of bravery are coming to the fore. One of them is that of *Faraaz Hossain*. He was on a vacation at Dhaka from his college in the US where he was pursuing higher studies. He spent less time at home but used the opportunity to meet his friends from foreign climes at Gulshan's famous Spanish restaurant, the Holey Artisan Bakery.

When ISIS terrorists struck, Faraaz was having food with his friends at the restaurant. The ISIS killers were singling out and separating Bangladeshis from the others before using weapon. They came to the table where Faraaz was sitting. Then they asked him whether he was a Bangladeshi and, when he said yes, they pushed him aside before asking others about their nationalities.

When all except Faraaz said that they were non-Bangladeshis, they opened fire from the only gun they had among them. Faraaz protested and told them that he was a part of his friends' group and would not like to be treated separately. The terrorists then told him that he too

would be killed if he did not want to stand aside. Faraaz preferred to stand with and by his foreign friends. And he knew that the price he would pay could be his possible death. The terrorists showed no mercy and killed all of them.

Today when the massacre at Dhaka is recalled, people talk about the courage of Faraaz. Probably, this is the only compensation for his parents and grandparents whom I know well. In fact, I have had dinner at their house at Dhaka. They lead a simple and austere life.

I met Faraaz at his grandparents' house. I recall exchanging notes with him about America where I had gone to North Western University to earn an MSC in journalism. He was raw in his attitude but steadfast in his views, even though he belonged to a very wealthy family. There were no airs about him. He was curious to know about India, which he said he would visit at leisure. He was impressed by our composite culture, something which he wanted Bangladesh to cherish because it too had a large number of Hindus, nearly

12 million, making Bangladesh the third largest Hindu state in the world after India and Nepal.

I have tried to pick up every detail about the killings. There is no doubt that Faraaz sacrificed his life for his foreign friends who were the real targets of the terrorists. This does not make amends for the brutal killing, but it does tell a saga of unbelievable bravery. True, he is mentioned with great respect in every Bangladeshi home and cited as an example of courage, but distraught parents and grandparents can never be consoled. A promising child has been lost from their family.

Such examples of self-sacrifice are by no means unique in the East. They are typical of value systems in the East which do not weigh individuals on the scales of wealth as is the case in the West. Mahatma Gandhi is an example. He preferred to be called a naked *faqir*, as he was characterized by the West, rather than be known for either wealth or erudition even though he had access to both.

The West cannot understand or appreciate the non-violent movement of Gandhi. Hundreds of volunteers went to the sea at Dandi to break the law by making salt and they suffered police lathi charges but never hit back because of the ideals of their movement.

Faraaz may not have been a Gandhi follower but he did represent his spirit and discipline. In India, wherever Faraaz's name has been mentioned, people bring in Gandhi's name. Had Gandhi been living today, I have no doubt that he would have travelled to victims-stricken Dhaka,

(Continued on Page 5)

Enlightenment in education

Sandeep Pandey

Rita Kanaujia, a widowed domestic help who lives in a slum in Chembur, Mumbai, desires to have her son admitted to Junior Kindergarten class at Lokmanya Tilak High School in Tilak Nagar. Two of her daughters are already studying in Classes III and IV here. The school wanted her to make a payment of Rs. 19,500, which she was incapable of after the death of her husband due to cancer in 2014. She moved the court. Due to court's intervention the school gave a concession but still insisted on a payment of Rs. 10,500. Rita agreed to make the payment in installments to which the school didn't agree. Justice V.M. Kanade and M.S. Sonak asked the school not to deny the child education just because of the inability of mother to pay the entire sum in one go. Justice Kanade even offered to pay the child's fees.

In 2011 the District Collector of Erode in Tamil Nadu, A. Anandhakumar got his daughter A. Gopika admitted to a Tamil medium panchayat union school in Kumuilankuttai giving instructions to the headmistress that his daughter would eat the midday meal served at school along with other students and should not be given any preferential treatment. The school toilet started getting cleaned twice and extra care was taken to keep the premises clean. Most importantly the teachers became punctual. This shows what transformation can take place if children of senior government officials start attending government schools.

While I was on a fast from 6th to 15th June, 2016 at Gandhi Statue, Hazratganj, Lucknow demanding implementation of Allahabad High Court order that children of everybody receiving a government salary must attend government schools, Ramesh who pulls a rickshaw in Lucknow and hails from Village Nakki Madhia in Mishrikh area of adjacent Sitapur District used to come regularly to express his solidarity. He also sat at the fast site on some days for several hours. He recently wrote a note saying that people should consider who is more important for them - a Chief Minister who merely eats with the poor but doesn't agree to send his children to the same school where the children of poor study or a person who goes hungry so that children of poor and rich could study together? This is the best compliment I've got related to my recent movement. Ramesh has become a campaigner for the cause. He has now hung a placard from his rickshaw and distributes pamphlets demanding common school system.

Ramesh is also informing his fellow villagers about the provision of Right to Education Act, 2009 which offers admission to children belonging to disadvantaged groups and weaker sections in any nearby school of their choice up to 25 per cent strength at the entry level and subsequently free education from classes I to VIII. Two of my neighbours, one on either side, have also used this Act to submit applications on behalf of their domestic help.

61 years old Rajni Saxena is a resident of A-895 Indira Nagar in Lucknow. Her domestic help Nagma has been with her for the last 20 years. Nagma was so interested in education that with Rajni Saxena's help she slowly picked up even reading English. After getting married to Raju and birth of her first child she was worried about getting Mohammed Imran some decent education. The husband was least interested. Imran was admitted to Dabble Academy where his monthly fees is Rs. 1,250. Considering that Nagma's monthly income is mere Rs. 4,000 one can imagine how she must have been struggling to make both ends meet. Rajni Saxena decided to use the RTE Act so that Imran could get education in the same school free of cost upto Class VIII. She guided Nagma to submit her applications for getting her income and caste certificates made from the District Magistrate's office. With the receipt issued, after Nagma was made to run four times, Rajni Saxena went and personally submitted Imran's application to Basic Shiksha Adhikari (BSA) of Lucknow, Praveen Mani Tripathi, on 23 June, 2016. Gurukul Academy, St. Dominic, City Montessori School and Dabble Academy have been given as possible preferences where Imran would like to study.

Yasmin Mahmud lives in A-885, Indira Nagar. Her 27 years old domestic help for the last few years Jamrul Nisha from Baddupur in adjoining Barabanki District is separated from husband after her first child Zulekha Bano was born. Zulekha is now 7 years old and Jamrul is worried about her education. 66 years old Yasmin Mahmud, who recently lost her husband, a retired Indian Railways officer, decided to take the initiative

and get Zulekha admitted to some school in neighbourhood under the RTE Act. She asked her daughter-in-law Tasneem Mahmud, an Image and Transformation consultant and trainer of soft skills, to go with Jamrul and get her forms submitted for getting the income and residence certificates made. Zulekha's form was also submitted with the BSA on the same day, 23 June. The preferences of schools mentioned on Zulekha's form include Springdale, City Montessori School, City International and Gurukul Academy.

When the BSA takes a decision, hopefully in favour of children, they will study in the best of schools in their neighbourhood.

These are inspiring examples of several happenings from different

parts of country. It is a narration of change country in going through in its thinking towards education. While on one hand poor have become conscious of the importance of education for their children, the elite have, at last, accepted the fact that children of poor deserve the same education that their children avail of. It is heartening to note how some ordinary housewives have started taking a proactive stand in getting children of their domestic help admitted into good schools so that children of these labourers could break the vicious cycle of poverty and do something more worthwhile with their lives. It also appears that Judiciary has an important role if the Legislature or Executive will drag its feet on the issue of implementation of Common School System.

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On Kashmir

We write this in anguish at another alarming spiral of violence in Kashmir, when a discredited old playbook has yet again been deployed to wreak havoc with civilian life. Kashmir's escalating violence follows a familiar pattern: a killing, a funeral where rage is vented through slogans and stones, and volleys of lethal gunfire in response. In 2010, this cycle rolled on repeatedly through four months, claiming over 110 lives, mostly of Kashmiri youth, including a number who were too young to know.

Nothing has been learnt from that year of catastrophe. The trigger for the current surge of unrest in Kashmir was the killing on July 8 of Burhan Wani, a militant of the Hizbul Mujahedin. The

circumstances of Wani's killing are yet to be fully explained. It is nonetheless ironic that it occurred on the very day the Indian Supreme Court issued a far-reaching judgment in the context of fake encounters in the state of Manipur, emphasising the illegality of the use of excessive and retaliatory force by the army, security forces and police. These strictures apply even in disturbed areas under AFSPA. Kashmir is an arena where the Supreme Court's observations that the rule of law would apply "even when dealing with the enemy", and that indeed, whatever the challenges, "the country's commitment to the rule of law remains steadfast", are breached on a daily basis. Available accounts of Burhan Wani's life in militancy

indicate that he was as a 16-year old, embittered and radicalised during the 2010 turmoil by the casual humiliations heaped on ordinary Kashmiris by the mass deployments of security personnel. He witnessed repeated violent incursions into his home and the harassment of near relations in what are called “crackdowns”, in terminology that has entered the youth argot of the valley. The death of his brother in a police encounter, when he had nothing to do with the militancy, is believed to have further hardened his resolve.

Burhan Wani’s life story should be cautionary warning that the heavy-handed, militaristic Indian approach to Kashmir, has only led to a quarter century of siege and growing alienation.

Wani’s funeral on July 9 in the southern Kashmir town of Tral witnessed a gathering of several tens of thousands. As protests broke out in this and other locations, security forces responded with maximum force. The death toll of thirty in a matter of three days, tells its own grim story.

Excessive and indiscriminate lethal force continues to be used for purposes of law enforcement. This is in brazen contempt of the U.N.

Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, which do not allow for departure even in exceptional circumstances such as internal political instability or public emergency. Pellet guns, introduced in 2010 for crowd control, purportedly on the ground that it injures and does not kill, have caused permanent injuries and irreversible loss of eyesight to at least 92 young men.

The upsurge of civil unrest comes after a long sequence of intelligence reports that flagged rising discontent at the new political arrangements in Jammu and Kashmir. The BJP’s arrival in the portals of power and its determined pursuit of a majoritarian agenda, have much to do with this.

Curiously, the intelligence warnings have focused on widening access to the internet and social media as a disruptive influence. This diagnosis which focuses on the symptoms rather than underlying realities, has fed directly into the shutdown of internet services in Kashmir, the thirteenth such closure in three years.

Certain recent observations of the Supreme Court, though made in reference to Manipur, bear repetition as general principles. Mass deployment of the army and security

forces in aid of civil authorities always is predicated on the premise that “normalcy would be restored within a reasonable period”. If normalcy is not restored for a “prolonged or indeterminate period”, it would be firm evidence of the “failure” of the civil administration or of the armed forces, or both.

Whatever the case, an unending state of unrest could not “be a fig leaf for prolonged, permanent or indefinite deployment of the armed forces as it would mock at our democratic process”.

The time is long past, if ever there was one, when a solution to the Kashmir problem could be achieved through force. Continuing recourse to this option and the prolonged and bloody stalemate that has ensued, have fuelled a mood of anger and despair in Kashmir.

–Ravi Nair and others

Looting of public funds in day light

During the Lok Sabha elections – 2014 campaign, Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India made false promises. One of the promises was that if his party is voted to power, he would bring back black money of Indians deposited in Swiss Banks and he would credit Rs. 15,00,000/- , in bank accounts of every Indian. But after BJP was voted to power, this promise lost its relevance.

I state that the government should make efforts to bring back black money in Swiss Banks which will take some more time, but the Public Sector Banks which have sanctioned huge amount by way of loans to the business community failed to recover the loans and in that

situation the government should make all out efforts to recover the loan amount from borrowers without showing any mercy to the heartless business community because it is public money.

In this connection, I wish to reproduce below relevant extracts from the article published under the title “Strategic Disinvestment of Public Sector” by Bharat Jhunjunwala in the Free Press Journal dated June 4, 2016.

The Vijay Mallya episode brought to light the deep rot in the PSBs. Mallya has accused the State Bank of India of providing loans even though the Bank was aware of the

problems being faced by the Kingfisher Airlines. 'The Bank is equally responsible', he said. The Secretary of the All India Bank Officers' Association has said that "A powerful nexus between Chairmen of Boards, auditors, Reserve Bank of India and the bank boards is behind the country's Non Performing Assets and a willful defaulter. He could not be closer to truth.

There is a fundamental difference in the attitude of top management of Public Sector and Private Sector Banks. The Chairman of the State Bank of India who granted the loan to Kingfisher Airlines did not lose a paisa from her salary and perks due to the loan having gone bad. She may have even made gains from the grease money paid by Kingfisher. The income of the top management of the PSBs is not necessarily related to profits made by the PSBs that he may be heading.

The PSBs continue to provide loans mainly to big businesses, and not the poor. Worse, the PSBs are giving bad loans and losing money. The government is imposing more taxes on the common man to raise the money to infuse more capital in the Bank. The Banks were nationalized to serve the common man, but the system has turned the policy around. Poor are being taxed to support corruption and inefficiency of the PSBs. This has happened because officials of the PSBs have much to gain by making bad loans.

It is difficult to regulate the Public Sector Banks, because the owner and the regulator coalesce into one. The Secretary of Finance is both the 'Owner' of the PSBs as well as their regulator. This has led to the PSBs wild horses without any control.

From the above facts, it is clear that the government cannot touch business community as interests of politicians are involved. By this way the public is cheated and looted in day light. This is nothing but committing of a national economic crime. The borrowers and guarantors are not sent to jail. In short, it is very easy to win elections

by defeating a particular party, but it is difficult to make India corruption free as the PSBs and the business community do not afraid of looting public funds by way of NPA or bad loans. What is expected is to take a drastic action against anti-social elements actively functioning in financial institutions. PSBs NPA or bad loans must be treated as sedition.

—R. D. Prabhu

(Continued from Page 2)

just as he went to Noakhali after the fierce riots between Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta. And he would have lauded a person like Faraaz who really represented a figure of noble ideals, decency and self sacrifice.

Just as statues of Bhagat Singh have been erected all over India, Faraaz should also be remembered in the entire subcontinent and I am confident that people would name their sons and statues after him, not only in Bangladesh but also in India and elsewhere.

At least school textbooks should have a chapter on him, not for the purpose of accelerating the idea of Hindu-Muslim unity, but for making the youth feel proud about Faraaz. They should be able to tell the elders that a person like Faraaz has given an example of the true spirit of the youth, as well as a demonstration of culture in the East and its value system.

I wonder how his non-Bangladeshi friends are recalling his memory. They should propagate the example of Faraaz in their own countries so that people of different religions and race feel proud of how an ordinary young man stood by his companions when he could have easily escaped from death.

This has nothing to do with a particular religion to which you belong, but represents the core of every religion: faith in the people to rise above parochial considerations and think of humanity as a whole. Unfortunately India, instead of rising above petty parochial appeals and serve as an example to the world, has become a prey to the propaganda of the fanatic fringe.

Since the advent of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's regime, the fringe party is trying to represent the whole. Taslima Nasrin, who was ousted from Bangladesh for having written the story of oppression of women, has asked the followers of Islam to introspect and find out how they have strayed from the real content of the religion. Faraaz would have approved such an approach.

Come to think of it, this is the only approach that is cogent, logical and human. The fanatic fringe among Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians should be made to realize that India is a tolerant country and those who are trying to disturb the equation among the communities are disfiguring India and all that it stands for.

Dr. Zakir Naik's "Peace TV"

Dr. Zakir Naik's 'Peace TV' preaches contempt, if not hatred, for other religions.

We appeal to all peace-loving Indians in general and Muslims in particular to expose Zakir Naik's real agenda and warn Muslim youth to beware of his toxic theology.

We demand that Zakir Naik and all hate-mongers, irrespective of religion, be probed and prosecuted for promoting enmity between different religious groups.

Since the July 1 terror attack in Dhaka there have been several reports in the media that security agencies in India and Bangladesh are probing the possible role of Dr. Zakir Naik in aiding and abetting terrorist acts in Islam's name.

Whether the televangelist is guilty of complicity in terrorist activity or not can only be established through an unbiased, fair investigation. But of one thing there can be little doubt. Dr. Naik is no messenger of peace. Far from promoting peace, his 'Peace TV' promotes contempt, if not hatred, for other religions and its followers.

Dr. Naik's and his benefactors' agenda is simple: To uproot the centuries-old tolerant, vibrant tradition within Islam and replace it with the rigid, supremacist, intolerant, dry-as-the-desert Saudi-promoted Wahhabism/Salafism which is hostile not only towards other religions but even towards other Islamic traditions and schools of thought.

The brand of Islam that Dr Naik promotes does violence to the clear

Quranic command to Muslims not to ridicule the beliefs of others. Nearly a millennium ago the message which the highly regarded Sufi, Ibn Arabi gave to fellow Muslims was this: "Do not praise your own faith exclusively so that you disbelieve all the rest... God, the Omniscient and the Omnipresent, cannot be confined to any one creed".

Dr Naik's Islam is contrary to the Islam preached and practiced for centuries in our subcontinent by numerous Sufi saints, including Baba Farid, Hazrat Nizamuddin, Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti ('Gharib Nawaz'). His Wahhabi fulminations are an assault on Islam's tolerant tradition; seeks to destroy India's age-old tradition of unity within diversity, its syncretic culture (*Gunga-Jamuni tehzeeb*) and shared heritage (*saajhi virasat*).

The following examples of 'Naik speak' speak for themselves.

Contempt for other religions:

- Islam is the "only true religion", only Muslims have real knowledge in this subject. Therefore, "we" have the right not only to build mosques across the globe but also to prohibit "sinful" religious practices, disallow construction of churches or temples in Islamic countries.

- Accepting prasad after Ganesh Puja offered by a Hindu is haraam (forbidden, sinful) for a Muslim; so is wishing 'Merry Christmas' to a Christian.

- Pig is the only animal where the male indulges in 'wife-sharing'.

Those who eat pigs behave like pigs.

- In demolishing the historic Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan, the Taliban were "educating Buddhists". Lord Buddha never approved of statues.

A frightening flirtation with words: And at a time of global concern over spreading terror in the name of Islam, instead of warning his millions of followers in unambiguous words against extremism and terrorism he chooses to flirt with words.

- "Every Muslim should be a terrorist... for anti-social elements".

- "If he (Osama bin Laden) is fighting the enemies of Islam, I am for him... If he is terrorising America the terrorist, the biggest terrorist, he's following Islam."

Misogynist message: Zakir Naik sermonises that women who step out of their homes without being clad in a burqa have only themselves to blame for sexual violence.

Two pretty sisters are walking down the road. One is in a miniskirt or shorts, the other is fully covered in a burqa. Who do you think is asking for trouble?

Islam permits Muslim men to have sexual relations with their wives and slaves. But vice versa is not permitted. [And that's exactly what the ISIS is currently doing].

Death for a Muslim apostate: While Zakir Naik claims the right of Muslims to propagate Islam throughout the world, his prescription

(Continued from Page 13)

Castes in India: their mechanism, genesis and development -II

B. R. Ambedkar

This paper by Dr. Ambedkar was presented at an anthropology seminar taught by Dr. A. A. Goldenweizer at Columbia University on 9th May 1916 and was first published in Indian Antiquary Vo. XLI (May 1917)

[24] Imposing celibacy on the *surplus man* in the group, therefore, fails both theoretically and practically. It is in the interest of the Caste to keep him as a Grahastha (one who raises a family), to use a Sanskrit technical term. But the problem is to provide him with a wife from within the Caste. At the outset this is not possible, for the ruling ratio in a caste has to be one man to one woman and none can have two chances of marriage, for in a Caste thoroughly self-enclosed there are always just enough marriageable women to go round for the marriageable men. Under these circumstances the *surplus man* can be provided with a wife only by recruiting a bride from the ranks of those not yet marriageable in order to tie him down to the group. This is certainly the best of the possible solutions in the case of the *surplus man*. By this, he is kept within the Caste. By this means numerical depletion through constant outflow is guarded against, and by this endogamy and morals are preserved.

[25] It will now be seen that the four means by which numerical disparity between the two sexes is conveniently maintained are: (1) burning the widow with her deceased husband; (2) compulsory widowhood—a milder form of burning; (3) imposing celibacy on the

widower; and (4) wedding him to a girl not yet marriageable. Though, as I said above, burning the widow and imposing celibacy on the widower are of doubtful service to the group in its endeavour to preserve its endogamy, all of them operate as *means*. But means, as forces, when liberated or set in motion create an end. What then is the end that these means create? They create and perpetuate endogamy, while caste and endogamy, according to our analysis of the various definitions of caste, are one and the same thing. Thus the existence of these means is identical with caste and caste involves these means.

[26] This, in my opinion, is the general mechanism of a caste in a system of castes. Let us now turn from these high generalities to the castes in Hindu Society and inquire into their mechanism. I need hardly premise that there are a great many pitfalls in the path of those who try to unfold the past, and caste in India to be sure is a very ancient institution. This is especially true where there exist no authentic or written records or where the people, like the Hindus, are so constituted that to them writing history is a folly, for the world is an illusion. But institutions do live, though for a long time they may remain unrecorded and as often as

not customs and morals are like fossils that tell their own history. If this is true, our task will be amply rewarded if we scrutinize the solution the Hindus arrived at to meet the problems of the *surplus man* and *surplus woman*.

[27] Complex though it be in its general working the Hindu Society, even to a superficial observer, presents three singular uxorial customs, namely:

(i) *Sati* or the burning of the widow on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband.

(ii) Enforced widowhood by which a widow is not allowed to remarry.

(iii) Girl marriage.

In addition, one also notes a great hankering after *Sannyasa* (renunciation) on the part of the widower, but this may in some cases be due purely to psychic disposition.

[28] So far as I know, no scientific explanation of the origin of these customs is forthcoming even today. We have plenty of philosophy to tell us why these customs were honoured, but nothing to tell us the causes of their origin and existence. *Sati* has been honoured (Cf. A. K. Coomaraswamy, "*Sati*:"

A Defence of the Eastern Woman” in the **British Sociological Review**, Vol. VI, 1913) because it is a “proof of the perfect unity of body and soul” between husband and wife and of “devotion beyond the grave,” because it embodied the ideal of wifeness, which is well expressed by Uma when she said, “Devotion to her Lord is woman’s honour, it is her eternal heaven: and O Maheshvara,” she adds with a most touching human cry, “I desire not paradise itself if thou are not satisfied with me!” Why compulsory widowhood is honoured I know not, nor have I yet met with any one who sang in praise of it, though there are a great many who adhere to it. The eulogy in honour of girl marriage is reported by Dr. Ketkar to be as follows: “A really faithful man or woman ought not to feel affection for a woman or a man other than the one with whom he or she is united. Such purity is compulsory not only after marriage, but even before marriage, for that is the only correct ideal of chastity. No maiden could be considered pure if she feels love for a man other than the one to whom she might be married. As she does not know to whom she is going to be married, she must not feel affection, for any man at all before marriage. If she does so, it is a sin. So it is better for a girl to know whom she has to love before any sexual consciousness has been awakened in her” (**History of Caste in India**, 1909, pp. 2-33.). Hence girl marriage.

[29] This high-flown and ingenious sophistry indicates why these institutions were honoured, but does not tell us why they were practiced. My own interpretation is that they were honoured because they were practiced. Any one slightly acquainted with the rise of

individualism in the 18th century will appreciate my remark. At all times, it is the movement that is most important; and the philosophies grow around it long afterwards to justify it and give it a moral support. In like manner I urge that the very fact that these customs were so highly eulogized proves that they needed eulogy for their prevalence. Regarding the question as to why they arose, I submit that they were needed to create the structure of caste and the philosophies in honour of them were intended to popularise them, or to gild the pill, as we might say, for they must have been so abominable and shocking to the moral sense of the unsophisticated that they needed a great deal of sweetening. These customs are essentially of the nature of means, though they are represented as ideals. But this should not blind us from understanding the *results* that flow from them. One might safely say that idealization of means is necessary and in this particular case was perhaps motivated to endow them with greater efficacy. Calling a means an end does no harm, except that it disguises its real character; but it does not deprive it of its real nature, that of a means. You may pass a law that all cats are dogs, just as you can call a means an end. But you can no more change the nature of means thereby than you can turn cats into dogs; consequently I am justified in holding that, whether regarded as ends or as means, *Sati*, *enforced widowhood* and *girl marriage* are customs that were primarily intended to solve the problem of the *surplus man* and *surplus woman* in a caste and to maintain its endogamy. Strict endogamy could not be preserved without these customs, while caste without endogamy is a fake.

[30] Having explained the mechanism of the creation and preservation of Caste in India, the further question as to its genesis naturally arises. The question of origin is always an annoying question and in the study of Caste it is sadly neglected; some have connived at it, while others have dodged it. Some are puzzled as to whether there could be such a thing as the origin of caste and suggest that “if we cannot control our fondness for the word ‘origin,’ we should better use the plural form, viz. ‘origins of caste.’” As for myself I do not feel puzzled by the Origin of Caste in India for, as I have established before, endogamy is the only characteristic of Caste and when I say *Origin of Caste* I mean *The Origin of the Mechanism for Endogamy*.

[31] The atomistic conception of individuals in a Society so greatly popularised—I was about to say vulgarised—in political orations is the greatest humbug. To say that individuals make up society is trivial; society is always composed of classes. It may be an exaggeration to assert the theory of class-conflict, but the existence of definite classes in a society is a fact. Their basis may differ. They may be economic or intellectual or social, but an individual in a society is always a member of a class. This is a universal fact and early Hindu society could not have been an exception to this rule, and, as a matter of fact, we know it was not. If we bear this generalization in mind, our study of the genesis of caste would be very much facilitated, for we have only to determine what was the class that first made itself into a caste, for class and caste, so to say, are next door neighbours, and it is only a span that separates the two. A Caste is an Enclosed Class.

[32] The study of the origin of caste must furnish us with an answer to the question—what is the class that raised this “enclosure” around itself? The question may seem too inquisitorial, but it is pertinent, and an answer to this will serve us to elucidate the mystery of the growth and development of castes all over India. Unfortunately a direct answer to this question is not within my power. I can answer it only indirectly. I said just above that the customs in question were current in the Hindu society. To be true to facts it is necessary to qualify the statement, as it connotes universality of their prevalence. These customs in all their strictness are obtainable only in one caste, namely the Brahmins, who occupy the highest place in the social hierarchy of the Hindu society; and as their prevalence in non-Brahmin castes is derivative, their observance is neither strict nor complete. This important fact can serve as a basis of an important observation. If the prevalence of these customs in the non-Brahmin Castes is derivative, as can be shown very easily, then it needs no argument to prove what class is the father of the institution of caste. Why the Brahmin class should have enclosed itself into a caste is a different question, which may be left as an employment for another occasion. But the strict observance of these customs and the social superiority arrogated by the priestly class in all ancient civilizations are sufficient to prove that they were the originators of this “unnatural institution” founded and maintained through these unnatural means.

[33] I now come to the third part of my paper regarding the question of the growth and spread of the caste system all over India. The

question I have to answer is: How did the institution of caste spread among the rest of the non-Brahmin population of the country? The question of the spread of the castes all over India has suffered a worse fate than the question of genesis. And the main cause, as it seems to me, is that the two questions of spread and of origin are not separated. This is because of the common belief among scholars that the caste system has either been imposed upon the docile population of India by a law-giver as a divine dispensation, or that it has grown according to some law of social growth peculiar to the Indian people.

[34] I first propose to handle the law-giver of India. Every country has its law-giver, who arises as an incarnation (*avatar*) in times of emergency to set right a sinning humanity and give it the laws of justice and morality. Manu, the law-giver of India, if he did exist, was certainly an audacious person. If the story that he gave the law of caste be credited, then Manu must have been a dare-devil fellow and the humanity that accepted his dispensation must be a humanity quite different from the one we are acquainted with. It is unimaginable that the law of caste was given. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Manu could not have outlived his law, for what is that class that can submit to be degraded to the status of brutes by the pen of a man, and suffer him to raise another class to the pinnacle? Unless he was a tyrant who held all the population in subjection it cannot be imagined that he could have been allowed to dispense his patronage in this grossly unjust manner, as may be easily seen by a mere glance at his “Institutes.” I may seem hard on Manu, but I am sure my force is not strong enough

to kill his ghost. He lives like a disembodied spirit and is appealed to, and I am afraid will yet live long. One thing I want to impress upon you is that Manu did not give the law of Caste and that he could not do so. Caste existed long before Manu. He was an upholder of it and therefore philosophised about it, but certainly he did not and could not ordain the present order of Hindu Society. His work ended with the codification of existing caste rules and the preaching of Caste Dharma. The spread and growth of the Caste system is too gigantic a task to be achieved by the power or cunning of an individual or of a class. Similar in argument is the theory that the Brahmins created the Caste. After what I have said regarding Manu, I need hardly say anything more, except to point out that it is incorrect in thought and malicious in intent. The Brahmins may have been guilty of many things, and I dare say they were, but the imposing of the caste system on the non-Brahmin population was beyond their mettle. They may have helped the process by their glib philosophy, but they certainly could not have pushed their scheme beyond their own confines. To fashion society after one’s own pattern! How glorious! How hard! One can take pleasure and eulogize its furtherance; but cannot further it very far. The vehemence of my attack may seem to be unnecessary; but I can assure you that it is not uncalled for. There is a strong belief in the mind of orthodox Hindus that the Hindu Society was somehow moulded into the framework of the Caste System and that it is an organization consciously created by the *Shastras*. Not only does this belief exist, but it is being justified on the ground that it cannot but be good, because it is ordained by the *Shastras* and the *Shastras* cannot

be wrong. I have urged so much on the adverse side of this attitude, not because the religious sanctity is grounded on scientific basis, nor to help those reformers who are preaching against it. Preaching did not make the caste system; neither will it unmake it. My aim is to show the falsity of the attitude that has exalted religious sanction to the position of a scientific explanation.

[35] Thus the great man theory does not help us very far in solving the spread of castes in India. Western scholars, probably not much given to hero-worship, have attempted other explanations. The nuclei, round which have “formed” the various castes in India, are, according to them: (1) occupation; (2) survivals of tribal organization etc.; (3) the rise of new belief; (4) cross-breeding; and (5) migration.

[36] The question may be asked whether these nuclei do not exist in other societies and whether they are peculiar to India. If they are not peculiar to India, but are common to the world, why is it that they did not “form” caste on other parts of this planet? Is it because those parts are holier than the land of the *Vedas*, or that the professors are mistaken? I am afraid that the latter is the truth.

[37] In spite of the high theoretic value claimed by the several authors for their respective theories based on one or other of the above nuclei, one regrets to say that on close examination they are nothing more than filling illustrations—what Matthew Arnold means by “the grand name without the grand thing in it.” Such are the various theories of caste advanced by Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Mr. Nesfield, Mr. Senart and Sir H. Risley. To criticise them in a lump would be to say that they

are a disguised form of the *Petition Principii* of formal logic. To illustrate: Mr. Nesfield says that “function and function only. . . was the foundation upon which the whole system of Castes in India was built up.” But he may rightly be reminded that he does not very much advance our thought by making the above statement, which practically amounts to saying that castes in India are functional or occupational, which is a very poor discovery! We have yet to know from Mr. Nesfield why is it that an occupational group turned into an occupational caste? I would very cheerfully have undertaken the task of dwelling on the theories of other ethnologists, had it not been for the fact that Mr. Nesfield’s is a typical one.

[38] Without stopping to criticize those theories that explain the caste system as a natural phenomenon occurring in obedience to the law of disintegration, as explained by Herbert Spencer in his formula of evolution; or as natural as “the structural differentiation within an organism,” to employ the phraseology of orthodox apologists; or as an early attempt to test the laws of eugenics—as all belonging to the same class of fallacy which regards the caste system as inevitable, or as being consciously imposed in anticipation of these laws on a helpless and humble population, I will now lay before you my own view on the subject.

[39] We shall be well advised to recall at the outset that the Hindu society, in common with other societies, was composed of classes and the earliest known are (1) the Brahmins or the priestly class; (2) the Kshatriya, or the military class; (3) the Vaishya, or the merchant class; and (4) the Shudra, or the

artisan and menial class. Particular attention has to be paid to the fact that this was essentially a class system, in which individuals, when qualified, could change their class, and therefore classes did change their personnel. At some time in the history of the Hindus, the priestly class socially detached itself from the rest of the body of people and through a closed-door policy became a caste by itself. The other classes being subject to the law of social division of labour underwent differentiation, some into large, others into very minute, groups. The Vaishya and Shudra classes were the original inchoate plasm, which formed the sources of the numerous castes of today. As the military occupation does not very easily lend itself to very minute sub-division, the Kshatriya class could have differentiated into soldiers and administrators.

[40] This sub-division of a society is quite natural. But the unnatural thing about these sub-divisions is that they have lost the open-door character of the class system and have become self-enclosed units called castes. The question is: were they compelled to close their doors and become endogamous, or did they close them of their own accord? I submit that there is a double line of answer: *Some closed the door: Others found it closed against them.* The one is a psychological interpretation and the other is mechanistic, but they are complementary and both are necessary to explain the phenomena of caste-formation in its entirety.

[41] I will first take up the psychological interpretation. The question we have to answer in this connection is: Why did these sub-divisions or classes, if you please,

industrial, religious or otherwise, become self-enclosed or endogamous? My answer is because the Brahmins were so. Endogamy or the closed-door system was a fashion in the Hindu society, and as it had originated from the Brahmin caste it was whole-heartedly imitated by all the non-Brahmin sub-divisions or classes, who, in their turn, became endogamous castes. It is “the infection of imitation” that caught all these sub-divisions on their onward march of differentiation and has turned them into castes. The propensity to imitate is a deep-seated one in the human mind and need not be deemed an inadequate explanation for the formation of the various castes in India. It is so deep-seated that Walter Bagehot argues that, “We must not think of . . . imitation as voluntary, or even conscious. On the contrary it has its seat mainly in very obscure parts of the mind, whose notions, so far from being consciously produced, are hardly felt to exist; so far from being conceived beforehand, are not even felt at the time. The main seat of the imitative part of our nature is our belief, and the causes predisposing us to believe this or disinclining us to believe that are among the obscurest parts of our nature. But as to the imitative nature of credulity there can be no doubt” (*Physics and Politics*, 1915, p. 60). This propensity to imitate has been made the subject of a scientific study by Gabriel Tarde, who lays down three laws of imitation. One of his three laws is that imitation flows from the higher to the lower or, to quote his own words, “Given the opportunity, a nobility will always and everywhere imitate its leaders, its kings or sovereigns, and the people likewise, given the opportunity, its nobility” (*Laws of Imitation*, tr. by E. C. Parsons, 2nd edition, p. 217).

Another of Tarde’s laws of imitation is: that the extent or intensity of imitation varies inversely in proportion to distance, or in his own words “The thing that is most imitated is the most superior one of those that are nearest. In fact, the influence of the model’s example is efficacious inversely to its distance as well as directly to its superiority. Distance is understood here in its sociological meaning. However distant in space a stranger may be, he is close by, from this point of view, if we have numerous and daily relations with him and if we have every facility to satisfy our desire to imitate him. This law of the imitation of the nearest, of the least distant, explains the gradual and consecutive character of the spread of an example that has been set by the higher social ranks” (*Ibid.*, p. 224).

[42] In order to prove my thesis—which really needs no proof—that some castes were formed by imitation, the best way, it seems to me, is to find out whether or not the vital conditions for the formation of castes by imitation exist in the Hindu Society. The conditions for imitation, according to this standard authority are: (1) that the source of imitation must enjoy prestige in the group and (2) that there must be “numerous and daily relations” among members of a group. That these conditions were present in India there is little reason to doubt. The Brahmin is a semi-god and very nearly a demi-god. He sets up a mode and moulds the rest. His prestige is unquestionable and is the fountain-head of bliss and good. Can such a being, idolised by scriptures and venerated by the priest-ridden multitude, fail to project his personality on the suppliant humanity? Why, if the story be true, he is believed to be the very end of creation. Such a creature is worthy

of more than mere imitation, but at least of imitation; and if he lives in an endogamous enclosure, should not the rest follow his example? Frail humanity! Be it embodied in a grave philosopher or a frivolous housemaid, it succumbs. It cannot be otherwise. Imitation is easy and invention is difficult.

[43] Yet another way of demonstrating the play of imitation in the formation of castes is to understand the attitude of non-Brahmin classes towards those customs which supported the structure of caste in its nascent days until, in the course of history, it became embedded in the Hindu mind and hangs there to this day without any support—for now it needs no prop but belief—like a weed on the surface of a pond. In a way, but only in a way, the status of a caste in the Hindu Society varies directly with the extent of the observance of the customs of *Sati*, enforced widowhood, and girl marriage. But observance of these customs varies directly with the distance (I am using the word in the Tardian sense) that separates the caste. Those castes that are nearest to the Brahmins have imitated all the three customs and insist on the strict observance thereof. Those that are less near have imitated enforced widowhood and girl marriage; others, a little further off, have only girl marriage; and those furthest off have imitated only the belief in the caste principle. This imperfect imitation, I dare say, is due partly to what Tarde calls “distance” and partly to the barbarous character of these customs. This phenomenon is a complete illustration of Tarde’s law and leaves no doubt that the whole process of caste-formation in India is a process of imitation of the higher by the lower. At this juncture I will turn back to support a former

conclusion of mine, which might have appeared to you as too sudden or unsupported. I said that the Brahmin class first raised the structure of caste by the help of those three customs in question. My reason for that conclusion was that their existence in other classes was derivative. After what I have said regarding the role of imitation in the spread of these customs among the non-Brahmin castes, as means or as ideals, though the imitators have not been aware of it, they exist among them as derivatives; and, if they are derived, there must have been prevalent one original caste that was high enough to have served as a pattern for the rest. But in a theocratic society, who could be the pattern but the servant of God?

[44] This completes the story of those that were weak enough to close their doors. Let us now see how others were closed in as a result of being closed out. This I call the mechanistic process of the formation of caste. It is mechanistic because it is inevitable. That this line of approach, as well as the psychological one, to the explanation of the subject has escaped my predecessors is entirely due to the fact that they have conceived caste as a unit by itself and not as one within a System of Caste. The result of this oversight or lack of sight has been very detrimental to the proper understanding of the subject matter and therefore its correct explanation. I will proceed to offer my own explanation by making one remark which I will urge you to bear constantly in mind. It is this : that *caste in the singular number is an unreality. Castes exist only in the plural number.* There is no such thing as a caste: There are always castes. To illustrate my meaning: while making themselves

into a caste, the Brahmins, by virtue of this, created non-Brahmin caste; or, to express it in my own way, while closing themselves in they closed others out. I will clear my point by taking another illustration. Take India as a whole with its various communities designated by the various creeds to which they owe allegiance, to wit, the Hindus, Mohammedans, Jews, Christians and Parsis. Now, barring the Hindus, the rest within themselves are non-caste communities. But with respect to each other they are castes. Again, if the first four enclose themselves, the Parsis are directly closed out, but are indirectly closed in. Symbolically, if Group A wants to be endogamous, Group B has to be so by sheer force of circumstances.

[45] Now apply the same logic to the Hindu society and you have another explanation of the “fissiparous” character of caste, as a consequence of the virtue of self-duplication that is inherent in it. Any innovation that seriously antagonises the ethical, religious and social code of the Caste is not likely to be tolerated by the Caste, and the recalcitrant members of a Caste are in danger of being thrown out of the Caste, and left to their own fate without having the alternative of being admitted into or absorbed by other Castes. Caste rules are inexorable and they do not wait to make nice distinctions between kinds of offence. Innovation may be of any kind, but all kinds will suffer the same penalty. A novel way of thinking will create a new Caste for the old ones will not tolerate it. The noxious thinker respectfully called Guru (Prophet) suffers the same fate as the sinners in illegitimate love. The former creates a caste of the nature of a religious sect and the latter a type of mixed caste. Castes

have no mercy for a sinner who has the courage to violate the code. The penalty is excommunication and the result is a new caste. It is not peculiar Hindu psychology that induces the excommunicated to form themselves into a caste; far from it. On the contrary, very often they have been quite willing to be humble members of some caste (higher by preference) if they could be admitted within its fold. But castes are enclosed units and it is their conspiracy with clear conscience that compels the excommunicated to make themselves into a caste. The logic of this obdurate circumstance is merciless, and it is in obedience to its force that some unfortunate groups find themselves enclosed, because others in enclosing themselves have closed them out, with the result that new groups (formed on any basis obnoxious to the caste rules) by a mechanical law are constantly being converted into castes to a bewildering multiplicity. Thus is told the second tale in the process of Caste formation in India.

[46] Now to summarise the main points of my thesis. In my opinion there have been several mistakes committed by the students of Caste, which have misled them in their investigations. European students of Caste have unduly emphasised the role of colour in the Caste system. Themselves impregnated by colour prejudices, they very readily imagined it to be the chief factor in the Caste problem. But nothing can be farther from the truth, and Dr. Ketkar is correct when he insists that “All the princes whether they belonged to the so-called Aryan race, or the so-called Dravidian race, were Aryas. Whether a tribe or a family was racially Aryan or Dravidian was a question which never troubled the people of India,

until foreign scholars came in and began to draw the line. The colour of the skin had long ceased to be a matter of importance” (*History of Caste*, p. 82). Again, they have mistaken mere descriptions for explanation and fought over them as though they were theories of origin. There are occupational, religious etc., castes, it is true, but it is by no means an explanation of the origin of Caste. We have yet to find out why occupational groups are castes; but this question has never even been raised. Lastly they have taken Caste very lightly as though a breath had made it. On the contrary. Caste, as I have explained it, is almost impossible to be sustained: for the difficulties that it involves are tremendous. It is true that Caste rests on belief, but before belief comes to be the foundation of an institution, the institution itself needs to be perpetuated and fortified. My study of the Caste problem involves four main points: (1) that in spite of the composite make-up of the Hindu population, there is a deep cultural unity; (2) that caste is a parcelling into bits of a larger cultural unit; (3) that there was one caste to start with; and (4) that classes have become Castes through imitation and excommunication.

[47] Peculiar interest attaches to the problem of Caste in India today; as persistent attempts are being made to do away with this unnatural institution. Such attempts at reform, however, have aroused a great deal of controversy regarding its origin, as to whether it is due to the conscious command of a Supreme Authority, or is an unconscious growth in the life of a human society under peculiar circumstances. Those who hold the latter view will, I hope, find some food for thought in the standpoint adopted in this paper.

Apart from its practical importance the subject of Caste is an all-absorbing problem and the interest aroused in me regarding its theoretic foundations has moved me to put before you some of the conclusions which seem to me well founded, and the grounds upon which they may be supported. I am not, however, so presumptuous as to think them in any way final, or anything more than a contribution to a discussion of the subject. It seems to me that the car has been shunted on wrong lines, and the primary object of the paper is to indicate what I regard to be the right path of investigation, with a view to

(Continued on Page 6)

for any Muslim who opts of Islam and preaches his new faith is death. His explanation: apostasy is the same as treason.

The most disturbing thing about Dr Zakir Naik and his ‘Peace TV’ is that his supremacist, exclusionary, divisive message is being lapped up by millions of gullible young Muslims well-educated in worldly subjects but with little grounding in Islam and the tolerant traditions within it.

The last thing that Indian Muslims – who are already victims of prejudice, discrimination, Islamophobia, recurring communal violence – need are the teachings of Zakir Naik. Instead of promoting communal harmony he and his ‘Peace TV’ have been promoting communal discord.

We appeal to all peace-loving Indians in general and Muslims in particular to expose Zakir Naik’s real agenda and warn Muslim youth to beware of his toxic theology.

We demand that Zakir Naik and all other hate-mongers be probed

arrive at a serviceable truth. We must, however, guard against approaching the subject with a bias. Sentiment must be outlawed from the domain of science and things should be judged from an objective standpoint. For myself I shall find as much pleasure in a positive destruction of my own ideology, as in a rational disagreement on a topic, which, notwithstanding many learned disquisitions, is likely to remain controversial forever. To conclude, while I am ambitious to advance a Theory of Caste, if it can be shown to be untenable I shall be equally willing to give it up.

and prosecuted for promoting enmity between different religious groups (Section 153-A of IPC).

Lastly, we appreciate Prime Minister Modi’s belated statement, “Preachers of hate and violence are threatening our society.” While making this statement we hope that the prime minister had not only Dr Zakir Naik in mind but also some ministers and MPs of his own party and the numerous leaders from his sangh parivar.

–Javed Anand and others

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Justifying crime, order of the day

Valson Thampu

It's true. Nothing afflicts us, except the ghost of our omissions and commissions. We are tormented today by the demons we let loose yesterday. This is a hoary truth. It is there in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

It is there in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in which the eponymous hero realises, too late in the day, that the evil returns to plague its inventor. It is there in our ancient wisdom that the consequences of a person's evil deeds will plague his stock for generations. It is embedded in the doctrine of karma, with its inexorable transmission of karmic debt across births.

All this notwithstanding, we continue to pretend that we are victims of forces external to us. As flies to wanton boys, wrote Aeschylus, we are to the gods; they kill us for their sport. In the language of the common man, this delusion underlies the question, "Why me?"

The scariest thing is not that hideous acts of crime that erupt from time to time. It is that the moral discernment, the sense and sensitivity, to see crime as crime has all but vanished. Is unleashing large scale communal violence to win elections a crime? We call it strategy. Is corporate greed poisoning millions of people to slow death a crime?

No, better call it a sliver of corporate shrewdness. Is choking the spirit of a nation through mega scams, a crime? No, it's "system failure." Such loot is not real, we are told. It's only 'notional.' Is living

obscenely wasteful lives in full view of a starving, impoverished people, a crime and an insult? No, it's "India shining".

Stealing kidneys from unsuspecting patients and trucking the harvest into the megabucks organ bazaar. Is it a crime? No, it is only a stray lapse in medical ethics. When thousands of crores of rupees disappear overnight from nationalised banks, is it crime? No, it is a mystic process of creating "non-performing assets". In an incomprehensible way, our assets, though non-performing, are increasing!

Let's face it. We are infecting every particle of life with crime. This is done by those who enjoy prestige and public visibility: the 'opinion makers'. What has done maximum harm to our society in the recent years are the nationally televised news hour programmes in which party spokespersons are given an eternity of time and unfettered licence to justify the unthinkable and the abominable.

No one minds that this has the effect of socialising, legitimising and valourising crime. The BJP justifies its corruption by alleging the Congress to have been equally corrupt. The Congress returns the compliment. All other parties too are corrupt. The message that goes out to the common man is, corruption and crime are the norm. The proviso is that you can enjoy immunity only if you are in power.

We must call these party retainers, 'social climate-changers.' Like in the environmental climate change scenario, they are the unscrupulous agents of 'social warming,' who degrade our human 'environment'.

The alarming rise of crime - and its metastasis through the body-politic - is a function of this human degradation and 'social warning.' Our society today is much like the grisly Uttarakhand forests, lacking just a spark to go up in flames.

Forest fires kill. They kill the vulnerable. Those who degrade the environment and suck the last drop of moral sap from the social trunk, remain secure at a distance; whereas the Nirbhayas, the Jishas and the thousands in similar segments of vulnerability, pay with their life.

We shall not make any progress in shackling the wild beast of crime so long as we stay in denial of this reality. Legislation of more draconian laws cannot help or heal our society. It is like trying to eradicate malaria by legislating that no patient shall betray symptoms of malaria, like chill and rigor. The thing to do is to prevent the proliferation of mosquitos.

The underprivileged emulate the ways of the privileged who seem to be licensed to get away with murder. Remember, for example, the Uttarakhand MLA who broke the leg of Shaktiman, with a lathi, snatched from a policeman on duty? Nayak and khalnayak merge into one under the proscenium of power.

Amitabh Bachchan became “Big B” - a larger than life character - by splashing on the silver screen with unattached thespian skills, the lurid colours of rebellion, offering vicarious fulfilment to the masses. For the underling, to rebel is to behave like the privileged. It is to break one’s

Zanjeer and to overleap the Deewar, as the young Bachchan did.

This could happen, half a century ago, only in the akhara of art. It is this that has now changed. And it is scary. Crime has been democratised. It is on parole and now

at large in the social jungle. This social equalisation of crime should spike a chill through our souls. In all of this, let us not forget that those we deprecate today for their depravity are not the ones who let the genie out of the bottle, in the first place.

RBI's wrong advise

RBI wrongly advises banks to submit data of defaulting borrowers to Credit Information Companies rather than to RBI.

It refers to shocking response from Reserve Bank of India (RBI) revealing that RBI has advised banks/financial-institutions to submit data regarding defaulting borrowers to Credit Information Companies (CICs) and not to RBI from December 2014 onwards.

RBI-step is neither justified nor proper. It is significant to note that it has not so far complied with Supreme Court verdict dated 16.12.2015 in the matter ‘RBI vs PP Kapoor’ (Civil 94 of 2015) where RBI has not so far made public details of default in loans taken from public sector banks by industrialists, out of the list of defaulters, top 100 defaulters, names of the businessmen, firm name, principal amount, interest amount, date of default and date of availing the loan etc. RBI is rather duty-bound in larger national and public interest for getting information about loan-defaulters from banks to make it public under ‘name and shame’ policy to have an effective check on increasing loan-defaults. Banks should also be directed to put such lists on their respective websites.

Considering lots of irregularities in mode of having database of loan-seekers, it is highly improper for RBI

to encourage banks/financial-institutions to evade ‘Right of Privacy’ of loan-seekers by sharing their details (often incorrect) with Credit Information Companies (CICs) which usually form database of loan-seekers on basis of wrong-doings of Direct Sales Associates (DSAs) which lodge loan-applications with too many banks and NBFCs without knowledge of loan-takers, thus adversely affecting credit-ratings of loan-seekers.

Since credit-rating of any person/body is personal information, CICs should rather give a royalty to them on income generated by CICs on sharing their information, apart from providing copy free-of-cost to credit-rated ones. It will make credit-rated persons file corrections if so needed. Union government has also reason to intervene because even public-sector banks rely on credit-ratings provided by CICs, as also advised by RBI.

–Subhash Chandra Agrawal

After Karpoori Thakur’s successful period as Chief Minister, there was a ghastly murderous happening at Arawal in 1985. I had retired by December, 1985 Karpoori Ji asked Tarkunde Ji (PUCL leader) to ask me to come to Patna to hold an enquiry. My committee’s other member was General Sinha, I was so embarrassed when I landed at Patna to find Karpoori Ji personally there. I remonstrated with him that he has been and now again was my leader and he should not have come to the aerodrome.

But more important was that before finalizing our report I told Karpoori Ji that I would like to meet Director General Police and one or two others high officers to enquire about certain vital facts concerning the enquiry, and that he may fix my appointment with those officers and I will go to their office to meet them. But Karpoori confidently said that they will come to meet me at the guest house where I was staying. The next day those officers came the guest house – this showed the respect he enjoyed amongst public that the officers (notwithstanding that there was another government) their respect for him was continuing.

–Rajindar Sachar

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**Land Reforms Should be
Integral Part of Agricultural
Development**

Bharat Dogra

**Is Superstition Limited to
Hindus?**

K. S. Chalam

**A World Gripped by the
Cancer of Terror**

Ram Puniyani

**How Exactly Does the Indian
Media Define a Terrorist?**

Shoab Daniyal

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Let's Await Court's Ruling

Kuldip Nayar

There is a vast difference between perception and evidence. When Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi says that the RSS is responsible for the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, he is conveying the general perception. In fact, the then Home Minister Sardar Patel imposed a ban on the RSS which he withdrew when the organization gave in writing that it was only a cultural outfit. However, the perception has remained till today. The BJP, which is said to be a political wing of the RSS, has always denied the charge. But there is no clinching evidence either with the BJP elements or those opposed to it..

When the party was in power at the Centre—they ruled for more than 50 years—it could have published the intelligence reports or some other documents to suggest that the assassination was the doing of the RSS. Nor did the BJP, when it was in power, could release anything which would remove the charge once and for all.

What Rahul Gandhi has said was the perception prevailing throughout

the country and abroad even today. At that time the RSS elements were on the defensive and generally preferred to keep quiet. This only confirmed the perception that the Mahatma was killed by Nathuram Godse, a fanatic Hindu.

I was working with an Urdu newspaper, *Anjaam*, then. We were all sitting at the office when the PTI teleprinter machine's bell alerted for a flash. We rushed to the machine and the cryptic message was: Gandhi shot at! I wasted no time and went straight to the Birla House on my scooter. My office was situated near Jamma Masjid and I rode through Darya Ganj area. The locality was calm and oblivious to the great tragedy.

There was a wooden gate at Birla House and there was no security to stop any visitor. I went to the raised platform where Gandhi's body, swathed in white khadi, was lying. Lord Mountbatten, the last British Viceroy, came after I had reached the venue. He saluted the body; both Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Home Minister Patel, who followed him in the queue, were

openly crying. The crowd had started swelling by then.

The assassin, Godse, who did not escape was still there and surprisingly without any remorse. The Raj Path through which the cartage was carried, with Nehru and Patel sitting on either side, to what is today called the Rajghat. Ironically, Gandhi who had spread the new philosophy of non-violence to the world was taken for his last rites in a military vehicle which the Mahatma would not have liked.

Rahul Gandhi was not even born then. But he had the privilege of being a scion of the family which gave its all to the national struggle. He has every right to find fault with the RSS and he is not a third party to the entire episode of courage and sacrifice. The entire conspiracy to kill the Mahatma has been placed before the public, though bit by bit. And there is no doubt that the RSS elements were behind it.

In a letter addressed to jailor Arjun Das at Ambala, where he was detained, Godse confessed his hand and had argued that the Congress leaders at that time were weakening the country, making it an easy prey for Pakistan. This was a flimsy argument which did not go down well with the public when the letter was ultimately released.

The dust of time has covered many a footstep and it is very difficult to find out today who else at the Nagpur headquarters of the RSS had blessed the heinous crime. This was probably the first crime committed in the name of ideology. Things have, however,

(Continued on Page 3)

Land Reforms Should be Integral Part of Agricultural Development

Bharat Dogra

One of the most unfortunate aspects of agricultural policy in recent times has been that land reforms have been almost entirely ignored and marginalized. Although no formal announcement has been made to this effect but for all practical purposes it is clear that the largely unfinished agenda of land reforms is now being given up almost entirely. This is highly regrettable as land reforms are not only an essential component of any agricultural development agenda based on justice and equality but in addition land reforms are also necessary for creating conditions in which the full productive potential of the most hard working sections of the peasantry can be properly realized.

Summarising the experience of the most important component of land reforms in India a former distinguished Secretary of Rural Development in the Government of India S. R. Sankaran wrote, " ... the efforts of the central and state governments to enact, revise and implement the ceiling laws, spread over 35 years, resulted in the redistribution of only 1.25 per cent of the operational area."

This seniormost official of rural development then went on to make a comparison with some other countries which had achieved good progress in agriculture. He wrote, " ... the extent of land redistributed was 43 per cent of agricultural land in China, 37 per cent in Taiwan, 32

per cent in South Korea and 33 per cent in Japan."

Thus it is clear that many countries which recorded very significant increase in agricultural production and productivity had first implemented land reforms on a significant scale and secondly, it is equally clear that the land reform efforts in India have been very inadequate. It follows that more and stronger efforts in this direction would have been good not just for justice but also for increasing production and productivity; but this has been ignored.

Instead it has been propagated falsely that when landless poor have been given land they have not used it productively. On the contrary this writer has met several beneficiaries of land distribution efforts who worked very hard and with great creativity to obtain good harvests even from the low quality land they were reluctantly given in some villages. In other villages more powerful landowners put several obstacles in their ability to cultivate the allotted land and spread the canard that these people just don't want to work. The more general experience has been that wherever supportive conditions have been provided including some support to improve almost uncultivable land and to provide some protective irrigation new land allottees have given very good results.

The International Labour Organisation estimated in a series of studies that equal distribution of land has the potential of increasing food output by 10 per cent in Pakistan, 28 per cent in Colombia and 80 per cent in north-eastern Brazil. The fact that small farms are more productive than large farms has been confirmed by even the World Bank for Argentina, Brazil, Thailand and some other countries. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations said more specifically in the context of India, "Redistribution of only 5% of farmland in India, coupled with improved access to water, could reduce rural poverty levels by 30% under what they would be, so that in Indian conditions land and water reform would be a key approach. "

Thus several studies confirm the positive contribution that land reforms can make to both increasing farm production and reducing rural poverty. When food production increases on the fields of the poorest sections then clearly there are higher chances of reducing hunger and malnutrition while improving food security. The chances of organic and eco-friendly agriculture also improve with land reforms as poorer farmers keen to use low cost methods and at the same time willing to contribute more manual labour make important improvements in composting and other related technologies based on making more productive use of local natural resources. Enthusiastic first generation farmers who are cultivating their own land for the first time are likely to contribute with a lot of vigour to repair and improvement of existing irrigation sources as well to the emergence of new sources near

their fields. The new land allottees can be the front rank contributors to a programme of environment regeneration which also enhances the productivity of their newly acquired land and includes better soil and water conservation as well improved irrigation and drainage.

In addition more equal land distribution has the potential of creating more stable rural communities compared to a situation where a large number of people

(Continued from Page 2)

changed now because the atmosphere has been politicized and there are very few voices left, whose credibility is beyond reproach. The RSS is still riding the high horse and refusing to join issue.

The fact that the matter has been given to the party spokesman to handle shows that the Congress is already making preparations for diluting its stand. If it does so, the party would lose the face, more so Rahul Gandhi, who is being projected to lead the party in the next Lok Sabha elections. This is a tough case before the Supreme Court because it is going to be damned if its verdict goes either in favour of the Congress or the RSS.

What saddens one is that the secular forces in the country are not marshalling their strength to face the biggest challenge to the idea of India, democratic and anti-communal. The struggle for independence was for the ethos of pluralism and egalitarianism. Once Gandhi was portrayed as a non-violent communist and he did not take any offence to the comment, although the communists had

remain without any land. Communities based on equality and justice are inherently more sustainable in the longer term although there may be some disruption for some time which can be handled with proper governance skills. Communities based on equality and justice are also inherently more capable of working together for protection of environment, regeneration of pastures and forests and other important constructive tasks beneficial to the entire community.

described him as a running dog of imperialism. The communists should make amends for their mistakes and hang the picture the Mahatma at their headquarters in Kolkata.

My advice to the RSS and BJP is the same. Gandhi is an apostle of the marginalized and the backward. He represented the national struggle and India's emancipation from the British. This is the point on which all the political parties meet and they should have no hesitation in collectively recognizing the fact that Gandhi rolled up the 150 years of foreign rule.

As for the allegations of Rahul Gandhi, the Supreme Court has taken note of them. In the wake of the court hearing, many skeletons may tumble out of the closet. Now that the Congress vice-president has refused to apologize—one can only hope that he will stick to his statement—the fat is on fire and the public may see an ideological warfare in the court itself. Rahul Gandhi is either made or marred.

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Is Superstition Limited to Hindus?

K. S. Chalam

Karnataka state is in the news once again for all the wrong reasons - this time for differing on the proposed anti-superstition bill. Karnataka is perhaps one of the few states in the country, may be a lone region that has been championing the cause of reason and rationality not only during the modern period, but also for the last more than a millennium in this part of the country. The revolt initiated by Basava, a traditional Brahmin, against the inhuman and barbarous practices, particularly in relation to caste and the solution provided by him against the caste prejudices had eventually ended with him to vanish in oblivion or might have been butchered by the sanatana dharma purveyors. Therefore, one need not be surprised to learn that the conflict between orthodox barbarians and followers of reason in the present Karnataka in the episodes of Kalburgi, Dabolkar, Pansare are not new. In fact the intellectual influence of the present state of Karnataka was not confined to its present boundaries, it had a wide spectrum of whole of the South including the Deccan (Maharashtra). Therefore, the entire country is looking for a solution to come out of superstitions through the proposed bill, though there are states that passed acts against superstition to show off that they are modern, but encourage myths in practice. Dr Narasimhaiah and several others in Karnataka have laid the foundation for the present bill.

The Siddaramaiah Cabinet discussed, “Karnataka Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifices and other Inhuman Evil and Aghori

Practices and Black Magic Bill, 2016”, in detail and it seems no consensus was reached due to difference of opinion on certain practices. The discussion in the cabinet should have been made public to initiate a debate in the country on an important national issue that involves the prospects of our ethos and the constitutional provision to promote scientific temper. I am told that there are several reasonable individuals even in the Hindu Parivar who could support this if a public debate is organised. In fact, the issue is so porous that the debate within the cabinet and in informal circles was perhaps confined to the practices that are by tradition related to the lower castes while the practices of the upper castes, sanskritised sudras, the converted elite are not touched at all. I think this is the crux of the problem of not being able to arrive at a consensus on defining what is superstition?

The Western or occidental reasoning is different from Oriental orientation. I have come across a recent study on the differences between these two systems of reasoning in mathematics, the simple approach for scientific reasoning, and the authors classified the two systems briefly as follows:

Occidental Reasoning

1. 1200 algebra: no formalisation
2. Paradigm of geometry, Equations
3. Aprioristic formulas that hide the processes, favouring, with the result, determinism

- 4 Reductio ad absurdum in a potential infinite

Oriental Reasoning

1. 200 B.C. algebra: no formalisation
2. Positional system, matrices (system of the rods)
3. Solving equations by means of algebraic manipulations with the strategies: i) making equals, ii) making homogeneous, iii) research for fundamental algorithms.
4. Existing infinity of operations

The basic point is that “the aspirations of ancient Greek tradition represented by Euclid, which proposed deducing all mathematics from a single set of indemonstrable but evident axioms, were not shared by the Chinese at least until the modern age. In China, as a matter of fact, the goal was not axiomatic-deductive demonstration, but gathering unifying principles from all of mathematics.” Though the article is related to comparison of Greek and Chinese traditions to represent Occidental or Western, and Oriental or Asian, the Chinese example is to a large extent true in the case of India. We had a tradition of materialism not only in the so-called Lokayata or Charvaka schools of Brahminical thought, but the doctrines of Ajivikas who were the pre-Jain-Buddhist sects (see A. L. Basham) that had deep roots in the native Indian epistemology. The native Indian episteme was different from the alien or Aryan. In fact the

alien practices were rooted in the Sumerian soil and had a direct influence on the pre-Abrahamic and Brahmic (Vedic) religious pantheon that carry some remote memories in the epics. That is why it is said that Christianity had a hidden Vedanta and Hindu and Islamic faiths had in common several heretical practices. The Hindu bug on the net in recent times produces blogs to show that Islam and Christianity had derived their theology from Vedas. In a way they are arriving at the idea of Vasudhaivakutumbakam to justify their hegemony. This is fabulous. Then why is it that the practices of the lower castes alone are subjected to scrutiny and the beliefs, traditions and customs, while old callous dogmas of the elite are either respected or preserved?

Interestingly, very few of the modern rationalist or western (including Christian rationalists) new atheist thinkers including a section of the dialectical materialists never looked at the literature produced by great scholars like D. P. Chattopadhyay, N. N. Bhattacharya, A. L. Basham - to name few. Nevertheless, the literary interpretations of D. D. Kosambi did not enhance our understanding of the continuous existence of cults of lower classes. In a way the present trend demonstrates the alleged presence of the kind of discrimination and deceit against the native traditions even in the intellectual exercises of modern India. All of us who are trained in the traditions of "rational man" are guilty of neglecting this very important and foundational tradition of India. Now, the debate on the Karnataka superstition bill has opened a new vista into the cosmos of life and living conditions of the poor and the wretched of India.

It is very easy to dismiss the cult practices of the lower castes as "sigh of the oppressed". But, they have been in existence since much before the emergence of pre-class society and are being used as identity, though the core of it was appropriated by the Brahminical or Sanskritised Hinduism and are being treated with respect. Similarly the Abrahamic and Brahmic (Vedic) faiths have several beliefs that are common and touted as spiritual as long as they are practiced by the elite. The Christian missionaries in their strategy to attract the lower castes deliberated and found that the lower castes have certain strong beliefs that should be made blasphemous and superstitious so that the space created can be filled with Jesus (see Henry Whitehead). They have started belittling the traditional practices of the untouchables as superstition and persuaded some of them to convert. The Hindu, Muslim and other alien faiths have never resisted the treachery. In fact they are together in denouncing the Native Indian traditions. The practice, it is reported is still prevalent in Andhra Pradesh and it is alleged that majority of the SCs and some artisans are converted and the dalit leadership lament that the masses are not available for any social movement, except their leaders. In the Muslim dominated Kerala districts, the belief/propaganda that vaccines are essentially *haram* took away the life of Mohammad Afzaz(14) who was not allowed the administration of vaccine for diphtheria, is being reported in the media as victim of superstition today. The so-called godless Dravidian movement seems to be in distress in this respect.

Interestingly, the so-called rational missionaries including those

intellectuals who are critical about other faiths do not look at the superstitions like no. 13, wine as blood of Jesus, faith healing, remarriage, contraceptives, beliefs in devils, Satan, etc. The Muslims do also believe in the same practices as that of Christians and have their superstitions about certain numbers, black cat, biting nails, glass breaking as good omen, owl as bad (some may be typical to India) etc. We may also find comparable beliefs among the Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs and others. In fact all the faiths including Brahminical Hinduism believe in horoscopes, date of birth, paying huge money as zakat/donation to places of worship, etc. Not all customs of the alien faiths are unscrupulous and superstitious; some are institutionalised for the betterment of the society. The point is that there are several such practices among the lower castes that were used in the past as norms and practices of a traditional society at its primitive stage or proto-scientific stage have remained with them as residuals as the believers were considered as untouchables. The Pambalas of Telangana is a classic example: how their attire, living conditions, etc, have remained the same from the time of Tantrism till to date.

The mainstream society never looked at the customs of the locals with understanding except smuggling some that are used for therapeutic practices in the name of Ayurveda, Yunani, etc. A few years ago there was huge hue and cry reportedly by the so-called Brahminical professors against the method used by a lower caste person called Ramar Pillai in Tamil Nadu, who claimed to have produced petrol from leaves. As he was subjected to several elite tests which he never knew, it was alleged

that the gentleman resorted to all kinds of tricks to prove it and we all have forgotten about it by now. But, the mainstream scientists have drawn massive grants to experiment with *Jatropha* plant as an alternative source of petrol. The point here is that the kind of traditional practices including some of the belief systems based on the living conditions of the lower castes were never studied scientifically and rationally to weed the grass from grain. Now after the advent of the ICT and media, we are now watching in almost all the channels whether religious or secular, telling us about the rationale behind the so-called upper caste or elite beliefs. A separate social class and huge infrastructure and trillions of rupees are behind such arrangements. It does not mean that we should use the so-called post-modernist, instrumental rationality to justify all nonsense. Instrumental rationality is often seen as a specific form of rationality using reason as a tool, focusing on the most efficient or cost-effective means to achieve a specific end, but not in itself reflecting on the value of that end. Horkheimer argues that instrumental rationality plays a key role in the oppressive industrial culture of capitalism as it doesn't bother about the evil effects or negative impact on society. I am not saying here that some of those who are critical about the superstitions are subjecting the practices of the lower castes with instrumental rationality, but I feel that we should look at the practices pragmatically within the social and historical background of India. Otherwise, it would amount to another kind of discrimination and disgrace meted out to the socially disadvantaged, if only the Aghori and other practices of the lower castes are critiqued while astrology, palmistry, numerology, etc practiced

by the Brahmin or elite in the places of worship are touted as rational or core of the faith. This is simply double standard or mockery. (*This is only*

to open a debate on the topic, the note is sent despite some infirmities on references.)

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A World Gripped by the Cancer of Terror

Ram Puniyani

The current times are very disturbing as so many innocent lives are being lost and social resources being destroyed due to the dastardly phenomenon of terror. To cap it all, this phenomenon has been linked to religion in the popular perception. Just during last two weeks (July 2016) we witnessed with horror the massacre of 49 people at the Pulse club in Orlando, US. This deadly incident had two interpretations, one that it is an act of Jihadi terror and two it was prompted by a man gripped by homophobia. One of the commentators pointed out, "It turns out that he may have been motivated by both homophobia and Islamic radicalism... Terrorism or homophobia? The answer is yes. Both."

In another incident 119 people were killed in Baghdad blast by Islamic State.

In Bangladesh on 1st July 28 people were killed. Those who lost their lives were identified as foreigners. There are some reports that the terrorists belonged to Jamaat UI Mujahideen and were not affiliated with Islamic State. One commentator points out that ISIS and the Al Qaeda are currently engaged in a fierce competition across our sub-continent aiming to outdo each other in spreading their terror tentacles. But the malignant

growth of Islamist extremism in Bangladesh can be easily traced back to the Jamaat-e-Islami (JEB) and its militant student wing, Islami Chhatra Shibir.

What connects these diverse destructive phenomena? At the surface it seems these are the manifestations of Islamic terrorism, as the phrase has become popular since 2001 after the 9/11 tragedy. If we go slightly deeper we can discern some clear strands of very different underlying pathologies operating in each of these. The one in Orlando has a lot to do with the prevalent gun culture in US. and has woken up the law makers to the prevalent norms of possession of the gun. While this may be most horrific of such cases, similar ones at lesser intensity have been occurring in US off and on unrelated to the Islamic terrorism so to say. In case of Baghdad mostly it is the one related to the Islamic State.

As far as the case of Bangladesh terror is concerned this seems to be a continuation of the terrorism which has roots in the fundamentalist streaks in Bangladesh politics. Such terror acts have been stalking Bangladesh since quite some time, manifested in the murders of progressive-secular liberal bloggers and Hindus. This has indigenous origin to which the present regime had turned a blind eye and violence

came to the fore in this dastardly way due to the failure of the state and society to curb the rising fundamentalist trends in politics. Currently in many countries of South Asia the militancy has origins in fundamentalism-communalism as seen prominently in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India among others.

In Pakistan fundamentalist doctrine was given the official status during Zia Ul Haq's regime. To get the cover for his dictatorial ambitions he resorted to alliance with feudal forces and Mullahs and brought in the doctrines of Maulana Maududi (Deoband Islam). This is what is referred to as Islamization of Pakistan. The focus of this was to push back the civic social norms around the Sharia as interpreted by Maududi; the focus was to bring in feudal conservative values, suppression of women and of civil liberties. In India the politics in the name of religion manifested more in the form of communalism, communal violence, where the religious minorities have been the victim. The extreme form of this ideology manifested in organizations upholding Hindutva ideology which have been alleged to be responsible for the acts of terror in Malegaon, Makka Masjid (Hyderabad), Ajmer and Samjhauta Express. The communal-fundamentalist ideology is an attempt to restore pre-modern, feudal values of birth based hierarchy of caste/class and gender in the garb of Sharia law or glorious traditions of the past, presented as religion.

Terrorism related to Al Qaeda-Islamic state variety has its roots in the politics of oil control in which the policies of United State has played a major role. It is the policy of US which funded the Madrassas based

in Pakistan and brought in the Maulana Wahab's version of Islam. Here the major focus is killing the infidel (kafir) as a part of jihad. In this variety the central focus is on violence against those differing with the dominant groups. It had a reason; as they wanted to fight communism, Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and so the killing of infidel. If we see the case of Pakistan one can see the Islamization of Pakistan during Zia's regime getting a continuum through the Al Qaeda variety taking over later, and Al Qaeda in turn laid the ideological foundations of Islamic State. Hillary Clinton clarified the US role very succinctly. There is adequate reference to show that US has been supporting the terrorist groups in more ways than one.

So two strands of terrorist actions are creating havoc in contemporary times. One has the motive of restoring the pre-modern values as seen in the case of Pakistan (inspired by Maulana Maududi), Bangladesh (similar variety), India (Hindutva) and in Myanmar and Srilanka as well. The latter have used particular interpretation of Buddhism. The other has its support system derived from the global politics of oil control. The tragedy is that both these varieties draw their foundation and legitimacy in the name of religion, particularly Islam. Religion has many streams, like Islam has Sufi as well as Wahabi tendencies and Hinduism has Bhakti and Brahmanism. US picked up Wahabi version for political goals in West Asia, Zia had picked up Maududi for strengthening dictatorship, Hindu nationalism-Hindutva has picked up neo-Brahmanism, for its own political agenda. Various streams of religion do prevail as such but become dominant only when propped up by political forces which can use that

cover to enhance their political goals. Recognizing this may be a major step in combating terrorism, and make it clear that it is political agenda masquerading as religion.

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Chau khamba Raj

Prominent intellectuals and leaders from Delhi and all over Punjab participated in a state level function on July 14, on Chau-khamba raj, a concept propounded by Dr. Rammanmohar Lohia, at Hoshiarpur organised under the stewardship of Balwant Singh Khera, vice president Socialist Party(India).

While addressing the function prominent sociologist Prof. Anand Kumar said that the concept of four pillars governance ushering in village level government found its echo in late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments for empowering PR

—B.S. Balli

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How Exactly Does the Indian Media Define a Terrorist?

Shoaib Daniyal

On July 10, India woke up to startling pictures of massive crowds at the funeral of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani in Tral, Kashmir.

The disconnect between Kashmir and the rest of India was captured by the fact that even as Wani was a figure of mass adulation in the Valley, large sections of the Indian media had described him as a “terrorist” as it had reported on his killing by Indian security forces on July 8.

This included the *Times of India*, Times Now as well as NDTV—even as the *Telegraph*, *Indian Express* and *Business Standard* stuck to the plain vanilla “militant”.

How these respective organisations differentiated between a “terrorist” and a “militant” was unclear and undefined.

This might seem like hair splitting around semantics but it’s actually far deeper than that – even if this is a discussion that’s not been had in India.

“Terrorism” and “terrorist” are words laden with value judgment, used often by political players as a means of getting their own message and viewpoint across. In reality, there are few definitions of the word “terrorist” accepted across the board. Indeed, it is for this reason that a number of global publications have strict guidelines on how to use the term. In India, however, few press outlets seem to have rules about the T-word and much of its use in the country, it seems, is driven

either by Arnab Goswami-esque jingoism and/or India’s highly troubled relationship with Kashmir.

History of the word “terrorism”

There are few words in the English-language which have had as tumultuous a life as “terrorism”. In fact, the word didn’t even start its life in English but in French where the *regime de la terreur* was a label adopted by the new French state to establish order after the first uprisings of the French Revolution in 1789. The first avatar of the word “terrorism” was therefore almost completely different from its modern meaning.

Firstly, it was applied to the functioning of a state, whereas today it is used to almost always describe non-state actors. Even more strikingly, at the time, it had decidedly positive connotations. The “terrorism” of the French state was pressed into ideals that many would today consider the foundations of the modern world: Liberté, égalité et fraternité. Given this connotation, the state used it as a badge of honour with revolutionary leader Maximilien de Robespierre proclaiming that, “terror is nothing but justice, prompt, severe and inflexible; it is therefore an emanation of virtue.”

In its more modern form, as a tool used by people against the state, terrorism traces itself to an Italian revolutionary called Carlo Pisacane who in 1857 theorised the “propaganda of the deed”. Holding actions, and not ideas, to be the driving force of human civilisation,

Pisacane was clear that as a tool of revolutionary instruction, violence was a far better teacher for the masses than a book or a speech.

The first group to take up Pisacane’s ideas were the Russian revolutionaries, Narodnaya Volya (literally, “people’s will”). Using the doctrine of the “propaganda of the deed”, the organisation assassinated prominent people – including the Tsar himself in 1881 – in order to spur a mass revolt against the Russian monarchy. Between 1881 and 1914 other assassinations inspired by Pisacane’s ideas, often undertaken by libertarian anarchists, were King Umberto I of Italy, King Carlos I of Portugal and King George I of Greece.

Note that while the terrorists till today subscribe to the “propaganda of the deed” – using violence as a way to shock – they differed starkly with most anarchists of that period in their goals. Like the French Revolution, the anarchists of the time subscribed to ideas such as democracy or human rights, which would generally be viewed as positive today, and used “terrorism” to combat autocratic regimes. Consequently, “terrorism” was mostly a value-neutral term describing a type of action rather than something pejorative. It is in this context that Indian revolutionaries such as Bhagat Singh are called “terrorists”. In fact, in its 1929 manifesto, Bhagat Singh’s party the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association was quite open to admitting that “terrorism”

was a part of its policy to pull down the British Raj.

Civilians in the firing line

Post World War II, revolutionary nationalists such as the Irish Republican Army, Jewish Zionist, Palestinians and Sri Lankan Tamils would use techniques similar to the Anarchists but with one crucial difference — now mass civilian casualties were also involved. This is, of course, how modern terrorism is defined. This change also made the word a pejorative one. Post World War II, there are few *self-described* terrorists.

In the modern-age, “terrorism” as a term has famously avoided a common definition – Saudi Arabia even defines atheists as “terrorists”. The US State Department goes by this: “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents”. The academic and terrorism expert Bruce Hoffman has a five-part test: violence for political goals, aims to influence a broader audience, involves an organised group, targets civilians and carried out by a non-state actor.

No matter the definition, “terrorism” as a term is a highly pejorative one today and used by political players to tar their opponents. “The decision to call someone or label some organisation “terrorist” becomes almost unavoidably subjective, depending largely on whether one sympathises with or opposes the person/group/cause concerned,” explains Bruce Hoffman. “If one identifies with the victim of the violence, for example, then the act is terrorism. If, however, one identifies with the perpetrator,

the violent act is regarded in a more sympathetic, if not positive (or, at the worst, an ambivalent) light; and it is not terrorism”.

Global media

Given this vagueness, many global media outlets are reluctant to use the term “terrorist”, preferring more banal — and unambiguous — words such as “gunman”, “bomber” or “militant”. “There is no agreed consensus on what constitutes a terrorist or terrorist act,” the BBC lays out in a guide for its reports. “The use of the word will frequently involve a value judgement.” It goes on to add:

The word “terrorist” itself can be a barrier rather than an aid to understanding. We should convey to our audience the full consequences of the act by describing what happened. We should use words which specifically describe the perpetrator such as “bomber”, “attacker”, “gunman”, “kidnapper”, “insurgent”, and “militant”. We should not adopt other people’s language as our own; our responsibility is to remain objective and report in ways that enable our audiences to make their own assessments about who is doing what to whom.

Many other organisations agree with the BCC. Reuters calls the word “terrorism” and “terrorist” “emotive words” and advises reporters to not use them unless quoting someone in direct speech.

Indian media’s use of the term

The Indian media, though, seems to have no fixed guidelines on the issue and the word “terrorism” is used without any consistency. Most

definitions of the act involve attacks on civilian targets but sections of the Indian media consistently use the term “terrorism”/“terrorists” to also describe cases of military targets being attacked.

In Kashmir, for example, sections of the Indian media have consistently described attacks on military installations as “terrorism”. For a November, 2015 attack on an Indian Army base in Kashmir, while NDTV, Times Now and the *Times of India* described the attackers as “terrorists”, Reuters and *The Telegraph* in contrast, stuck to “gunmen” and “militants”.

Yet, even with respect to attacks on Indian security forces, there seems to be no consistency. In Manipur, for example, attacks on Indian forces have been reported by NDTV, Times Now and the *Times of India* using the word “militant”. The value-laden term “terrorist”, it seems, is easier to abjure when the location isn’t Kashmir.

Meaningless words

In his sparkling 1946 essay *Politics and the English Language*, British writer George Orwell criticises the use of what he calls “meaningless words”:

The word Fascism has now no meaning except in so far as it signifies ‘something not desirable’. The words *democracy*, *socialism*, *freedom*, *patriotic*, *realistic*, *justice* have each of them several different meanings which cannot be reconciled with one another. In the case of a word like *democracy*, not only is there no agreed definition, but the attempt to make one is resisted from all sides. It is almost universally felt that when we call a country

Bhumi Adhikar Andolan

democratic we are praising it: consequently the defenders of every kind of regime claim that it is a democracy, and fear that they might have to stop using that word if it were tied down to any one meaning. Words of this kind are often used in a consciously dishonest way. That is, the person who uses them has his own private definition, but allows his hearer to think he means something quite different.

“Terrorism” is, of course, exactly the sort of “meaningless word” that Orwell railed against, used not for its lexical meaning but to serve various political agendas.

In most cases, the Indian media uses it either to suit the purposes of the state or various nationalist narratives. The sharp difference between the way it is used when Muslims/Kashmir are involved versus other instances such as the North-East also points to a subtle anti-Muslim bias.

The nationalist pressure on the Indian media is, of course, apparent and, in the case of Burhan Wani’s death, has even been written about by journalist Rajdeep Sardesai. As Sardesai explains, even in Britain during the 1983 UK-Argentina Falklands War, the BBC came under intense pressure to appear more patriotic. However, at the time, the organisation resisted, with director general John Birt reaffirming that the BBC was not an “extension of the political authority”. Its first journalistic commitment was to the truth, not to the nation state – a principle that the Indian media has unfortunately not stuck to when using the terms “terrorism” and “terrorist”.

–*Scroll.in*

Three-day long national convention of the Bhumi Adhikar Andolan was held at Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad on July 16-18, 2016 in the wake of the increased attack of the global capital unleashed by brazen corporatisation and unbridled FDI in key sectors resulting into high price rise, inflation, and naked loot of the natural resources by corporates, all facilitated by the policies of the Union government and certain state governments. The convention was attended by more than 500 activists of 15 states who dwelled on the on-going struggles in their regions; ground situation of the alliance building processes; centre and state governments attempt at subverting democratic processes by changing laws and issuing notifications and obsession of the political elite with the current GDP based growth model. It discussed the unfolding situation at various levels where the precariousness of the nature resource based communities was increasing and life of toiling workers and masses was becoming harder everyday, as the impact of 25 years of the reforms becomes visible everywhere and inequality in the society reaches its zenith.

The Convention also took note of the massive unrest in the society caused by the economic hardships faced by the society and in particular dalits, adivasis and marginal communities. It also discussed the growing attack on the minorities and sense of insecurity; massive political unrest in certain parts of the country demanding reservation for certain caste groups; and rights violations of the people in conflict areas due to heavy militarisation and failure of the

State to find political solution, promote democratic processes and undertake peace initiatives in wake of provocations by the non-state actors.

The convention agreed that it was after a long drawn struggle and sacrifice that the Land Acquisition Act 1894 was repealed and new Land Acquisition Act was legislated in 2013 by the Parliament. Although there were inadequacies in it, it had some progressive elements like the principle of prior informed consent, Social Impact Assessment, safeguards for food security, enhanced compensation etc that gave some protection to land losers and dependents on land. However, after the Narendra Modi-led BJP government came to power it brought a draconian Land Acquisition Amendment Ordinance that tried to do away with the need to seek consent, have SIA or safeguard food security and allowed for unbridled forcible land acquisition.

The united issue-based opposition built against the BJP Government’s move to impose the draconian Ordinance (promulgated thrice) had forced the Government to withdraw the move at least temporarily. Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan played a significant role in building up a momentum and public opinion against the Ordinances. The Government had to concede its first defeat by not issuing the Ordinance for the fourth time. The withdrawal of the Bill from the Parliament is still pending and we must remain vigilant about it.

Building on this political victory,

the convention deliberated upon plethora of issues facing the country and made these observations, assertions, and put forth demands upon the government and also for its own constituency:

1. No forced acquisition and displacement:

Keeping in view the nation-wide build-up against its attempts to dilute the 2013 Act and withdraw whatever little progressive content and safeguards the Act offered, the BJP Government has changed its strategy. It has come up with a move to try and sidestep such united opposition by calling upon States to come up with land acquisition legislations facilitating easy land grab. Already Gujarat have legislated laws like SIR Act and other to dilute the Land Reforms legislations and facilitate land grab. In Odisha, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and other States also such moves are afoot. Odisha also is now planning to allow purchase of Tribal land. On the other hand it is declaring traditional forest cultivators and tribals as land grabbers.

The interim period from December 2014 to August 2015 when the Land Acquisition Ordinance was in place Andhra Pradesh government managed to acquire thousands of acres of land in the name of the State Capital and several other Projects through land pooling. Rights of peasantry and dependents on land have been disregarded across the country. In all these legislations the rights of Dalits and Adivasis are being undermined. The rights of the Narmada Dam oustees as well as hundreds of other Projects are being denied and there have not been any effective rehabilitation and resettlement.

Large tracts of land are being forcibly acquired in the name of industrial corridors, economic corridors, smart cities, National Investment and Manufacturing Zones, (NIMZ), SEZs, industries and infrastructure development. Lakhs of acres are under the potential threat of acquisition under the DMIC, BMIC Economic Corridor, Bangalore-Chennai Economic Corridor, Vishakapatam-Chennai Coastal Corridor and such Projects. Loot of land, mineral and forest resources as well as common property resources have been rampant as the corporates and land mafia have been given a free hand.

We envisage protecting land from acquisition without people's prior informed consent and democratic Social Impact Assessment. Plunder of forest and mineral resources will be resisted. We also envisage occupation of lands remaining unutilised and demand re-distribution to landless with the slogan of 'Zameen Wapsi'.

2. Empower local self government institutions and their role in Development Planning, implement Forest Rights Act, PESA and ensure protection of constitutional rights as per the Fifth and Sixth Schedules:

We believe effective implementation of the provisions for the FRA and PESA would empower the Gram Sabhas and Panchayats to play their constitutionally mandated role, as per 73rd and 74th amendment, in the development planning and communities would get control over natural resources and secure their livelihoods. Any attempt at the subversion of these acts will only undermine the democratic processes and people's movements will resist

them by all means. 15th December, 2016 will mark tenth anniversary of the FRA and Bhumi Adhikar Andolan will organise massive rally at Jantar Mantar with clear demand of effective implementation of the Act and challenge any attempts at amending the Act.

3. Bring a national Land Use Policy to protect farm land from large scale diversion to non-agricultural purpose like industry and infrastructure, prioritise housing rights for poor in the urban land-use and not promote evictions and displacement in name of Smart Cities:

A comprehensive Land Use policy should be made which protects farm land from large scale conversion for non-agricultural purpose, with clear regulation and public participation. Priority should be given to food security and livelihood security, focusing not only on irrigated multiple-crop land but also single-crop land in rainfed areas which form 60% of cultivated area. Gram Sabha and Panchayat should have control over the utilization of public lands which serve common purpose such as grazing, with clear provisions to ensure access and use by the most needy communities such as Dalits and tribals. In some cities, agricultural and livestock rearing has been banned, facilitating easy conversion of land use, this needs to be changed.

No common land including wasteland be diverted for industrial purposes without the consent of the Gram and Basti Sabha. Most often these are being encroached upon by the powerful caste and capital interests and State has turned blind eye to them, often acting only against the poor, dalits and adivasis.

Clear provisions should be made for reclamation of wasteland into agricultural land, protection of green cover to prevent soil erosion, degradation and groundwater depletion, and improving agricultural land to make it more suitable for effective production. Coastal land and fragile areas such as Western Ghats should be protected applying the environmental laws and regulations.

Urban land-use should be planned with priority to housing, amenities and livelihood for the poor with in-situ housing projects for poor localities. There should be no cut-off date for Right to Shelter, whereas appropriate cut-off dates can be designated for government allotted subsidized housing including middle class. Urban Land Ceiling Acts should be revived. Land-use planning should be participatory with public hearings in communities above 3000 families.

In the name of Smart Cities, poor and working class is being evicted from the cities and that needs to be stopped. The whole concept of smart cities like its predecessor JNURM is anti-poor and pro-corporate. Any planning has to be done keeping in mind the needs of the most marginalised and working classes in the cities.

4. Changes to Environment Laws not acceptable: Based on the recommendations of the T S R Subramanian Committee, environment laws are also being changed to suit the demands of corporate sector and take away the rights of the people and local self-government institutions. Slums are being forcibly cleared and even coastal land is being encroached upon for ports, big infra projects,

PCPIR and so on trampling upon the rights of the traditional fishworkers. All this would lead to massive displacement and permanent denial of land rights of the landless. Lakhs of acres of land acquired in the name of industrialisation, SEZs etc is remaining unutilised.

5. Ban illegal mining, ensure inter generational parity in resource utilisation, and implement SC guidelines in Goa
Foundation case: The scourge of illegal mining is haunting the hinterland as well as the river beds and sea coasts, polluting water sources, running streams, and causing massive damage to ecology and economy both. The rampant mining and extractives based economic growth model is leading to destruction of the nature and mother earth and contributing to the large scale climate change. Hence, the need for no mining in 'No-Go' areas (and build upon this criteria), dense forests and climate sensitive forests areas.

6. Address agrarian crisis, implement SC judgement on tackling draught, ensure income security for every agricultural household, and establish a permanent Farmers' Income Commission: Over 3.2 lakh farmers have committed suicide since 1995 at the rate of one farmer committing suicide every half an hour according to conservative estimates put forward by the National Crime Records Bureau. In reality the human tragedy is of a magnitude unheard of in the entire history of humanity. The Government is cutting down public investment for agriculture and rural development, rural credit is increasingly inaccessible to poor and marginal farmers, indebtedness and

landlessness is rising, allocation for MGNREGA is being drastically cut, farmers are not getting remunerative prices for their products despite ever increasing costs of production. sugarcane farmers are to get thousands of crores of arrears from the corporate sugar lobby. Trade liberalisation and indiscriminate entry into Free Trade Agreements is leading to dumping of cheap agricultural products including dairy products thereby pushing our farmers into distress. Procurement facilities are being curtailed, extension services systematically dismantled and farmers are getting prices far below the actual cost of production.

7. MSPs should be declared at 50% above cost of cultivation. Ensure that farmers get MSP in all 25 crops through procurement, market intervention and price guarantee: The BJP Government has gone back on its election promise of providing Minimum Support Prices according to Swaminathan Commission Recommendation of C2+50% i.e at least 50 percent above Cost of Production and had filed an affidavit to that effect in Supreme Court. It has also banned procurement from States which provide bonus over and above the MSP. The Government is kowtowing to diktats of the USA, EU and other countries in the WTO and cutting down food and agricultural subsidies. The entire agricultural policy is to aid profiteering by seed monopolies and agribusinesses at the expense of the people. The Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan stands opposed to all such policies and will strive for alternative policies that will ensure food and livelihood security to all as well as decent standard of living including

housing, health and education. Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan stands resolutely against unequal Free Trade Agreements, WTO diktats, trade liberalisation and against any such monopolistic deals with other countries.

8. Implement Land Reforms—Give land to landless agricultural workers not corporates: There should be renewed focus on land reforms to give ownership of land to deprived sections, especially Dalits, adivasis, women, project-displaced families, and so on. Ceiling limits should be properly enforced stopping the exemptions and loopholes allowing thousands of acres to be taken over by a few individuals and corporates, and making surplus land available for distribution.

Ensure Food Sovereignty and Food Security and sort out the massive corruption within the Food Distribution System: Food security doesn't mean giving subsidised food alone but empowering communities to produce their own food and securing land rights which will make them self-reliant. In that regard it is also important that farmers have complete control over the seeds and the systems of production and not be made slaves to the big multinationals claiming their IPRs. No company should be allowed exclusive intellectual property rights over seed in any crop.

However, there is also the need for effective implementation of the National Food Security Act, given many state governments have failed to do so. In the name of rooting out corruption linking of ration delivery with the Aadhar and other electronic identification programmes is resulting

in leaving out a big chunk of population, which is often due to systems inefficiency and denies a large number of poor and vulnerable population access to their entitlements.

9. Rights of Tenant farmers, Sharecroppers and Women farmers should be upheld. The real cultivators should get full recognition and benefit of all support systems: Tenant farmers, sharecroppers and women farmers are the worst-affected in the agrarian distress in many parts of the country, because they get left out of all government support systems including low-interest bank loans, disaster compensation, crop insurance, subsidies, etc. They are the real cultivators not only working hard but also taking the risks of production – tenant farmers and sharecroppers cultivate more than 30% of the area, and women perform 70% of tasks in agriculture. Their rights should be upheld. There should be a comprehensive system of recording and recognizing the real cultivators including tenant farmers, sharecroppers and women farmers, so that they get the benefit of all government support systems and eligibility for all provisions in case of land acquisition. The Model Tenancy Act by Niti Ayog must be withdrawn.

10. Rights of the Agrarian Workers, unorganised sector workers to be protected and minimum wages and social security measures implemented: Today 93% of the labour force is in the unorganised sector and a majority of them is dependent on agriculture and other related activities. This section is under tremendous attack due to farm crisis and decreasing

support from the government. We demand that the allocation to the MGNREGA be increased to ensure 300 days work and 300 Rs wages daily. In addition, to deal with the farm labour crisis due to high migration recognise agriculture, as a work should be brought within the MGNREGA, that way the workers and farmers both would benefit. In addition, a number of suggestions and guidelines have been issued by the Supreme Court of India to effectively deal with the draught situation in the country. Unfortunately, the implementation by this by the Union and State governments has been extremely poor and tardy.

With the growing precariousness and distress time has come that the Minimum Wages Act be mandatorily applicable to the agricultural labourers as well. In addition, on lines of the Social Security Act for the construction workers should also be implemented for the agrarian workers.

11. Comprehensive support for shift from high-input chemical agriculture to low-external-input ecologically sustainable agriculture: One of the biggest causes of the crisis is the model of high-input chemical agriculture promoted in the past few decades – leading to indebtedness, damage to soil fertility, declining productivity, depletion of water, and poisoning of food and water system. While accepting the importance of increasing production and productivity, the emphasis should be on *sustainable* productivity. The policies and support systems should be fully reoriented to ensure a time-bound shift to low-input ecologically sustainable agriculture, using many viable models demonstrated and

established across India in the past two decades.

12. Reverse the injustice done to rainfed agriculture :

Though 60% of Indian agriculture is rainfed, it is highly neglected compared to irrigated agriculture; consequently much of the distress and farmer suicides is in rainfed areas. We demand a comprehensive mission to revive rainfed agriculture by promoting dryland crops, animal husbandry and fodder, revival of minor irrigation, and targeted support. Providing protective irrigation to the first crop in rainfed areas should be the first priority rather than irrigation for second and third crops.

13. No privatization of water resources and services; Priority to drinking, domestic use and agriculture:

Water should be respected as a natural resource essential to human life and food production, and attempts to privatize water bodies and services, and give control to corporates should be completely stopped. Water for drinking, domestic use and agriculture should receive priority over other uses, with further prioritization for food crops and one-crop protection in dry regions. Landless families should also be given rights over water to ensure more equitable use and to redress the inequity in land ownership.

14. Resist attempts to dilute labour laws and express solidarity and active support to workers' strike of 2nd September 2016: Workers' rights are being curtailed and the Narendra Modi-led BJP Government has been tampering with labour laws in the name of "ease of doing business". Against such attacks an

unprecedented strike was witnessed on 2nd September, 2015 in which the Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan extended solidarity. The Central Trade Unions also took up some of our demands and spoke against the Land Acquisition Ordinance. We extend solidarity to the united working class strike called on 2nd September, 2016 and will work actively to make it a success.

15. Resistance to divisive and fascist politics:

Faced with growing protests and unprecedented unity of people against the policies of the BJP Government at the Centre and States the BJP-RSS and their affiliates are resorting to divisive politics and deliberate communalisation. Rationalists and cultural personalities are being physically attacked and killed, dissent is brutally being suppressed. In the name of protection of the cow, systematic attacks are being launched on minorities and Dalits. Deliberate communal and casteist violence is being resorted to in different parts of the country. A spontaneous response against such efforts is developing. Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan will resist such divisive efforts and work for building communal harmony and strengthen the unity of toiling masses.

16. Curb attack on the autonomous functioning of the universities, corporatisation of education, and suppressing of dissent within the universities and enact Rohith Act: University campuses across the country are in turmoil and there has been a growing attack on the students and attempts are being made to suppress any dissent, free thinking and free flow of exchange of ideas. The corporate

agenda of the education and their pandering to the market needs is solely driving the education policy today leading to complete erosion of the values and democratic principles necessary for functioning of a vibrant democracy.

Access to education by all remains a cause of concern. The demand for a common school system has been there for long and is responsible for the continued inequality and the perpetuation of the discrimination within the universities. SC/ST communities face discrimination at every level in the education system from admission, recruitments, promotions or opportunities for growth. The fact that a brilliant student like Rohith Vemula had to commit suicide due to continued harassment and caste based discrimination indicates towards systemic crisis within the education system today. The demand for Rohith Act by the student community needs support from all the organisations and Bhumi Adhikar Andolan express its solidarity with the movement and demand.

17. End Caste based Discrimination and Ensure Effective Implementation of the SC/ST Act:

The resource struggle is also inherently a caste and class struggle and Dalits and Adivasis have been at the receiving end. The caste based violence and systematic elimination of the rights and dignity of the community is being done in collaboration with the political and caste elite leading to their further impoverishment and disempowerment. The inability of the system to ensure justice to victims of the caste-based violence on every count has ensured its continuation

without fear of any impunity. This is condemnable and unacceptable. Supreme Court and Higher Court must take suo-moto cognizance of these offences and ensure fast tracking of the cases on line of the violence against women cases. This will not only ensure justice but also prevent future attacks on the community.

Bhumi Adhikar Andolan reasserts and reaffirms its faith in the reservations provided for the SC/ST communities by the Indian Constitution as a way to address the historical injustice. The ongoing attempts to subvert that by some political forces and caste groups in the name of economic justice is not acceptable and any heed to that by the governments and political parties is primarily based on vote bank calculations.


18. Withdraw all fabricated cases from the social and cultural activists, tribals, dalits, farmers and students: a number of activists have been framed on numerous false charges and incarcerated. In the current political climate, the targeting of activists has increased manifold and thus their victimisation as well. As Bhumi Adhikar Andolan, we extend support and solidarity to the activists and movements facing police oppression and support the effort to establish a people's commission to defend the rights of the activists.

19. Repeal AFSPA and Stop increased militarisation in conflict regions: Recent judgement of the Supreme Court has validated the long term demand of the movements for withdrawal of the AFSPA from J&K, and many of the North East states. Under AFSPA, many heinous crimes have been committed without any prosecution

often feeding in to the vicious circle of continuing violence. The continued unrest is also due to heavy militarisation within these areas, which often leads to hardships for the citizens of those areas.


20. Assert democratic rights of association, freedom of expression and raise voice against any incursion: A climate of fear and intimidation is being promoted specifically targeted at

muzzling dissent, restricting freedom of association, assembly of citizens to criticise anti people policies of the government and control or close down any democratic spaces available for free speech and gathering. These attempts by the State and vigilante groups are not acceptable in the largest democracy of the world, and are completely violates the ideas and principles enshrined in the Indian constitution.




Rural India Focus


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**The solution to
Kashmir problem**
Sandeep Pandey

**Growing inequality
in Kerala society**
Varughese George

**An Explosive Report by Justice
Mootham of Allahabad in 1955**
Chandra Bhal Tripathi

Recent crimes linked to media
Bharat Dogra

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A page from Quit India Movement

Kuldip Nayar

As India prepares to commemorate 68 years of freedom from British imperial rule, it may be worth remembering a dusty town in Uttar Pradesh that suffered the consequences of declaring itself an independent country for a few days in 1942.

The sovereign Republic of Ballia, headed by Chittu Pandey, managed to survive for some seven days before British-led military and police forces managed to regain control and unleashed a series of atrocities that are still remembered by the descendants of those who were raped, beaten and killed by shooting, firing and burning.

At the orders of an English police officer called Fletcher, an estimated 130 leaders of the local independence movement were hanged. Those who were not hanged were forced to climb trees where they were bayoneted. Those who managed to avoid the tree punishments were taken to local jails where they were suspended by their legs and starved. Those who avoided the leg suspension torture were forced to sit together on the floors of the jails where they were fed chapattis that gave them dysentery.

Ballia offers a small insight into the realities of colonial rule where 'lesser breeds' like the Indians suffered unimaginable miseries at the hands of their white rulers. Some of those tortures resulting in death, whether it involved bayoneting or being forced to lie on blocks of ice for hours on end, were not all that different from what the Jews endured at the hands of the Nazis.

The difference is that what happened in places like Auschwitz in Germany has been well documented and some of those responsible for what happened in the concentration camps have been brought to justice, if not by the allied powers and post Nazi Germany at the international court of justice in the Hague, then certainly by the modern state of Israel.

Atrocities committed in places like Ballia that joined in the Quit India movement of 1942 are still not fully documented. As for the likes of Commissioner Fletcher, no one to this day knows what happened to him and whether he was ever held to account for the murders of so many innocent civilians.

The solution to Kashmir problem

Sandeep Pandey

In recent years it has become fashionable among some historians to suggest that 200 years of colonial rule were not all that bad and that India gained more than it lost from interacting first with the East India Company, a gang of thugs dressed up as so-called gentleman traders, and then face-to-face with the British government.

In practice there was not that much difference between the brutality and exploitation practiced by the company and the government. One small example should suffice. It was British government representatives who forced baptism on Maharaja Ranjit Singh's son and heir, Duleep Singh. And it was British government officials, including Lord Dalhousie who, after presiding over the looting of the Lahore treasury, 'persuaded' young Duleep Singh to hand over the fabled Kohinoor diamond in person to Queen Victoria. Today that same Kohinoor forms the centre piece of the British monarch's crown.

Back to the benefits of 'gora' rule. It was the British after all, so the argument goes, who introduced Indians to the English language and helped to develop the country's infrastructure, whether by bringing in piped water, electricity and sewerage facilities to urban areas, or laying the foundations both of the railways and the posts and telegraph services. And it was the British again who introduced key religious and social reforms such as the abolition of Sati and child marriage in 1829 and the Widows Remarriage Act of 1856.

Yet the Indians were quite capable of behaving like gentlemen. When

(Continued on Page 3)

On 8th July, 2016, the Supreme Court said that Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958, in force in parts of Northeast and J&K, cannot be an excuse for extrajudicial killing - whenever such allegations surface they have to be investigated regardless of whether the person is dreaded criminal, terrorist or insurgent. On the same day a young militant Burhan Wani was killed in an encounter by the security forces. We don't know whether it was a case of extrajudicial killing. Prashant Bhushan says it was a fake encounter. Extrajudicial killings have been going on quite freely. The case in which above judgment has been delivered has a list of 1528 deaths in counter insurgency operations in Manipur from which the Court has sought details on 62 which are suspected extrajudicial killings. And Manipur is a small state compared to J&K.

Moreover, the turnout at Burhan Wani funeral indicates two things - either the killing was perceived to be extrajudicial or he is viewed by Kashmiri youth more than just a militant. He represents the aspirations of Kashmiri youth because of which they like to associate themselves with him even taking the risk of facing fire from Indian security forces. Experience of Burhan Wani at the hands of Indian security forces when they beat him up and humiliated him is the same that every Kashmiri youth faces at some point or the other and even repeatedly. Most simply pocket the insult. Some like Burhan Wani revolt against it and in the process become a militant. There are a number

of organisations from across the border which are ever willing to train such youth in use of arms and explosives and guerilla warfare, even though Burhan is not believed to have received training in Pakistan. He was the commander of Hizbul Mujahideen at the young age of 22 years.

Basic question is who or what is responsible for the birth of militants: Pakistani terror organisations or policy of Indian state which alienates the youth of valley? Why is the demand of Omar Abdullah as the then Chief Minister of J&K and for which Irom Sharmila has been fasting in Imphal for the last 15 years - removal of AFSPA - not being met? Only a reduced presence of security forces can lead towards a situation of normalcy. But the security forces scuttle this idea.

A political problem cannot be treated like a law and order problem. Indian state must accept that there is disaffection in Kashmir and the political views of national political parties and the people of Kashmir probably differ greatly. The only way out is dialogue with not just political parties but all sections of separatists and insurgents in Kashmir which the current BJP government at centre seems to be disinclined towards. It is not that government doesn't talk to such groups. In Nagaland they have had an agreement with separatist groups. Moreover, if the government is not talking to separatists in Kashmir then it is a sure recipe to push them towards Pakistan, for which then the government should not blame them.

In the time of grief and crisis a refreshing approach has been offered by the former Home Minister P. Chidambaram. He has differentiated between the land of Kashmir and the people of Kashmir. He argues that successive governments of India have worried about the territory of Kashmir in their zeal to maintain Kashmir as integral part of India but have failed to take the people along. The people have become more and more alienated because of government's policies.

Considering that P. Chidambaram was Home Minister, it is commendable that he has expressed his opinion so candidly and take a position very radically different from the traditional official position of government.

Chidambaram advocates honouring the promises made by India to J&K at the time of its accession to India. He argues for more autonomy to J&K allowing them to frame their own laws as much as possible as long as they don't conflict with the Constitution of India. He calls for Indians to respect the identity, history, culture and religion of people there.

Chidambaram has made a surprising revelation that he was in favour of withdrawal of armed forces from civilian areas and for them to be posted only in border areas but the defence establishment did not agree to it. In any case he thinned the security forces by 10,000. He also wanted the state government to be responsible for day to day law and order situation but again the security forces were not agreeable to this proposition.

(Continued on Page 5)

(Continued from Page 2)

the East India company established control in the name of trade in 18th century India, its officers duly went about trebling the taxes that the local peasants were obliged to pay. These taxes remained in places even during times of dire famine. How different it was when local rulers were in charge and dispensed with taxes during times of calamity.

In Ballia 200 years later it is instructive to recall just how the British administration was treated by the leaders of the independence movement. British officials and their local toadies were gathered together and peacefully ushered across the railway line that divided the civil and military lines of the town. None were harmed in any way.

Even more instructive was the unity that prevailed in those days between Hindus and Muslims. Inevitably, when they returned the British committed all kinds of atrocities. They did not want the national flag to be hoisted in Ballia and they shot and killed any who dared to do so. Emerging from the shadows of the town was a young Muslim who was killed when he tried to raise a flag that was not the Union Jack. It is still a matter of local pride in Ballia that before the flag fell to the ground, another volunteer took it upon himself to grab and support that symbol of national pride. Some 11 men were killed one after another by soldiers of the crown.

Significantly, this gesture of defiance by the citizens of Ballia was never reported in the British media. This was during the Second World War when Winston Churchill was Prime Minister. As the war was coming to a close he is recorded as

saying that Britain would never give up its Indian Empire.

His recoded comments include, "I hate Indians. They are a beastly people with a beastly religion." Just as shocking were his earlier comments about Mahatma Gandhi. "It is alarming and nauseating to see Mr Gandhi, a seditious Middle Temple lawyer, now posing as a fakir of a type well known in the east, striding half naked up the steps of the vice regal palace, while he is still organizing and conducting a campaign of civil disobedience, to parlay on equal terms with the representative of the Emperor-King."

Churchill did not and could not anticipate that Ballia would ignite the fire which five years later would engulf and destroy colonial rule both in India and beyond. Ironically, the statues of both Gandhi and Churchill today stand close to each other in a prestigious location opposite the British parliament in London. EOM

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Growing inequality in Kerala society

Varughese George

We have been talking about the 7 per cent growth rate in Kerala economy, above the national average, but the question is does this reflect reality? Is this growth meaningful in the life of the poor, the dalits, and adivasis and fish workers, the Outlier Society as John Kurien calls it.

Prof. Amartya Sen is talking about two types of opportunities; the economic opportunity and social opportunity. Either you give them the land, the economic opportunity, or education and health, the social opportunity. The census of India 2001 shows that of all scheduled castes in Kerala cultivators account for 1.7 percent only. Every third scheduled cast worker in Kerala is an agricultural labourer. They account for 33.7 percent of scheduled castes.

On 21st July 2009 the Hon. Supreme Court instructed Kerala Government to allot land to adivasis within 6 months. But the state governments since then have made no effort to implement the order. Land has since been appropriated for stadiums, national highways, etc., but when it comes to the question of adivasis the approach is different. The fisher folk also have no land.

The partial resolution of this problem could be made through a second land reform. The land reform act brought at the time of the first EMS government was a revolutionary one. For the first time ceiling was brought for the proprietorship of land. All land after the ceiling limit of 15 acres was to physically taken over by the

government. Then it has to be redistributed among the landless. Prof. M A Oommen wrote that at that time there were 7.82 lakh hectors of surplus land. But subsequent governments since then made no earnest effort to physically take over this surplus land and redistribute it among the landless. Till now, only 40343 hectors were redistributed. Surplus cultivable land thus, was wasted and transferred to benami hands.

Secondly in pre-land reform Kerala, landless tillers were of two broad categories, as Radhakrishnan writes, those without any leased-in land who worked as hired agricultural laborers and those who had small parcels of leased-in land. The majority of those who have benefitted by the land transfers through the land reform act conferring ownership rights belong to the category of cultivating tenants. The real cultivators of land, the agricultural laborers did not get land.

Thirdly, the plantation was excluded from the ceiling limit. That might have been logical at that time since rubber plantation seemed to be the most organized industry at that time. The trade unions also stood against partition of plantation, lest it might disintegrate the plantation labor. But as early as 1980s P. Radhakrishnan, in his landmark study 'Peasant struggles, land reforms and social change, 1836-1982' wrote that "the exclusion of vast areas of plantations from successive land reforms enactments has to be seen as a major limiting factor of Kerala land reforms,

making the effects of even the most thorough-going, act only partially felt."(P-172).

Now times have changed. The dalits, adivasis and fish workers have started asking for a piece of land. Two major private plantation companies have in their possession more than two lakh hectors of government land in lease. There are also other private plantations with 1000-2000 acres each with government land in their hands as lease. The lease period to most of these estates are over. The government should take over such land.

Secondly regarding private owned plantations, a ceiling has to be fixed, whether it is 100 or 200 acres. The surplus land above the ceiling has to be physically taken over. Even PCK has given 1000 acres of land to Adivasis in Kannur and in Kannur we are left with only 140 ha. If the public sector can part with its land for re-distribution among the landless, why not the private sector? The Constitution clearly stipulates that as per Article 39(B), the state shall, in particular, direct the policy towards securing that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed to subserve the common good. Article 39(c) stipulates that the operation of the economic system does not result in concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment.

We are not giving land, economic opportunity to the poor. At least, give them social opportunity: education and health. If you look into the national

health profile of 2013, we can find that the highest incidents of chicken gunya fever in 2009 was in Kerala numbering 13349 and dengue in 2013 numbering 7911 including 25 deaths. Chicken gunya fever was wide spread in Pathanamthitta district and social profile show that SCs, STs and OBCs were the most affected. The mid-term appraisal of XIth plan prepared for Planning Commission for CDS states that between 1999-2006 the state could not make any significant progress with regard to malnutrition in children and women. One out of every 4 children aged below 5 years are stunted or too short for their age. Caste wise differentials are very severe, with 34 percent among scheduled castes being stunted, followed by other backward castes - 26 percent.

This study also states that more than one fifth of the children below 5 years in Kerala are underweight. Between NFHS 2(1998-99) and NFHS-3(2005-2006) surveys the percentage of children with anemia increase from 44 percent to 56 percent.

Among women also, malnutrition is a major problem. Among women aged 15-49 years nearly one over of every 5 women is too thin. Anaemia continues to be a major health problem among women in Kerala. One third of women aged 15-49 years are anaemic.

With regard to education we are living and moving in a knowledge society. Knowledge society is a society that has universal access to sharing of knowledge. But in Kerala there is a knowledge divide. The census of 2001 shows that among scheduled castes graduates and above are just 2.1 percent while non-technical and technical diploma

holders constitute 1.5 percent. The SC/ ST department states that the drop out of SC children in 9 and 10 classes in the year 2010-11 were 2828 and in college 25338 the same year.

The slum population is increasing. As per the report of the committee on slums in Kerala in 2014 it was 541314, in 2015 it will be 543671 and in 2016, 545906. In the aftermath of Tsunami that struck on 26.12.2004 the centre, state and voluntary agencies built homes, 46 tsunami colonies in Kollam, 12 Tsunami colonies in Alappuzha and 3 Tsunami colonies in Ernakulam District. In these colonies 2000 families are living and the houses are dilapidated and unlivable. There is water scarcity in these colonies.

Regarding the status of tribals, As Ajmal Khan points out, Kerala has comparatively less population of tribals, the scheduled tribal population is 364189. They form just 1.2 percent of the total population. But according to an undisclosed survey prepared by the ST Development Report and brought out by *Indian Express* on 19 May 2014 through its correspondent M.S. Vidyanandan said that a total of 13.09 of the tribal families were affected by malnutrition and their number was maximum in Wayanad District followed by Palakad and Idiki Districts. A total of the 18 percent of the families had members who were differently abled or mentally challenged. The drop out rate was 62 percent in general. Thus Kerala society hailed as just and participatory has become divisive and inequality is growing.

(Paper presented in the Seminar, Kerala Economy: Challenges and Way Forward, at K.N. Raj Centre, Kottayam)

(Continued from Page 3)

If Chidambaram and Omar Abdullah were allowed to work on their ideas situation would have been completely different today. People would have been spared the presence of security forces among them which can be oppressive and humiliating. If people had felt more involved in running their own government they would have also felt the responsibility to maintain peace. It is possible that still some extremists would have continued to operate. But then it must have been left to the Kashmiris to deal with their fellow citizens to try to convince them to leave the path of violence.

Right now presence of Indian security forces for such a prolonged period makes it look like an occupying force. P. Chidambaram says we cannot preach to Sri Lanka to respect the democratic rights of its Tamil minority when we're not able to do it with Kashmiris.

If human rights violations take place because of the presence of security forces we cannot expect the Kashmiris to trust the government. The ultra-nationalist view of the present government in power in New Delhi makes things worse. They know only one way to deal with their opponents - that is to remain tough. It is beyond their imagination to talk to people whom they consider anti-nationals. They just can't perceive that whom they consider anti-nationals may not be so in the eyes of people of Kashmir. They could even be their heroes. Unless the government starts seeing things from the Kashmiri perspective there is no headway towards resolution of the Kashmir conflict.

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Why is Kashmir boiling?

PUCL expresses its deepest concerns about the manner in which the Indian security establishment has handled the protests that erupted across the Kashmir valley as a consequence of the killing of Burhan Wani in a suspected fake encounter last Friday, 8th July, 2016. By many accounts, Wani was shot at from close quarters of about 4 feet in a cold blooded murder and not in an encounter. Two other persons accompanying Wani were also killed by a special team of the security forces. Such cold blooded killings camouflaged as “encounter” in an alleged gun-fight is unacceptable in a democracy. PUCL condemns both the Central Government and the PDP-led J & K government for launching an operation to liquidate suspected or real terrorists in fake encounters instead of respecting the rule of law and prosecuting them.

During the last few months, many terrorists have been killed in Kashmir without noticeable protest, but following Burhan Wani’s killing the valley is on fire. The widespread protests in the valley has led to the firing in which as many as 34 unarmed Kashmiris have been killed and over 92 people injured including those hit in the eye by the so-called ‘non-lethal’ weapons firing pellets, instead of bullets.

It is important for the rest of India to ask why there is so widespread and determined protest now when there was no protest at such a scale every time alleged terrorists were killed? The obvious reason is that though the protesters accept that those who fight with arms must expect to be countered with arms as is the rule of war as well as peace, but to them, the killing of Wani was not in a real encounter but in a fake

encounter after luring him to the place where he was killed with his two friends. Most lamentably, the circumstances and manner of Wani’s killing are being concealed from the people, but the people of Kashmir know it and are seething with anger.

Some newspapers have reported the circumstances and manner of Wani’s killing but placed it at some obscure place. For example, The Dainik Bhaskar, Muzaffarpur edition (11.7.2016 on page 17) has published an account of the encounter based on an interview of Upmita Bajpayee with an officer involved in the operation. According to the officer, a honey trap was set with a girl known to be close to Wani. She lured him to visit her at her house at the village Badmura. The security forces were tipped and were also informed that the terrorists were not heavily armed. The house was surrounded and was set on fire to force him out, as the Islamists do not want to die in a fire as it is like ‘Dokhaj’ (Hell). As the fire raged, Wani reportedly came out supported by two of his friends. The security forces shot him from a distance of 4 feet. They also killed both of his friends though they initially wanted to capture them alive but killed them, too. The heading of news item is KHUD JAAL ME FANSA THA WANI, SENA NE GHERA TAB NASE ME THA, 4 FEET DOOR SE MARA GOLI (Wani walked into the trap himself, when the armed forces surrounded him, he was inebriated, was shot from a distance of four feet).

Kashmir would not have been on the boil if Wani were not killed in cold blood in a fake encounter after setting a honey trap. Most likely his death would have been protested like other cases of killing of terrorists in

a real encounter but without the scale of current uprising.

It is important to point out that the alleged terrorists are being treated as worse than Nathuram Godse, who murdered Mahatma Gandhi and Ajmal Kasab, the Pakistani terrorist, involved in Mumbai terror attack of 2008. None of them was shot dead like Wani. They were tried giving them the opportunity to defend themselves and finally punished according to the law. That is what the adherence to the constitution and the rule of law mandates and is the basis of our claim to be a civilized nation.

It is a shame that the rest of India is not protesting against the cold blooded murder of Wani and his friends. Their being a terrorist was not a greater crime than Gandhiji’s murderer or Ajmal Kasab’s role in Mumbai terror attack. Our law as reiterated by the apex court from time to time does not permit killing of terrorists in fake encounters and treats it as plain murder. The general indifference or support for the killing of Wani in the rest of India smacks of a double standard and angers and further alienates the people of Kashmir.

The PUCL demands that regardless of the difficulties, the State must fight terrorism within the frame-work of the constitution and the law of the land to win the trust of the people in the fairness of the Indian State and arrest further alienation of the Kashmiris. The lawless ways of the State are bound to add to the legitimate anger and alienation of the Kashmiris.

Dr. Prabhakar Sinha **V. Suresh**
President, General Secretary
Peoples Union for Civil Liberties

An Explosive Report by Justice Mootham of Allahabad in 1955

Chandra Bhal Tripathi

I refer to an explosive, not yet published, secret report by the late Justice Mootham of the High Court of Allahabad in 1955 who inquired into the ugly incident of the convocation of Allahabad University. The communist/socialist student leaders of that university held a black flag demonstration against K M Munshi, the autocratic Governor of U.P. and Chancellor of Allahabad University, and were brutally assaulted by *lathis* by the RSS activists. Eight student leaders were expelled and the University remained closed for at least six months. As the President of the UP Branch of the National Union of Students of India (established in 1950 at Bombay as the Federation of the University and College Unions of India— now defunct due to the conspiracy of the Congress Party) I went with my good friend Robin Mitra to Allahabad to explore the possibility of a solution to the imbroglio. We somehow got access to Justice Mootham's secret report for 4-5 hours one night. It was an explosive report containing the evidence of the witnesses. A highly placed teacher and administrator of the University in his deposition had accused Governor Munshi being closeted in his saloon at Allahabad Jn. station for 15 minutes with the RSS student leaders and two senior professors having paid money to them buy *lathis* from a shop in Katra for being used to assault the leftist student leaders opposed to Governor Munshi. I remember the names of all the *dramatis personae*. One of the RSS student leaders became the HRD Minister at the

Centre and another became the DG of Police in UP and later a BJP MP.

I prepared a 24-page manuscript titled *The Truth about Allahabad* after my return to Lucknow. I had come from a far-off place where I was doing anthropological field work and so I stayed in the room of the firebrand socialist Raj Narain in Darul-Shafa, the residence of MLAs. I was shocked to find that before I could

get this explosive booklet published, it was stolen from my suitcase. Obviously someone staying in that room in the garb of a confidante of Raj Narain ji was an agent of the UP Police- Special Branch. This secret document is of historical importance. I would urge upon the Government of UP to retrieve it as well as my manuscript and make these public to expose all the *dramatis personae* and the then communal and conspiratorial forces.

Black day for Indian children

Lok Sabha has passed 26 July 2016 Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2012 to allow child labour below the age of 14 years in family enterprises is a regressive move.

RTE Forum, a coalition of ten thousand grass-root organizations, people's movement, educationists and teachers organizations, has said that "Today is black day for the millions of Indian children; they will now be deprived from all their rights which they have achieved after the decades long struggles, like, right to education, equal opportunity for quality learning, play, protection and enjoyment of their childhood."

The Labour Ministry and the Government have completely negated the voice of Child Rights Activists of this country and also the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour.

There are 1,01,28,663 child labourers in the country between the

age group of 5 to 14 years as per 2011 census. The amended Bill might give a first impression that the Government is taking a stringent measure to end child labour upto 14 years. But a closer look at this reveals that it is hardly the case. Of course there are some relevant measures in the new bill such as a jail term of up to 2 years for those employing children below the age of 14 for labour activities. Activists who have been fighting for rights of children have been critical of the bill.

The Government has made an exemption that the child can help his family or family enterprise after his school hours or during vacations. The government has made the amendments on the hypothesis that education and work for children can go hand in hand but this defeats the very purpose of protecting the children from exploitation and also the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act.

RTE Forum has expressed deep

concerns about the insensitive approach of ruling party towards children of this country and said that this is a clear violation of existing Fundamental right to Education (Article 21A). RTE Act, which is guaranteeing right to education up to 14 years, is now planning to move as a legal entitlement towards secondary education. This amendment will affect the retention rate of children in schools and increase drop outs of marginalized especially girl children. Goal 4 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) declared by United Nations is also pushing for the universalization of education till the secondary level.

The employers and contractors will be benefited by this amendment and children are now forced to be exploited through this amendment.

‘Family’ has been defined as child’s mother, father, brother, sister and father’s sister and brother and mother’s sister and brother; ‘Family enterprise’ has been defined as any work, profession, manufacture or business which is performed by the members of the family with the engagement of other persons. This means a child can work in any manufacturing or business unit if it is owned by his/her relative.

Several Parliamentarians have also criticized the bill saying “we should not do to other children what we do not do to our own”. Some of the members in the opposition have said strongly that none of them would like their children to do labour, family business or not, apart from studies.

—Ambarish Rai,

National Convener Right to Education Forum

Recent crimes linked to media

Bharat Dogra

Two major crimes were busted in Delhi on July 9 and highlighted in next day’s crime stories in newspapers. Both these stories were reported to have some linkages to media.

A gang of chain snatchers was busted in Model Town leading to the arrest of five men who, according to the police, were involved in 65 cases of chain snatching . These gangsters generally used motorcycles and scooters to speed past people on roads and snatch their gold chains and mobile phones.

The police said that these gangsters were inspired by a popular Hindi film *Dhoom*. A leading headline in the *Hindu* made the connection amply clear—‘Dhoom gang busted’. The *Times of India* added to the media connection by informing that one of the gangsters earlier used to act in a TV serial. The *Rashtriya Sahara* reported further that the crimes were committed on the pattern of what was seen in the film. A headline in the *Hindustan* said, “They learnt crime methods from watching TV show.”

In another case reported on the same day, a Delhi businessman was abducted by hostile persons known to him and beaten till he became unconscious. He was then taken in a car and buried alive in the sugarcane fields of one of the attackers.

A senior investigator of this

murder told the *Hindu* , “The killers were inspired by a crime show on television. They thought that no trace would be left if a man was buried in an unknown agricultural field.” The headline in this newspaper said, “Killers inspired by crime show.”The story also started with the words—”Inspired by a crime show on television —.”

The *Rashtriya Sahara* confirmed this by reporting that the criminals had informed the police in the process of interrogation that they learnt about this method of disposing a body from a crime serial. The *Times of India* added another dimension to this media connection by reporting that the murderers had also looked for guidance on how to dump a body on YouTube (All quotes from newspapers dated July 10) .

Several such incidents have been reported in the past when linkages between crimes and media programmes were reported. In fact the film *Dhoom* had been involved earlier also in such reports. In a diamond robbery case in Hyderabad the gang leader admitted to be inspired by this film, as was the case earlier in at least one bank robbery. A teenager in Delhi who faked his own kidnapping was stated to have learnt some tricks from a Hindi film *Khiladi*. In a shocking case reported from Amravati, two boys stated to be influenced by a Hindi film *Divyashakti* kidnapped and disrobed a girl, then drew vulgar pictures on her body.

Perhaps the most serious linkage between crime and media was drawn in the context of a terrorist attack in Ahmedabad which was said to be influenced by the plot of a Hindi film *Contract*. In this film the villain plans low intensity explosions followed by a bigger explosion when people rush to hospital. A somewhat similar sequence was also seen in the actual attack.

While all this is certainly cause for concern, the linkage should not be exaggerated to the extent of saying that in all such cases the crime would not have taken place at all if the exposure to some film or TV scenes had not taken place. A number of factors taken together are responsible for any increase in crimes, and increase in certain types of media exposure is only one important factor among other several important factors.

Certainly there is need for greater caution in the way crime is depicted. Romanticised depiction of crime should be avoided. In other countries there have been reports of the film 'Bonnie and Clyde' leading to crimes based on romanticized acts shown in the film. Such allegations have appeared in India in the context of a more recent hit film in Hindi *Bunty and Buble*.

Another suggestion for caution is that crime films and TV shows should concentrate more on 'whodunnit' tracing the criminal than on detailing methods of committing crimes. In this context objections were raised in India to some episodes of the TV detective serial *Vyomkesh Bakshi* which

(Continued on Page 12)

Nepal urf Lattha Par ki Diary

Madan Lal Hind

"*Nepal urf Lattha Par ki Diary*", written in Hindi by Ravinder Bharati, is a historic book on the underground movement to fight the autocratic Rana rule and to establish a democratic set-up in Nepal. Bharati is a well-known poet, writer and socialist political activist of Patna, Bihar. He has been a product of the JP Movement.

The contribution of B. P. Koirala, Ganesh Man Singh and whole lot of others to the fight for the democratic future of Nepal has been widely acknowledged and documented. But few books have talked of small workers who gave their lives for Nepal. The Diary, for a change, talks about the sacrifices of the unknown, unsung heroes of this battle.

In this sense, Bharati has done full justice to the dramatis personae of the theatre of the war for the soul of Nepal. The book gives a graphic account of the struggle waged by Ram Harakh, Kusheshwar Jha, Sivadhari Sahu, Chander, Divya Devi and many other soldiers. All of these Madhesies died fighting for democracy in their country.

Socialist leaders Dr Rammanohar Lohia and Jayaparaksh Narayan were the source of inspiration for the leaders like Bisheshwar Prasad Koirala and Krishna Prasad Bhattarai. The Diary delineates the role JP and Lohia played behind the scene for Nepal.

This reviewer, for instance, did not know that the socialist government in Burma (now Myanmar) sent, at the instance of Dr Lohia, plane loads

of arms for the volunteers of the Nepali Congress. Similarly, at the request of Jayaprakash Narayan, Subedarji, a veteran of the Azad Hind Fauj, had been helping the Nepal Congress foot soldiers for years.

They developed the "Muktagami Radio" (Liberation Radio of Nepal). This Radio worked overtime to give the latest news of the struggle. It played a major role in forming public opinion against the oppressive Rana rule. Government's Nepal Radio could not match the Muktagami Radio in its reach, efficiency and dispassionate coverage.

"*Nepal urf Lattha Par ki Diary*" graphically describes how the transmitter of the Muktagami Radio was literally carried on the back of renowned Hindi writer Phanishwar Nath Renu. Renu was a passionate socialist in India and a close associate of B. P. Koirala in Nepal.

The Muktagami Radio began its day with a liberation song. Then it continued to give the news day and night with the slogan "Jai Nepal" (Victory to Nepal). "Bhairhava has been captured. Birgunj has gone into the hands of Muktagami soldiers." "After the fall of the Rana Government, an interim government has been formed in Birgunj and Butwal." So on and so forth.

Veteran socialist commander Dr Kuldip Jha has been martyred. "What? It is impossible. Dr. Jha cannot die", says the driver of the bus going from Purnea to

(Continued on Page 12)

Pellet Guns in Kashmir

Ravi Nair

The government of India and the state government of Kashmir must immediately order their police forces to immediately stop using pellet guns and the lethal cartridges that they use. Any further usage of such weapons, which have caused extensive, arbitrary deaths and grievous wounds, would be not just callous, but a criminal act.

Since July 9, 2016, in the aftermath of the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen leader Burhan Wani, large scale protests and funeral gatherings have been taking place across the Kashmir Valley. The apparently indiscriminate use of allegedly “non-lethal” weapons like pellet guns to control crowds has resulted in 43 civilians having lost their lives so far. Hundreds have been blinded and a few thousand injured.

A curfew remains in effect in several parts across the Kashmir Valley. Additionally, mobile telephone networks and internet services remain dismantled, reportedly to prevent further agitation. Newspapers failed to publish for five consecutive days due to raids on their offices and printing presses, till they started again on July 21.

Protests in Kashmir have primarily involved stone throwing from demonstrators, with police and security force personnel responding with gunfire from firearms or pellet guns. The indiscriminate and excessive force used by state forces in Kashmir has no parallel

anywhere in India.

Stone throwing does not give police the right to shoot at protestors indiscriminately. Deadly force should only be used when it is unavoidable and proportionate to the crowd’s actions. Proportionality, necessity and calibration are key principles governing the use of force within national and international law.

Pellet guns were first introduced in Kashmir in 2010 for crowd control as a “non-lethal” alternative to other deadlier weapons. Nevertheless, in 2010, 14-year-old Irshad Ahmad Parray and 20-year-old Mudasir Nazir lost their lives to pellet gun injuries. These boys are two of ten victims who have been killed by pellet guns since 2010, yet these guns are considered the better option, a “non-lethal” choice to control crowds. It is reported that at least 92 people have lost their eyesight and at least 1,500 people have sustained serious injuries from pellet guns since 2010.

Domestic procedures on crowd control should reflect international expectations of proportionality and necessity. In an unnamed official document, provided by a confidential source, it is dictated that crowd control tactics must aim to minimise collateral damage and avoid the loss of human life, and that during training, an emphasis should be placed on respecting human rights. On paper, these procedures should protect Kashmiris, but in reality they are not followed.

During a crowd control operation, only two to five officers should have non-lethal weapons and banners should be used to warn the unlawful assembly prior to the deployment of any force. Additionally, the document states that when firing becomes necessary, which is only after efforts are made to disperse a crowd without force, every attempt should be made to fire below the waist. With the number of eye injuries Kashmiri citizens are facing, it is hard to believe that any attempt was made to fire below the waist.

Moreover, if shooting is resorted to, firing must be in single shot mode. Yet pellet guns fire hundreds of tiny shots with each cartridge. This goes hand in hand with the requirement that fire only be directed towards the most violent sections of a stone-pelting mob, not the mob in its entirety. Pellet guns do not offer effective aim to target the crowd accordingly and many peaceful protestors and bystanders have been injured during their use.

Furthermore, this document orders that women and children demonstrators only be dealt with by female officers and that water cannons, tear gas smoke, and if necessary stun grenades be used to disperse these demonstrators. The number of young victims affected by the current crowd control measures in Kashmir, particularly young boys, and the use of pellet guns on women and children refutes that this objective has been upheld.

Regrettably, the current state of law in India grants government officers impunity for even the most serious human rights violations, including the current pellet attacks and breakdowns in crowd control procedure. The Indian Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) produces de facto immunity for police officers, members of the armed forces and other government officials. Section 197 of the CrPC says that no court has jurisdiction over an alleged criminal offence committed by a government official “while acting or purporting to act within the discharge of his official duty”, without first obtaining authorisation from the requisite central or state government.

In contrast, the case of Shaimaa’ El-Sabbagh, in undemocratic Egypt, illustrates accountability not seen within India’s legal system. El-Sabbagh was a 31-year-old activist who died during a public assembly as a result of birdshot injuries. This case resulted in the sentencing of a police officer to 15 years for her death.

Moreover, following the Koothuparamba incident in 1994, in Kerala, police officers were charged with murder and had to fight the case on appeal for exoneration. The officers were exonerated as a result of the impunity available to them.

Although both of these were rare cases of prosecution, Kashmiris are unable to even fathom charges of this nature being levied against a police officer.

Ironically, the same day that Burhan Wani was killed, the Supreme Court of India made a decision in *Extra Judicial*

Execution Victim Families Association v. Union of India discussing fake encounters in Manipur and “the illegality of the use of excessive and retaliatory force by the army, security forces and police”. The Supreme Court noted that the rule of law applied “even when dealing with the enemy”. This commitment, however, is breached everyday in Kashmir. The court went on to hold that an unending state of unrest could not “be a fig leaf for prolonged, permanent or indefinite deployment of the armed forces as it would mock at our democratic process.”

The Indian government is violating international standards with its current response to protests in Kashmir. Specifically, the government is violating the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials and the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials. The basic principles state that, “Law enforcement officials...(must) apply non-violent means before resorting to the use of force”. Additionally, provision five states, “whenever the lawful use of force and firearms is unavoidable, law enforcement officials shall: (a) exercise restraint in such use and act in proportion to the seriousness of the offence... (b) minimize damage and injury... (c) ensure that assistance and medical aid are rendered to any injured or affected person at the earliest moment...”

In Kashmir, restraint is not being exercised, injury is not being minimised and medical assistance is not ensured. Pellet guns are not a proportional response to the current protests. Far too much

harm has been inflicted, particularly involving people’s eyesight, far too many bystanders, including children, have been injured and medical assistance comes only at the risk of being arrested and prosecuted.

When the police are involved in crowd control efforts, they must distinguish between violent protestors, peaceful protestors and bystanders. The pellet gun cartridges in Kashmir fire a large number of small pellets over a wide range, they are not targeted. Even the inspector general of the Jammu and Kashmir police acknowledged that pellets do not have a predictable trajectory.

Basic principles 13 and 14 discuss protests, stating, “in the dispersal of assemblies that are...non-violent, law enforcement officials shall avoid the use of force” and “in the dispersal of violent assemblies, law enforcement officials may use firearms only when less dangerous means are not practicable”. Further, firearms can only be used in the conditions stipulated under principle 9 — “self-defense or defense of others, against the imminent threat of death or serious injury, to prevent serious crime involving grave threat to life...”

All of the conditions stipulated pose a much greater risk than stone throwing. The magnitude of the circumstances is hardly comparable, yet pellet guns are being used on the people of Kashmir and have been since 2010.

Moreover, the basic principles require that, “in cases of death and serious injury or other grave consequences, a detailed report shall be sent promptly to competent authorities.” Hence, authorities

should be reporting and investigating every instance of serious injury resulting from the use of pellet guns. However, instead of investigating these injuries, police personnel are attacking ambulances and searching hospitals to make arrests.

Under article 3 of the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, “law enforcement officials may use force only when strictly necessary”. The code continues, “in general, firearms should not be used except when a suspected offender offers armed resistance or otherwise jeopardizes the lives of others”. Furthermore, the introduction to the code states, “every law enforcement agency should be representative of and responsive and accountable to the community as a whole”. However, the current state of conflict in Kashmir illustrates a clear divide along religious and cultural lines.

In 2013, the Jammu and Kashmir State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) stated that, “the use of pellet guns by government forces was a serious threat to life”. The SHRC declared that the petitions submitted regarding ten people who received serious bodily injury from pellet guns made out a *prima facie* case of a human rights violation. The commission also reminded law enforcement agencies that they must follow standard operating procedure and use minimum force.

That same year, the Jammu and Kashmir high court rejected a petition filed seeking a ban on the use of pepper gas and pellet guns for crowd control.

The use of pellet guns as a crowd control tactic must be

banned. Since 2010, these “non-lethal” weapons have caused serious injury and severe harm to thousands of Kashmiris. The use of pellet guns in Kashmir in reaction to the current protests is a clear violation of human rights and

humanitarian law. These weapons have neither been used proportionally nor in compliance with international standards on the use of force or domestic standards on crowd control.

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(Continued from Page 9)

detailed how some objects of everyday use could be used as weapons of murder.

Moreover the question is not just of the impact of a particular film or TV show but also of the overall impact of excessive depiction of crime and violence in media. For example the well known study of Prof. Centerwell of the University of Washington has concluded that the overall impact of the introduction of TV in the USA and Canada has resulted in a substantial increase in

the number of murders, rapes and assaults over a period of several decades.

So while allegations of media linkage in the context of some specific cases can be debated, there is no doubt that certainly there is need for caution and restraint as the reach and impact of media are increasing and on the whole excessive depiction of violence and crime in unrestrained ways can certainly lead to several kinds of problems.

(Continued from Page 9)

Kathmandu. “Dr Jha had promised me that he would come back for sure after unfurling the flag of democracy in Kathmandu”, wails the driver, tears rolling down his face. Bihar socialist leader Karpoori Thakur, who is also in the bus, pats the back of the inconsolable driver.

The Diary also records the contribution of the socialist journal Hindi “Weekly Janata” published from Patna to the movement for democracy. It was then published under the editorship of great socialist Hindi writer Rambriksha Benipuri. The book highlights how Dulari Master and Ganouri Mahto took *Janata* to every nook and corner of Nepal at the risk of their lives and limbs. Nepali Congress leaders used to call these two workers “Do Bailon ki Jodi”

(the couple of bullocks) of Munshi Premchand.

Ravinder Bharati seems to be greatly influenced by the world-famous tome “Ten Days that Shook the World” of John Reed about the Russian Bolshevik Revolution. The style is the same. Love for minutest details is the same. And the urge for accuracy is the same. Bharati’s prose tends to be sheer poetry at times. Proof-reading mistakes here and there are rather jarring, though.

On balance, “*Nepal urf Lattha Par ki Diary*” is an eminently readable book, particularly for those who are interested in the history of the democratic transformation of Nepal from the despotic Rana reign.

Open letter to M. J. Akbar

Respected Akbar *ji*,
Greetings,

Eid Mubarak. That you have become the Minister of State for External Affairs is no less a special occasion than Eid. We journalists should be very happy that you first became a spokesperson for the Bharatiya Janata Party and then a parliamentarian and now a minister. You fought an election on a Congress ticket. Then you came back to become an editor. Then you again went from an editor to a spokesperson and then a minister. Perhaps I will never know what you thought about journalists becoming *netas* and the work ethics that come into play with that.

Did you ever pass through a crisis of conscience? Even though there are no Gods in journalism, during these times, did you ever fear God?

Akbar *ji*, I am writing this letter to you with a certain degree of bitterness as well. But you are not the reason for that. You may help me out of it. For the last three years I have been called a pimp on social media. The political change that veteran journalists like you call great for India has also forged the culture of shouts of “pimp” and “hustler” trailing news stories and news bringers. It has come so far that even my mother has been called a whore - a woman who could never go to school, who does not even know what an anchor is, or what is prime time. She has never seen the studios of NDTV. All she asks is if I am keeping well. But she does read the newspaper very closely. When she found out that I am abused like this, she could not sleep well for days.

Akbar *ji*, when you came from journalism into politics, did people call you a pimp too, abuse you, vilify you-like they do me (especially after the episode with the black screen aired?) Then when you came back from the Congress into journalism, did people - especially the then opposition whose member you are today - see you as a pimp for 10 Janpath (the headquarters of the Congress) or any other party? What explanations did you give yourself then to carry on? Can you share those explanations with me? I need your help.

In journalism, I have done many a bad report. Some have been exceptionally terrible. But until three years ago, no one used to call me a pimp. Neither did they drag in my sister or mother into it. Akbar sir, I am not a pimp. But do tell me what should I do to become Akbar. When Murli Manohar Joshi used to be a minister in the Vajpayee government, I used to debate the saffronisation of education a lot. Back then, no one in your party office spoke to me with hostility. Dr Joshi even had tea served to me after interviews and asked for sweets to be brought in. He never said you are asking these questions because you are a pimp of the Congress. Due to his age, he often got angry but never did he decline an interview or hint the government was annoyed at me.

But now everything has changed. There is a new culture of political control. There is now a horde of people who try to find political leaning and meaning behind every news story. This horde is flagrantly abusive. They

often use the photo of our Prime Minister on their profiles and use symbols of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Many of them follow ministers and many are followed by ministers. They identify some as against the BJP and heap praises on the rest.

Definitely there has been a decline in journalism. It wasn't there at all when you fought an election, won, lost and came back to become an editor. That must have been the golden age of journalism. It can be called the Akbar age if those who abuse us don't take offence. All this means that today some journalists have become an unannounced extension of the spokesperson. Those who abuse me don't call these people pimps. The section that does is the same that trolls Smriti Irani.

As a colleague, in your Foreign Ministry, you will find General VK Singh who coined the word ‘presstitute’ for journalists. In Hindi, the crowds that agree and support him call us ‘*preshya*’ - a combination of press and *vaishya* (prostitute). Because I work for NDTV, they replace N with an R and call it Randi TV.

Do you think when journalists ask difficult questions, they are pimping another party? Which question can make one a pimp? If editors like you can tell me, I can learn a thing or two. I can tell young reporters don't become Ravish Kumar, if you must become somebody become Akbar because maybe even Ravish Kumar will one day become an Akbar.

I am a bit of an emotional person. I've definitely been shaken by these attacks. That's why after seeing you, I thought you could help me. For the last three years, before every report, I have been struck by the thought that those people who are celebrating India's cultural ascent may call me a pimp and my mother a whore, but my mother is the only real Mother India. I am bringing up my mother again and again because people of your party understand 'Ek Ma ki bhavna' the best. When you take the name of your mother, it's the end of an argument.

Akbar ji, I am writing this letter with a lot of hope. Your response will be an example for future journalists who these days pay Rs. 10 to 15 lakhs to study journalism. In my eyes, a generation that pays so much to study journalism is not worth much, but your response can boost their confidence.

When you returned to journalism from politics, did you worry about the party and its ideology when writing about them? Were you able to hold your ground? How firmly? When you returned to politics from journalism, did you start doubting what you wrote? Did you ever feel that you wrote what you did expecting a reward? I believe that we journalists write in the pressure of our times and context. Switching between journalism and politics, can one be free from these moral dilemmas? Did you manage to do it?

To avoid being like Twitter trolls, I don't want to bring up what you wrote about the riots in the country including Gujarat. I am just asking this on a personal level. Even before you, people from a number of media

organisations have gone to the Rajya Sabha. With the Congress, you fought for the Lok Sabha, and with for the BJP, you fought for the Rajya Sabha. I am happy that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has kept this tradition of the Congress government alive of putting journalists in Parliament. People singing the praises of Indian culture perhaps did not notice that popular Atal ji was himself a journalist and after becoming Prime Minister, he could not abandon his love for his paper Veer Arjun. You can find quite a few other examples.

I haven't jumped into politics just yet. If I do, you will be of great help. That is why you should tell me what journalists should do. Should they fight elections, become ministers, and then become journalists again? Will they be able to report then? When one becomes a reporter in the name of national interest, should they always be on the lookout of political opportunities?

I hope that in the name of principles, those who hurl abuses are welcoming you. They should also shower flowers on you. Your competence is without doubt. You are a hero for all of us. Those of us who consider journalism to be a religion could not see how you have upheld its rituals. Because anchors these days show their importance based on their TRPs, I would say I am a zero-TRP anchor. The TRP meter tells me no one watches me. On these grounds, you can overlook my letter. But being a minister, you are principally answerable to each and every citizen of this country. So based on this, you can respond. The one with the top TRPs won't ask you how a minister can respond to someone with zero TRPs. And that too a Minister of State for External

Affairs. Once again, Eid Mubarak. From the heart.

Your minion,

Ravish Kumar

*Senior Executive Editor,
NDTV India*

*Translated by
Divyanshu Dutta Roy*

Supreme Court and RSS

No judicial court advises any suspect or accused to tender apology so as to escape defamation prosecution. There are cases where even after the accused had tendered an apology in a defamation case, the court, after trial, convicted him and awarded punishment. Throwing all norms to the winds, our Supreme Court advised, or rather threatened the Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi that he will have to face trial if he does not tender apology to the RSS for leveling charge against it regarding complicity in Mahatma Gandhi's murder. Let the whole world know, once again, know the true facts about such a grave matter. Is not RSS capable to defend itself? It is very shocking to find a high pillar of our Republic running to help an organization which is engaged in poison-spreading campaign against the minorities. The Supreme Court would do well not to transgress boundaries of its role and functioning.

–Pannalal Surana,

Chairman, Central Parliamentary Board, Socialist Party (India).

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Brief note on NEP
Ramesh Patnaik

British Raj in india
Chandra Bhal Tripathi
Rammanohar Lohia

**Political parties and
our Constitution**
Jawaharlal Jasthi

Mahatma Gandhi's Speech

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Segregation in democracy

Kuldip Nayar

Yet another Dalit family was hacked to death because it was suspected to have eaten beef. The laboratory tests of the “beef” showed that it was some other cattle. Some time ago, the Kerala House in Delhi was attacked by *gau rakshks* because beef was served there. But the most shameful aspect is that there was no repentance among the upper caste and even the leaders of the RSS, who are supposed to work for the social upliftment, did not utter a word of either condemnation or sorrow.

All religions indulge in social, economic or political discrimination but it is not the part of the religion itself as it is among the Hindus. And for centuries, it is going on without much challenge. There are still certain parts of India where the Dalit cannot use the road or well which are frequented by the upper castes. The worst part is that the funeral ground which the upper caste use is exclusive for them.

Islam which teaches equality has also been affected and the burial places of those placed high in life cannot be used by ordinary Muslims. In fact, a different kind of caste

system prevails in Islam. For example, Sayyds are considered the Brahmins of the community and they practise the same kind of discrimination as the Hindus do when it comes to marriage or death. They refuse to consign the bodies at the common burial ground.

In fact, an ordinary Muslim suffers from both sides—one because he is poor and, two, because he is considered not at par with the well-placed Muslims. Here, the economic factor has come into play. And then it has got mixed with preferences and prejudices, making the poor Muslims’ plight still more pitiful. True, the Indian constitution does not allow discrimination on the basis of religion. But it is practised all over and even the police force has come to be contaminated and it connives at the violation of the upper caste without a demur.

The practice has become more glaring and persistent since the advent of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s regime. That the upper caste people have been appointed to key positions in universities and other institutions at the behest of the government make some of the best

brains rot. The RSS makes it sure that the people appointed are from the “right” background to ensure that the Hindutva philosophy is taken as the guideline.

Not long ago, the Pune film institute went on strike for months together when its head was replaced by a television artiste who had the blessings of the RSS. The government did not change its decision even in the midst of widespread discontentment. Ultimately, the students had to give in because their career was at peril.

Time has come for introspection. The upper castes have not accepted the presence of Dalit or even members of other backward classes in their midst. The numerous agitations in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh or, for that matter, in other parts of the country have not jolted the conscience of the upper castes. These are the results of the government pursuing with reservations despite the 10-year time-limit set by the Constituent Assembly way back in 1950.

I recall that during the debates of the Constituent Assembly when Dr B.R. Ambedkar, a revered Dalit leader, declared that they did not want any reservation. He was persuaded by the assurance that the period will not be more than 10 years. Now the situation is such that as soon as the period is over, parliament unanimously extends it to another 10 years. No political party, including the communists, has stood up to resist and say enough was enough.

Now that elections in Uttar Pradesh, the largest state in the country, are scheduled to take place in 2017, Dalit leader Mayawati is

(Continued on Page 8)

Brief note on NEP

Ramesh Patnaik

The Ministry of Human Resources Development preferred not to put T.S.R. Subramanian Committee Report (30 April, 2016) on Draft New Education Policy (NEP 2016) in public domain. Keeping the nation in dark about a report of a public committee is most undemocratic and highly condemnable particularly when it is related to education, a fundamental right of the people. Now, it has issued a document of its own with a title '*Some Inputs for Draft National Education Policy 2016*' and is seeking response from the people before 31st July which we may call as Proto-NPE because, the government will not change it in essence unless there is a strong peoples' movement against the nefarious designs built into it. The document plans for a great deal of commercialization and communalization of education as expected.

This is a most ill conceived document on education from the central government ever. Though the MHRD played safe by stating that it is only an input from the government in making the policy, it speaks clearly the mindset of the government. The government does not propose abolition of commercialisation of education. That is the first acid test in deciding the nature of any policy document in education. Government is rather going to facilitate the growth of commercialisation of education further. Again, it is now clear that the government will pursue more vigorously the pet policy of the ruling classes - Public Private Partnership to siphon public funds to private

agencies. So, naturally government doesn't speak about 'Common School System' and least about Common Education System. Multi standard institutions, in terms of infrastructure and teaching faculty, would continue both in public and private sectors. The government is going to proceed with globalisation of trade in education services by preparing ground by tribunalisation of justice and multi-nationalisation of accreditation along with bringing legislation for allowing foreign universities. The document gives assurance in weak terms for allocation of 6 per cent GDP for education. But, its stress on commercialisation would only prove the things otherwise. On the other hand, it does not even hint at cumulative gap mounted over 30 years from the time of NPE 1986 due to far lower allotments over the period made to education against the assured 6 per cent of GDP in the policy.

On the other hand the government proceeds with its project of reestablishing Manu Dharma not only by denying education to the SCs, STs, and all disadvantaged sections and minorities — religious and linguistic but also confining the sections to skill training which all probability would reproduce caste system. Drop outs will be encouraged by rigorous screening akin to Brahminical practices and the children so dropped out, mostly from disadvantaged sections, will be diverted for 'skilling'. Child labor is not going to be abolished and rather will be institutionalized by providing

'alternate schools'. Open schools, open colleges and open educational facilities on one hand and skilling on the other hand will be the main thrusts of the government and all disadvantaged will be pushed towards these thrust areas. Increasing majority of the disadvantaged sections on all counts, caste, religion, region, gender and linguistic-cultural group will be denied formal, liberal and really professional education. Majority of them will be denied even upper primary education as the diversion would start as early as at class V for them.

Though government in the document talks of social justice, nowhere it talks about need of reservations, applying reservations to all institutions and at all levels and applying rule of reservation in privately run schools and colleges. There is no even mention of need of hostels and other affirmative measures to bring the poor and socially disadvantaged to the schools, colleges and universities. Languages of the people will be looked down. Mother tongue as a medium of education will be confined only up to class V. Again, the state governments are given free hand to introduce English medium even at primary level. The government is clearly against mother tongue as a medium of education only to produce cheap labor for corporate service sectors and consumers for their products. Sanskrit will be introduced in all states at school level and college levels and the glory of a particular religion, a particular culture, a particular language, a particular caste and a particular gender against the rest will be sung through it in the name of glorious past. The medieval period of Indian history (which RSS consider as Muslim Period) is not even referred to in the

document and it makes a clear indication of the government approach to mitigate the contributions of the period in development of the civilization of this land. The communal approach which this government pursues leads to neglect or playing down of contributions of all religious and linguistic minorities, tribes and suppressed casts and marginalized sections. Coming to the campus democracy, there will be selective ban on student and teacher activists to curb opposition to the projects of neo-liberalism and communalism in the campuses. High level of bureaucratization of administration and centralisation of curricula is sought on one hand to regiment thought and on the other hand to subordinate education system to global market in content and form. The document nowhere gives a clear historical understanding of what education stands for. Further it does not give recognition to the fact that education was denied to vast majority of this country in the name of caste and gender. Neither the document notes the historical development of the present education system, the contributions of reformers nor does it think for a scientific secular democratic education system for future. It does not look like a policy document or like a document in preparation of a policy framework. It is a techno-managerial document than a socio-political one. It only tried to reorient the education system to sub-serve the interest of the corporate capital - domestic and foreign on one hand and to communalize education on the other hand by interfering with the system in a post-modernist method.

The government wants through this policy to further commercialise and communalize education system.

The thrust will not be knowledge and enlightenment of individual and development of the people and the country but skilling individual and benefiting corporate market. Further, it seeks the increase of caste discrimination, religious, cultural and linguistic discriminations, gender and normal body discriminations. The policy is not interested in reservations, hostels and stipends to support poor and disadvantaged sections rather it stands for screening and excluding the poor and disadvantaged and divert them for vocational training and open learning. It is opposed to mother tongues of the people. Now, the rights and entitlements of the poor and disadvantaged are at stake. It seeks to centralize curricula, bureaucratize administration and globalize accreditation and tribunalise justice to facilitate multi-lateral and plurilateral possible agreements in 'trade in education service' either under World Trade Organisation or outside of it. Government is highly allergic to the rights of the students and teachers, autonomy of the universities and is out to weed out any opposition to its project of commercialisation and communalisation of education. It seems out of place to expect something like transformative education from this government and inclusion of subjects like civil liberties, human rights, subjects to sensitize the students about social discriminations and cultural diversities, alternative models of development and subjects like public policy for sustenance of small holding peasant economy and so on and so forth. The government policy perspective seems is meant to serve the ruling classes and the neo-

(Continued on Page 15)

Thus spoke Mahatma Gandhi

It is a well known fact that on the night of December 22-23, 1949, idols were put under the central dome of the Babri mosque, at Ayodhya by some miscreants and an FIR was lodged by the police constables posted there at that time. The 1949 violation was a result of premeditated collusion between bigoted sections of the then ruling Congress party and the local Faizabad bureaucracy led by a deputy commissioner whose blatant partisanship was proved by his subsequent admission to the Bharatiya Jan Sangh.

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru expressed his distress at the 1949 incident in a series of letters, to Deputy Prime Minister Vallabhbhai Patel, to Governor-General C. Rajagopalachari, to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Govind Ballabh Pant and to a close friend K.G. Mashruwala (The Babri Masjid, edited by A.G. Noorani). In a December 26, 1949, telegram to Pant, he presciently described the installation as a "dangerous example" that will have "bad consequences." To Mashruwala (letter dated March 5, 1950), Nehru confessed that the district officer in Faizabad "misbehaved," further that while UP CM Pant "condemned the act on several occasions" he refrained from "taking definite action." In a letter dated April 17, 1950, to the U.P. Chief Minister, the Prime Minister Nehru poured out his anguish: "... U.P is becoming an almost foreign land to me ... I find that communalism has invaded the minds and hearts of those who were the pillars of the Congress in the past. It is a creeping paralysis and the patient does not even realize it ... It seems to me that for some reason or other, or perhaps mere political expediency, we have been far too lenient with this disease ... "These exchanges conclusively nail the lie that the 1949 installation of idols was an act of faith on the part of the Hindu masses.

In this context here is an important speech delivered by Mahatma Gandhi in Delhi at prayer meeting on 27-28th November 1947, well before the Ayodhya controversy erupted.

–Qurban Ali

Brothers and Sisters,

Yesterday I wanted to mention one point but since I had to talk about many other things, it was left out.

I have received many telegrams from Kathiawar. I have already told you about what I heard and what subsequently appeared in the Pakistani newspapers. Those papers are read by thousands of people there. May be some ten thousand or so. I do not know how many people must be reading them. But nothing would be achieved if I started thinking whether those things had really happened. Hence it was good that I placed before you what I had read in those newspapers. I do not know if all those things are true. If they are true, they are a matter of great shame for Kathiawar. And if

they are not true, it is a matter of shame for the newspapers. Thus it is a matter of shame for either side. I have also told you what the Sardar has to comment on the matter. He came today also and told me that whatever reports came from there were not worth mentioning. They were highly exaggerated. But the telegram I have received from Rajkot is worth noting. It is a fairly long telegram and I would like to mention it to you in brief. After all, I know the Muslims of Kathiawar. I do not know them individually, but I know the Khojas, Meenas, Vaghers and some Kumbis among the peasants, and Mahers. After all, I was born there and lived there for almost 17 years. In fact I lived there for full 17 years, because I did not go out to study anywhere. My father never sent me anywhere. I

completed my studies there and attended college for a few months, and that too at Bhavnagar. Even for the examination I could not go beyond Ahmedabad. That was my condition. I saw everything that happened there and, later too, kept contact with the people by visiting them. So, the sender of that telegram says that I am greatly worried on their account, and, in turn, my worry has become their worry. He says it is true that some Hindus in Kathiawar had lost their balance, but is there any place where this has not happened. They resorted to violence and even harmed some Muslims. They destroyed their houses and even burnt them down.

But, he says, the Congressmen did not let the situation go far. They were under the leadership of Dhebarbhai.

I know him very well. He went forward to protect the Muslims and succeeded to a great extent. Not all Hindus were involved in those acts of loot and arson. Had that been the case, all Muslim houses in Rajkot would have been set ablaze, there would have been large-scale violence and some people would have been killed. But things did not reach that point. The Congressmen and others took every precaution. Dhebarbhai was abused and manhandled. Even though he is a big man and also a lawyer, when the mob gets excited all considerations of big and small are forgotten. They harassed him because he was trying to protect the Muslims. Some people who accompanied Dhebarbhai write, that, though some injury was caused, Dhebarbhai was saved by other people. The telegram also mentions help from the Thakore Saheb and the police. In that case, who are left to be suspected of creating the trouble? They say “the *Hindu Mahasabha* and the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh*— these organizations have certainly done some mischief—their aim was to drive out the Muslims at least from Rajkot. However they could not do so. But now we have nothing more to worry and there is no danger to the Muslims. So you also should not worry. We are watching the situation elsewhere too and we would send you another telegram.” I have received a telegram from a Muslim gentleman from the same place. He expresses his extreme gratitude to the Congressmen and others who tried their best to save the life and property of the Muslims. But there is yet another telegram from Bombay also sent by a Muslim gentleman. He states that what I had said earlier about Kathiawar was correct but what I have been told later about it is not correct. That lots of things

have happened there and are still happening. I do not know whether I should believe the telegram from Bombay or the one from the other Muslim gentleman. But I doubt the truth about the telegram from Bombay because it has been sent from Bombay, while the other one has been sent by those who are right in Kathiawar. Moreover, the people of Kathiawar cannot deceive me. Where would they escape after deceiving me? Hence I feel that the telegram from Bombay gives an exaggerated version. The actual situation would be known to me in due course. For the present, let me at least put all this before you.

There is also a telegram from Bhavnagar. It is from the Maharaja of Bhavnagar. I know him too, because I have lived there for three or four months. So he felt concerned about me and wondered why I was so much worried. He has said in the telegram that I need not worry. He says that they are all vigilant. The Hindus also are vigilant. They would not let any harm come to the Muslims and I should have no doubt at all about it. But there is a telegram from Junagadh sent by some Muslims. They say that I am being deceived, and I should set up a commission and inquire whether the Muslims are being harassed or not. Similar telegrams have also been sent to Jawaharlal, the Sardar and others. I would like to say that it is not possible to appoint a commission for anything and everything. Setting up a commission is no joke. Where is the need for having a commission even though some harm might have been done? As for Kathiawar, I am like a commission myself. If anything comes to my notice, I can check it. I can handle the Princes as well as the people of Kathiawar. I do not claim to succeed in everything I

undertake or that they abide by everything I say. But is not Kathiawar the same as Bihar? If someone wants me to set up a commission in Bihar, do you think I would oblige? I am at their disposal myself. People there love me and listen to me. And so, it would not be proper to set up any commission there. I have also received several letters from the Muslims in Rajkot. Many of them are friendly with the Hindus and also happy with the Congress. Then, who belongs to the *Hindu Mahasabha* and the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh*? I can have no enmity towards them. They think theirs is the only way of saving Hinduism. But I believe that Hinduism will not be saved in that manner. They believe in violent opposition to those who commit an evil act. But I would ask how fighting an evil by another evil will help. We have got our own Government. Take it to task and demand an explanation as to why such things are happening. Moreover, our Government is vigilant and it is trying its best. And so I would like to tell the *Hindu Mahasabha* and also the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh*—both are Hindu organizations and many influential and educated people are associated with them as in other organizations—that they cannot save Hinduism in this manner. Is it true that they have harassed the Muslims? If not, who has? The Congress has not harassed them, nor has either of the Governments done it. Who then are the other Hindus who did it?

Today all the Hindus and Sikhs are to be blamed for this just as in Pakistan all the Muslims are to be blamed, and rightly so. That is why I would suggest that those who are innocent and yet are accused should clear their names. The Muslims in

Junagadh can get justice if they want. Why then should we set up a commission? Having talked about the situation there let me also talk about the situation here. The Sardar has made some arrangements and he is going to protect all the mosques we have here. You must have read the notice sent by him in the newspapers that the occupied premises of the mosques should be vacated in a week's time otherwise they will be vacated with the help of the police. But I ask you what will he gain by sending the police? If some Hindus have installed an idol in some mosque—the idol may be of gold or silver or brass or earth or stone—but it is said, and I also believe, that so long as it has not been sanctified and not worshipped by pure hands, in my view it is not an idol but a mere piece of stone or gold.

Such idols have been installed in the mosque at the corner of Connaught Place (in New Delhi). In my view, there is no Hanuman in those idols. To me it is a mere piece of stone which has been shaped like Hanuman and to which some *sindoor* has also been applied. In my view it is not worthy of worship. It can be worshipped only if it is legitimately installed and sanctified. But all this was not done. Hence it is the duty of those who have installed the idols to remove them from there at daybreak and then keep them wherever they choose. By thus installing idols in the mosques they are desecrating the mosques and also insulting the idols. As followers of Hinduism we are idol-worshippers, but worshipping any idol in this manner is not religion but the opposite of it. So, why should the Sardar send the police there? Those who are Hindus among you should become watchmen and remove the idols so installed. We

should offer to repair the mosques which have been damaged. But the Sardar says that the Government would bear the expenses of the repairs of those mosques. Why should the Government do it? Is it not because we are not doing it ourselves? The Government has to protect everybody. But it would be a matter of shame for us all—Sikhs and Hindus today.

Of course I have not heard about any Sikh having installed the idols, for the Sikhs have only one idol or, say, the holy treatise, that is, the *Granthaheb*. I have not known of any Sikh having kept the *Granthaheb* in any mosque. Even if any of them has done so he has insulted the *Granthaheb*. The *Granthaheb* can be kept only in a Gurudwara. Only the holy Sikhs keep it on a high pedestal after nicely decorating it. Somebody like me would wrap it in a nice khadi cloth. But today, even though people do not think in terms of swadeshi or foreign things we do manufacture beautiful woolens and silks by hand. If we spread such silk cloth and keep the *Granthaheb* on it, it would be worthy of worship. And if any Sikh goes and keeps it in a mosque, he insults the *Granthaheb* and then it cannot be worthy of worship. A Muslim gentleman came to see me today. I could not make out what he wanted to say. But he was holding a copy of the Koran which was half burnt. Even that was sacred for him and so he had wrapped it in a very clean cloth. He opened the cloth and showed the burnt Koran to me. He did not say anything but looked at me with tearful eyes and then went away. He talked a few things with Brajkishan, since I was busy with my work. Similarly, if any Muslim comes here and installs the Koran here and beats you and me up, I would say

that he is insulting the Koran. The Koran does not ordain that people should be compelled to accept it. That is why I very respectfully wish to tell the *Hindu Mahasabha* and the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* and others who wish to listen to me and also the Sikhs that the Sikhs are great and if they turn good and become true followers of Guru Nanak, the Hindus would then automatically become good. I have great respect for the Sikhs in my heart but today, everybody, whether Hindu or Sikh is going astray and India is being destroyed. Are we going to drag India into dust after raising her high? Are we going to destroy our religion, our achievements and our country? May God save us from all this.

[From Hindi] Vide "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 27-11-1947 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-11-1947. *Prarthana Pravachan—II*, pp. 144-50. (Abridged)

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Forgotten history of misrule of British Raj in india

Chandra Bhal Tripathi

An article by Dinyar Patel that appeared on BBC News-India on June 11, 2016 is heartrending. In the famine in Orissa in 1866 one million people perished. All due to the policies of the British colonial rulers. What a shame that we all have forgotten this tragedy. We salute the great Dadabhai Naoroji, President, Indian National Congress and the first Indian Member of the British House of Commons, to have seriously investigated into the issues of Indian poverty. We also salute the great nationalist and historian Ramesh Chandra Datt, also President of the INC who thoroughly exposed the British misrule. In this article he has been quoted as follows:

“By 1901, Romesh Chunder Dutt, another leading nationalist, enumerated 10 mass famines since the 1860s, setting the total death toll at a whopping 15 million. Indians were now so poor - and the government so indifferent in its response - that, he stated, “every year of drought was a year of famine.”

The following are some more excerpts from the BBC News article:

“In modern-day Orissa state, the worst hit region, one out of every three people perished, a mortality rate far more staggering than that caused by the Irish Potato Famine.

“Famine, while no stranger to the subcontinent, increased in frequency and deadliness with the advent of British colonial rule.

The East India Company helped kill off India’s once-robust textile industries, pushing more and more

It is a pity that after Independence the Government of India decided to remain in the British Commonwealth by dropping the word ‘British’ and even today continues to acknowledge the British monarch as the Head of Commonwealth. It was a British Labour Party MP, Fenner Brockway, who strongly urged India to leave the Commonwealth. I read his brilliant article in the Congress Socialist Party weekly Janata in 1948. We continue to pay homage to the British monarch and yet claim to be a free country. Burma severed all links with Britain in 1948 under the leadership of Gen. Aung Sain, father of Nobel laureate Suu Kyi Aung Sain.

The cruelties of the British colonial rulers are galore. Jallianwala Bagh is a permanent blot on the British rule. I remember the man-created Bengal famine of 1943 when my revered mother, a selfless social worker, organised commendable relief work for Bengal famine victims in our small eastern

people into agriculture. This, in turn, made the Indian economy much more dependent on the whims of seasonal monsoons.

“It can, we fear, no longer be concealed that we are on the eve of a period of general scarcity,” announced the Englishman, a Calcutta newspaper, in late 1865.

“The Indian and British press carried reports of rising prices, dwindling grain reserves, and the

UP town Basti. The shameless British Government never apologised to the Indian people for their cruel deeds. What prevents us from giving up this vestige of the colonial rule? Cannot we do it even now? But we perhaps cannot expect any such self-respecting step from people like Narasimha Rao, Manmohan Singh, Narendra Modi who feel happy in being *chamchas* of their new masters, the United States of America. Even in recent years more than 3,00,000 kisans have committed suicide due to highly discriminatory policies of World Bank and International Monetary Fund which are nothing but appendages of the US Govt. For serious drought situation in parts of Maharashtra and some other States and perennial scarcity areas of Orissa our Central and State Governments are squarely responsible though indirectly to an extent the exploitative US Government, WB and IMF cannot absolve themselves of their complicity.

desperation of peasants no longer able to afford rice.

“All of this did little to stir the colonial administration into action. In the mid-19th Century, it was common economic wisdom that government intervention in famines was unnecessary and even harmful. The market would restore a proper balance. Any excess deaths, according to Malthusian principles, were nature’s way of responding to overpopulation.

“On a flying visit to Orissa in February 1866, Cecil Beadon, the colonial governor of Bengal (which then included Orissa), staked out a similar position. “Such visitations of providence as these no government can do much either to prevent or alleviate,” he pronounced.

“Regulating the skyrocketing grain prices would risk tampering with the natural laws of economics. “If I were to attempt to do this,” the governor said, “I should consider myself no better than a dacoit or thief.” With that, Mr Beadon deserted his emaciated subjects in Orissa and returned to Kolkata (Calcutta) and busied himself with quashing privately funded relief efforts.

“In May 1866, it was no longer easy to ignore the mounting catastrophe in Orissa. British administrators in Cuttack found their troops and police officers starving. The remaining inhabitants of Puri were carving out trenches in which to pile the dead. “For miles round you heard their yell for food,” commented one observer.

“As more chilling accounts trickled into Calcutta and London, Mr Beadon made a belated attempt to import rice into Orissa. It was, with cruel irony, hindered by an overabundant monsoon and flooding. Relief was too little, too late, too rotten. Orissans paid with their lives for bureaucratic foot-dragging.

“For years, a rising generation of western-educated Indians had alleged that British rule was grossly impoverishing India. The Orissa famine served as eye-popping proof of this thesis. It prompted one early

nationalist, Dadabhai Naoroji, to begin his lifelong investigations into Indian poverty.

dated picture of Indian famine victims

“As the famine abated in early 1867, Mr Naoroji sketched out the earliest version of his “drain theory”—the idea that Britain was enriching itself by literally sucking the lifeblood out of India.

“Security of life and property we have better in these times, no doubt,” he conceded. “But the destruction

of a million and a half lives in one famine is a strange illustration of the worth of the life and property thus secured.”

“His point was simple. India had enough food supplies to feed the starving - why had the government instead let them die? While Orissans perished in droves in 1866, Mr Naoroji noted that India had actually exported over 200m pounds of rice to Britain. He discovered a similar pattern of mass exportation during other famine years. “Good God,” Mr Naoroji declared, “when will this end?”

(Continued from Page 2)

being wooed by all political parties. She has said that her party would go it alone and there is every possibility that she might return with a majority. Her advantage is that the Dalit voter obediently follows her instruction. She is the only one who can get the Dalit votes transferred to some other community. Even though the Congress has traditionally fought for social justice, Mahatma Gandhi was the only leader who believed in giving equal status to the Dalits. True, they did not like the title “Harijan” (sons of God) given by him because they thought it was too patronizing.

Dr Rajendra Prasad after finishing his task as the president of the constituent assembly was appointed as the food minister. He went to Gandhiji to seek his advice on his accommodation. The Mahatma, who was living then in a *bhangi* (sweeper) colony told him to live in the cottage next to the one he was residing. Dr Rajendra Prasad was so horrified over the idea that he went to the then Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru and complained on Gandhiji’s suggestion.

No legislation is going to help, as has been India’s experience. Ultimately, it depends on the upper castes to change their attitude. They believe in democracy but not in equality which is the integral part of the system. People in the world feel hard to believe that the country which has sent rocket to the Mars, something which the advanced countries envy, practise discrimination against human beings.

Their horror is glaring when they see that a democratic country where people queue before the ballot box to choose their leader cannot get over the prejudice which they have inherited from the time even before the British who divided the society caste-wise and religion-wise to make their rule easy.

Whatever parliament does to eliminate this malady will not help until the upper castes realize that what they are doing is against the democratic polity which they cherish. The sooner this realization takes place, the better it would be for the country and its polity.

Letter to H. J. Laski

Central Jail, Agra (No date)

Dear Prof. Laski,

“As the newspapers of my country have not yet learnt to cut the question hour in your Parliament, I have to trouble you over something you would know nothing about. The Under-Secretary for State, India, Mr. Arthur Henderson, has said that I have made unfounded allegations in respect of my detention in the Lahore Fort. “I doubt if the Under-Secretary knows what my accusation is. The amazing thing is the repose with which the British Government has asked my country to dismiss my accusation when, in practice, it has made some very awkward though successful attempts at suppressing its publication. Aside from odd bits, my country does not to this day know of what I have accused the Government. While still a prisoner in the Lahore Fort, but after I was allowed to write to the High Court, I made a Habeas Corpus application in December 1944, and supplemented it with somewhat fuller details in January 1945. When the hearing was held, the Judge ordered it to be secret. The Government had earlier taken an added precaution and banned, under one Ordinance or another, all reference in the newspapers to this Habeas Corpus case. At the hearing, the Judge declared his intention to go into the merits of my application and I was examined on oath, and they were on the way to enquiring into my accusation, when he accepted the Indian Government’s plea that I was under

orders of transfer to another province and the proceedings were scotched. In the order dismissing my applications, the Judge also felt that the ‘sole motive’ of the India Government in detaining me was not to torture me. I regret I am unable to give you the exact wording of this strange order. I may add that I was arrested in Bombay in May 1944, and kept there for a month. If it was the Government’s intention to secure the King’s peace, that could have been very well achieved by continuing to hold me in the Bombay jail or taking me to another as now, in my home province, the United Provinces. In respect of prisoners ill-treated in the Lahore Fort, the Punjab Government has often amused the country by passing the responsibility on to the Government of India. The British Under-Secretary has now almost passed it back to the Punjab Government.

So far as it concerns me, the Government of India is the culprit, for I have been its prisoner in law as in fact and recurrent orders for my ill-treatment emanated from it, and the Punjab Government is an associate in crime. No Government in your country could so interfere with Justice or shirk a criminal charge against it. On my transfer to this jail, I made an application to the Federal Court, but the Chief Justice of India felt that he had no jurisdiction of any sort. After several months’ delay, I have succeeded in contacting my lawyer Mr. Madanlal Pittie, but I do not know how much longer it would be before he is supplied with

copies of my applications to the Lahore High Court. These were seized from me on my transfer from Lahore to Agra.

I do not intend to detail to you my rather long experience in the Lahore Fort. Should your Parliamentary Party or any of its members be genuinely interested, they could easily obtain the two applications to the Lahore High Court and the third to the Federal Court as court documents. I must add that these applications are a definite understatement of what I had to go through. In the first place, I have avoided mention of vulgarities and, in the second, the short scope of a court application and inadequate talents would have made me sound dramatic, if I had tried to communicate the dull but ugly cruelty as I felt it. I had hoped that the hearing in the court would bring it out more fully. I would here indicate that I was ill-treated in one way or another for over four months, that I was kept awake day after day, night after night, the longest single stretch running into ten days; and that, when I resisted the police in their efforts to make me stand, they wheeled me round on my manacled hands on the matted floor. It took me some time to learn as a physical feat, and a lesson I should like never to forget, that no pain is actually unbearable; it has either been unbearable in the past, but then the man is insensible or dead, or it appears to be unbearable as an imagined state of the next moment. “It is true that I was not beaten nor were needless driven under toe-nails. I do not wish

to make comparisons. A European, more than another, with his better sensibility to the human body and if he is not dulled with horrors, may realise what I underwent. But, beating and bastinadoing to death or near about it and forcing the human mouth to considerable atrocities—these and worse have also taken place. I will give you one or two instances, as readily come to my mind.

One man swallowed poison in a police outpost of the Bombay Province, another threw himself down a well in a United Provinces jail; and of those who died through beating or ill-treatment after their arrest, there is no checking up except that in one Orissa jail out of over 300 in the country, the number of deaths among political prisoners rose to around 29 or 39—I cannot exactly recollect. My country has gone through a great deal in the past three and a half years. Men have been shot dead by the thousand, some out of moving vehicles as a test of marksmanship or to instil terror, women have been strung up on trees and lacerated or raped on the public road, and houses razed in the Lidice or Becassi fashion, though not as intensive in a single area but in the total vaster by the score. This is not surprising. Once it is understood that the country was reconquered in terror and vengefulness, the fact that nothing more massive than the August Rebellion is known to modern history explains itself. Three to four million died in the created famine. Already there was beating of an another kind fifteen years ago. My father, who died in a bus two weeks back, was beaten unconscious in the wholly peaceful raid of the Dharsana Salt Depot.

Aside from my regret that we had not enough time together, it is as well that he is freed from successive imprisonments and worse in his own country, and from the oppressive sense of a nation's suffering that goes with these.

I have given you the national picture to fit into it my own experience as very small bit. The British Labour Movement, as any other socialist movement, has been erring, because it views foreign rule on the ground of democracy or fascism or other political forms at home. If pre-conceived notions are cast away, it is just possible that the British system of ruling my country may be found to be slightly worse than any other, or it may be slightly better. That would depend on one's understanding of facts. No one would deny that British rule in Hindustan has, as a young brute, been heinously atrocious. It is again becoming so, now that it is declining into an aging ogre. The middle period of secured and comparatively orderly rule is gone beyond recall. I do not know if it is at all possible to prevent or even to mitigate the ugly doings of this ogre. But this I know that the British Labour Movement will not even have made an attempt, if it theorises foreign rule on any other view than that of bloody youth and crueller decline, with the middle period, at any rate in my country, dead and gone. In face of all this, the Under-Secretary has had the brass to call me a liar.

All Governments, as known to everybody, tell lies on the plane of high policy, but when a Government does so at the level of persons and minor things, it must be wholly mucked. Isn't there one man in the

Parliamentary Labour Party who can bring this out? Should it be said that the doers of these atrocities are in large numbers my own countrymen in British employ? I do not deny that there is a great deal of rottenness in my country and that is what makes it so galling, but the Englishman thinks he would not be here unless he made use of it.

Miss Usha Mehta's case

Not wanting to release me, the Under-Secretary has also said that the Government is considering the question of my prosecution. I am now under detention for over a year and a half, apart from my imprisonment of two years early in the war, and if the Government has not yet completed considering this question, it may as well go on doing so indefinitely. There is a young woman in a Bombay jail, Miss Usha Mehta, perhaps the only woman political in the jails of that province, who is doing a term of four years for running a freedom radio. I am not quarrelling with her sentence, although, had this young woman of rare attainment and rare courage been Spanish or Russian, your countrymen would have glamorised her into a heroine. She was held under detention for a year and for several months more as an under-trial, so that, if this judicial lapse had not taken place, she might have well completed her term and be out now. I might add that her trial and that of her colleagues was banned from the newspapers.

Of the eight to ten thousand political prisoners, a large number of whom are classified as ordinary criminals, almost the entire lot are held in prison, aside from the inherent inequity of their sentence or

detention owing to one lapse or another even under the existing law. A few days back, ten persons serving life terms were released, because the Allahabad High Court found they had been convicted on the evidence of an 'unmitigated liar'.

Jayaprakash Narayan

Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan, General Secretary of the Socialist Party, is now under detention for over two years, apart from his earlier conviction and detention of nearly three years, and the India Government, on its own declaration, has been considering the question of his prosecution ever since his arrest. It will presumably go on considering the question, meanwhile holding him in prison.

I do not know what kind of an answer Mr. Leopold Amery would have returned, had he been asked about my detention and presuming that he had still wanted to hold me in prison. I like to think that he would have taken his stand on the usurper's unhedged power and would have just said that I was detained under the laws of the land, whatever they might be. That would have been better than a Labour Under-Secretary's screening of a bad deed.

The Government is afraid of placing us on trial and it will continue to be so a freighted. Our trial may end up in its own trial. Except for the Indo-Russians, no one can possibly think that we have worked for Axis victory in intention or even in the unintended results of our deeds. In fact, Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan had wanted that an appeal be sent from the Freedom Press of this country to the British Socialist

Movement, but I felt that there was not at that time a worthy enough head of the movement nor any actively favourable element to whom such an appeal could be sent.

Then the charge is levelled against us that we have tried to achieve our aim through violence. It is a vague charge and as such has no validity in law nor a place in any coherent political discussion. The drawing of the line between violence and nonviolence as a method of political endeavour is an essentially Indian beginning and is wholly distinct from the accepted opposition between constitutional and unconstitutional means. It must, therefore, await recognition, until, if at all, the Indian National Congress is able to create a State with its politics. Such an event will also radically alter the concept of Government and its obligations. Meanwhile, it does not lie in the mouth of the British Government or of any other, to throw about this charge, for the right to violence is, in the dominated world, linked up with some of the finest efforts of man. If I were to follow the British Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Attlee, or the Archbishop of Canterbury, I would have to call it the sacred right to violence. For the rest, the Indian Penal Code is drastic enough, more drastic than any now prevalent. There is ghastly provision in it against the political kind of killing, or the very vaguest association with it, or sedition, or the mere owning of arms. I have not been put up for trial on any of these counts, nor the many hundreds, who have been detained almost throughout the war and are still in prison several months after the last fascist was let out in your own country.

In lending the smallest countenance to Government's plea that everybody still in prison is a Socialist and advocate of violence, the British Socialist is deliberately enabling the British Fascist in this country to work out his lawless ire against the Indian Socialist.

If Mr. Stephen Davies, a member of your Parliamentary Party, thought it worthwhile to question the Under-Secretary about me he should also have acquired necessary information to bring out through supplementaries how inept and unworthy the answer was. Questions asked in a hurry and in pursuit of an unpleasing duty or to create illusion are worse than no questions at all. For the present, at any rate, I have little desire for release and there is no urgency of any sort whatever. The British Government is welcome to hold me in prison as long as it lasts in this country. But the fact remains that there was not one man in your Parliamentary Party who could tell the Secretary with facts that he was lying, that he has not so far, nor shall, put me up for trial, that he did his habitual screening to make my detention more palatable to the stupid.

All writing from a slave country to the ruler's land is largely ineffectual, and wearies, but I hope you have not asked yourself why I have not addressed this letter to your Parliamentary Party.

Please accept my warm greetings.

Yours sincerely,

Rammanohar Lohia.

*(From The Price of Liberty,
Edited by Yusuf Meharally)*

Political parties and our Constitution

Jawaharlal Jasthi

Every one born is deemed to belong to a religion and a caste. Similarly every individual is supposed to belong to some political party or other. We cannot, or not willing to, think of politics without parties. Strangely, there is no mention of political parties in our constitution as drafted originally and also in the constitution of the USA. It is not that the framers of the constitution were not aware of the existence of political parties at that time. There were political parties even before the constitution was written and while it was being written. But the parties did not find a place in the constitution as it was originally finalized and adopted on 26th January, 1950. It must have been a deliberate omission.

We, at present, are not able to think of politics without parties. When they are so fundamental for political practice, why did the constituent assembly refused to give them a place in the constitution? It is felt necessary to raise this question because the parties are introduced into the constitution with effect from 1 March 1985 by the 51st amendment. The need for it and its justification is to be verified in the light of the latest judicial decisions of the highest court of the country.

In the course of judicial review, the validity of any law passed by the legislature and anything done by the executive is tested against the constitution. But when the constitution itself is amended, there is no reference frame to verify the validity of it. The doctrine of *basic*

structure is invented for the purpose. The judicial review of laws by the courts is considered one of the basic structures of the constitution. But the very first amendment restricted that right by opening the Ninth Schedule. At that time the doctrine was not invented and in spite of objections from some of the judges, it was declared valid by the court. The courts accepted it and continue to honor it even after the doctrine is applied later. That first amendment has changed the basic structure of the constitution radically. The change itself is now the part of basic structure.

Giving constitutional recognition to the political parties also is such a change that has shattered the basic structure of the constitution. It has also made real democracy impossible by replacing representatives of people with representatives of the political parties. Even the Representation of People Act, one of the earliest Acts passed, did not contain any reference to political parties. Part IVA was added to the Act after the Ninth Schedule was added to the constitution. It replaced people with political parties. This is clearly against the intentions of those 300 intellectuals, who framed the constitution after deliberating for nearly three years. If they were convinced of the need for political parties, they would have mentioned so at the time of constituting the Council of Ministers. Art.75(1) of the constitution states that "The Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President and the other Ministers

shall be appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister." What is the criterion for the President to appoint the Prime Minister? Can it be an arbitrary choice? Why is it not stated directly that the person enjoying the support of majority of elected members shall be appointed as Prime Minister? Art.75(3) states that "The Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the House of the People." Nowhere is it mentioned as a party in majority or a party in opposition. Political party is mentioned in Art.75(1B) which is introduced after the Tenth Schedule was added to the constitution. Similar provision is made under Art.164 in regard to the constitution of the Council of Ministers for the states.

Party affiliation is considered to be an essential requirement for a member of legislature which is negation of his character as a representative of the people. Art.102(2) states that "A person shall be disqualified for being a member of either House of Parliament if he is so disqualified under the Tenth Schedule." Similar provision is made under Art.191(2) in regard to members of state legislatures. What is this Tenth Schedule that has become so effective that it can override the main provisions of the constitution? In the normal drafting process, a schedule is supposed to serve as an adjunct to the main provision in the Act. Usually it may contain some details of procedures or explanations. But here the main part

of the legislation is incorporated in the Tenth Schedule and the main provisions are sought to be changed to fall in line with it. How strange! The tail is wagging the dog.

A need was felt to regulate the behavior of members elected to the legislature and it is shown as a justification for the provisions made in the Tenth Schedule. The need itself arose because of some erroneous presumptions that were allowed to rule the body politic of the country against the will of the framers of the constitution. The constitution did not say that the Prime Minister shall be selected based on his support in the House. He, along with his Council of Ministers, shall be responsible to the House. It is implied that he shall have the support of the majority of members in the House. It was never the intention that the majority must belong to a party. It was not the intention that a particular group of members hold the House under their control. It is not democracy. The government has to deal with so many problems and solutions are to be proposed. Those who support the government on one issue may not support in all other issues. That is their prerogative. On other issues, some other members will support the government. It may include some of the original members and some new members who opposed the government on the earlier issue. What is wrong in it? It depends on the nature of the problem and its effect on the people whom they represent. Just because the proposal of the government was not approved by the legislature, the government need not fall. If the government is persistently doing things not acceptable to the members in general, they can bring a 'no confidence motion' and get a new government. But such a situation is

not allowed in our system all these days. A change in the stand of a member is taken as a defiance of the party to which he is supposed to belong. This gave rise to the slogan: "Aya Ram, Gaya Ram". It led to horse trading and a change in the government and started instability. That is because the members are not allowed to express their preferences on the various issues freely. And what is wrong if there is frequent change in government? At one stage, there were changes of government within three months in Italy. But that condition did not last long. People learnt the lesson and the system got stabilized. The real merit and justification for democracy is that the people get the government they deserve. They learn only if they are allowed to learn.

The elected members are supposed to be members of a political party and are expected to tow the line of the party. How is it democracy? A strange logic is adopted to sanctify the subordination to the party. The members contest the election as representatives of the party and so they must act according to the dictates of the party. By that the members became representatives of the party and ceased to represent the people who elected them. In fact, the people are supposed to have elected the party and not the candidate. That concept was given hold even if there is no base for it in the constitution in the name of practicability.

Here the nature of a political party has to be studied. The party is supposed to consist of members who have a common program on the various issues that face the country and the program is the basis for the people to vote to the candidates of that party. The various political

parties are supposed to have different programs. That itself is a myth. There is less difference between the programs of the parties, nothing to choose from. Moreover, they never try to fulfill the promises made in the programs, manifestos. They promise the heaven knowing fully well that it is an impossibility. People know it as well and they vote based on other considerations. The purpose in forming a party is to come to power. The basic conviction is that they cannot do anything unless there is power in the hands. Many more things can be done if there is power in hands. To get the power it is necessary to form a group of people who are willing to contribute to their philosophy. There is no party in which the members have a homogeneous outlook. The main criterion is the possibility of coming to power. If the party has no possibility to come to power, the member discards it and joins the party which is in power or which has more possibility to come to power. That is why the floor crossing happens. The reason is that there is nothing like a commitment to any particular theory or program of action.

In fact the comprehensive program of a party, if any, put before the electorate, confuses the voter. An ordinary voter is not concerned with many of the areas covered in the manifesto. The common man in the village is not concerned with the foreign policy or with nuclear agreements. He is concerned more with the local issues, which affect him closely. In fact, he may find some aspects that are not to his liking and some to his liking. In such a situation what is he expected to do? When he votes for a candidate in election, he is not voting for all the points in the manifesto. But he votes as there is

no alternative. Similar is the case with the elected member. He finds that what the government is proposing is quite reasonable and could be supported, but his party is against it for no other reason except that they are not in the government. The party has its own plans and its own way of dealing with the government. The main aim is to come to power and to create the situation favorable for that. The member knows that it is wrong. But he is not allowed to express his opinion. That is the result of giving recognition to political parties. That is now constitutionally valid. It strikes at the very root of democracy. It has shattered the basic structure of the constitution itself.

It is usually argued that parties make it possible to devise a basis for government and seek the approval of the people for it. Even if they are not in power they form an alternative and make the party in power behave. That is the fundamental mistake in understanding democracy. The problems will not remain the same, the same solutions will not hold good in all circumstances. New problems arise. New solutions have to be devised. The situation is dynamic. The party refuses to take note of it while the elected member is capable of it. He must be allowed to reflect his opinion, the intention of the people who elected him. It is not the party that the voter chooses. It is the candidate that is visible and answerable to him.

By recognizing the parties, opportunity is given to make politics a career. It legitimized the collection of money, black and green, and accumulate funds in the name of party. Money is the cement for the edifice of the party. Families like "political families" have come into

existence. If politics is allowed as a career, naturally a tendency develops to get himself perpetuated in the career line. The son of a doctor tends to become a doctor, because the facilities are made readily available. The son of an advocate tends to become an advocate for the same reason. So also the son of a politician. Politics is family business. It is a career, not a service. The entire picture of politics is changed. It is an area of struggle for existence and efficiency in perpetuating themselves in the field. No other values stand in the way.

You cannot forbid the formation of political parties. It is part of fundamental right to form associations. It is true. It is not necessary to forbid the formation of parties. Let them have any number of parties and any sort of regulations. But they shall not be allowed to rule the legislature. What the Tenth Schedule did is exactly that. The Schedule recognizes the right of parties to issue "whips" and the members are supposed to follow the dictates of the party. Instead of the elected members, the parties are involved in the legislation process with constitutional support. By defying the whip of the party, the member is losing not only the membership of the party but also the membership of the legislature which is unwarranted and beyond comprehension by any logic. It helps the government to be partisan and retain its power even after losing the support of majority of members. Because, all the members of the party that is supporting the government are not happy with it, but are not allowed to express their reservations. The democratic nature of the legislature is destroyed. It is against the fundamental feature of the constitution. It is agreed that

democracy is the most fundamental part of the basic structure of the constitution and the same is now allowed to be destroyed.

In this respect, the system followed by the Americans appears to be pragmatic. The candidates are allowed to contest elections in the name of parties. But the elected members are free to vote on the various issues according to their own preference. Parties do not interfere. In fact many of the bills introduced by private members are sponsored by two members each belonging to one of the two parties. It frequently happens that the bill proposed by the government is opposed by some of the members of the same party and supported by some of the other party. It gets passed and becomes an Act. There are many Acts that are passed like that. The merit is that parties are not allowed to dictate the members on how to vote on the various issues. They remain the representatives of the people of their constituencies. At worst, they may play for their own interests at times, but that does not amount to much.

This right given to parties becomes more sinister as the law does not exercise any right to regulate or control the parties. Even when the parties were asked to reveal information about the funds received and spent by them, they claimed exemption from the provisions of the Right To Information Act (RTI) and the government stood helpless. That is because the government itself belongs to a party and depends on the support of parties and not of members themselves. If the whip is not recognized on the floor of the legislature, by defying the whip the member may lose the party

membership at the most, but not the membership of the legislature which is his constitutional right. Even when all the conditions prescribed in the Tenth Schedule for disqualifying a member are fulfilled, the Speaker may refuse to announce the disqualification. Nobody can do anything as he has the support of the majority party in the House and the

proceedings of the legislature cannot be questioned in any court. That is what is happening in most of the legislatures now. The recognition to political parties by virtue of the Tenth Schedule has undermined the independence of the elected members and made them subordinates to the respective parties. The democratic nature of the

elected body is undermined. It is more regrettable that the judiciary that has invented and adopted the doctrine of basic structure so zealously, did not care to raise any objection to the Ninth Schedule or to the Tenth Schedule which have undermined the very basic democratic structure of the constitution.

(Continued from Page 3)

middle class that emerged in the course of enforcement of neo-liberal economic, political and cultural model. The neo-liberal and the fascist agenda of the party in power are through in this policy document of the government and there is an all out attack on the constitutional values and prescriptions.

People of this country cannot take these attacks unprotected. 'We the people of India' should defeat it and proceed further to achieve abolition of commercialisation of education

and establishment of common education system fully funded by state and administered in decentralized and participative democratic mode. We should fight for a common education system that stands against all inequalities based on economic capacity, caste, religion, belief, language, culture, gender and normal body and consider diversity as the potentiality of the country. We shall fight for free, equal and quality education for all from KG to PG and Research. We shall fight against age-old bigotry and stand for scientific temperament. India has got

diversified and rich cultures and languages and education system should stand for all that. Education system should work for lessening all inequalities and democratizing all diversities and shall stand as a social process for radical reconstruction of society on the basis of equality and social justice. We shall work for building a democratic, secular, egalitarian, scientific and enlightened education system rooted in socio-cultural, religious and linguistic plurality of India, in consonance with the values enshrined in the preamble of the constitution.



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Brief note on NEP
Ramesh Patnaik

British Raj in india
Chandra Bhal Tripathi
Rammanohar Lohia

**Political parties and
our Constitution**
Jawaharlal Jasthi

Mahatma Gandhi's Speech

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The voice of history

Quit India

The following is the text of the resolution passed by the All — India Congress Committee on the evening of August 8, 1942 :

“The All India Congress Committee has given the most careful consideration to the reference made to it by the Working Committee in their resolution dated July 14, 1942, and to subsequent events, including the development of the war situation, the utterances of responsible spokesman of the British Government, and the comments and criticisms made in India and abroad. The Committee approves of and endorses that resolution and is of the opinion that events subsequent to it have given it further justification, and have made it clear that the immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself and of contributing to the cause of world freedom.

“The committee has viewed with dismay the deterioration of the situation on the Russian and

Chinese fronts and conveys to the Russian and Chinese people its high appreciation of their heroism in defence of their freedom. This increasing peril makes it incumbent on all those who strive for freedom and who sympathise with the victims of aggression, to examine the foundations of the policy so far pursued by the Allied Nations, which have led to repeated and disastrous failure. It is not by adhering to such arms and policies and methods that failure can be converted into success, for past experience has shown that failure is inherent in them. These policies have been based not on freedom so much as on the domination of subject and colonial countries, and the continuation of the imperialist tradition and method. The possession of empire, instead of adding to the strength of the ruling Power, has become a burden and a curse. India, the classic land of modern imperialism, has become the crux of the question, for by the freedom of India will Britain and the United Nations be judged, and the

peoples of Asia and Africa be filled with hope and enthusiasm.

“The ending of British rule in this country is thus a vital and immediate issue on which depend the future of the war and the success of freedom and democracy. A free India will assure this success by throwing all her great resources in the struggle for freedom and against the aggression of Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism. This will not only affect materially the fortunes of the war, but will bring all subject and oppressed humanity on the side of the United Nations, and give these Nations, whose ally India would be the moral and spiritual leadership of the world. India in bondage will continue to be the symbol of British imperialism and the taint of that imperialism will affect the fortunes of all the United Nations.

“The peril of today, therefore, necessitates the independence of India and the ending of British domination. No future promises or guarantees can affect the present situation or meet that peril. They cannot produce the needed psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the glow of freedom now can release that energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of the war.

“The A.I.C.C. therefore repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British Power from India. On the declaration of India’s Independence a Provisional Government will be formed and Free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The Provisional Government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its command, together with its Allied powers, to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The Provisional Government will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution according to the Congress view, should be a federal one, with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied Nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free

countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people’s united will and strength behind it.

“The freedom of India must be the symbol of and prelude to the freedom of all other Asiatic nations under foreign dominations. Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, the Dutch Indies, Iran and Iraq must also attain their complete freedom. It must be clearly understood that such of these countries as are under Japanese control now must not subsequently be placed under the rule or control of any other Colonial Power.

“While the A.I.C.C. must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India in this hour of danger, the Committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world demand a World Federation of free nations, and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a World Federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, and the pooling of the world’s resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a World Federation, disarmament would be practicable in all countries, national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary, and a World Federal Defence Force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression.

“An independent India would gladly join such a World Federation and co-operate on an equal basis with other nations in the solution of international problems. “Such a Federation should be open to all nations who agree with its fundamental principles. In view of the war, however, the Federation must inevitably, to begin with, be confined to the United Nations. Such a step taken now will have a most powerful effect on the war, on the peoples of the Axis countries, and on the peace to come.

“The Committee regretfully realises, however, that despite the tragic and overwhelming lessons of the war and the perils that overhang the world, the governments of few countries are yet prepared to take this inevitable step towards World Federation. The reactions of the British Government and the misguided criticism of the foreign press also make it clear that even the obvious demand for India’s independence is resisted, though this has been

made essentially to meet the present peril and to enable India to defend herself and help China and Russia in their hour of need. The Committee is anxious not to embarrass in any way the defence of China or Russia, whose freedom is precious and must be preserved, or to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the United Nations. But the peril grows both to India and these nations, and inaction and submission to a foreign administration at this stage is not only degrading India and reducing her capacity to defend herself and resist aggression, but is no answer to that growing peril and is no service to the peoples of the United Nations. The earnest appeal of the Working Committee to Great Britain and the United Nations has so far met with no response, and the criticisms made in many foreign quarters have shown an ignorance of India's and the world's need, and sometimes even hostility to India's freedom, which is significant of a mentality of domination and racial superiority which cannot be tolerated by a proud people conscious of their strength and of the justice of their cause.

“The A.I.C.C. would yet again, at this last moment, in the interest of world freedom, renew this appeal to Britain and the United Nations. But the Committee feels that it is no longer justified in holding the nation back from endeavouring to assert its will against an imperialist and authoritarian government which dominates over it and prevents it from functioning in its own interest and in the interest of humanity. The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass

struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilise all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken.

“The Committee appeals to the people of India to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot with courage and endurance, and to hold together under the leadership of Gandhiji, and carry out his instructions as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress Committees can function. When this happens, every man and woman, who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads along ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India.

“Lastly, whilst the A.I.C.C. has stated its own view of the future governance under free India, the A.I.C.C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on mass struggle it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power when it comes, will belong to the whole people of India.”

LokaSwara Lecture. 2016

Social democracy, Welfare state system and India

B. Vivekanandan

If politics is about people and their welfare, the political leadership of the state should follow a vision, based on a sound ideology.

The pivotal position of ideology in the development of a vision was once explained to us by Dr. Bruno Kreisky, former Socialist Chancellor of Austria, at a meeting held in New Delhi. Dr Kreisky was in Delhi in 1985 to receive the Jawaharlal Nehru Award. At that time, Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister. During a conversation, Dr Kreisky asked the young Indian prime minister a pointed question whether he had studied any ideology. Rajiv Gandhi replied 'No'. After this meeting with Rajiv Gandhi, Dr Kreisky came to our meeting — a meeting of the Indian Centre for Democratic Socialism, organised by my friend Pradip Bose, a nephew of Subhas Chandra Bose. After narrating his conversation with Rajiv Gandhi, Dr Kreisky observed: "I wonder, how, without studying any ideology, and a vision based on it, this young man is going to lead this vast country." Kreisky proved right. Rajiv led India with the skill of a manager. As a result, during that period, the Indian polity suffered drift and degeneration. People's welfare counted for less and less. The point is that, every leader in politics, and every political party in the country should have an ideology and a vision based on it to guide the state policies and programmes.

As a student of political science, economics and international relations, I had opportunities to study various ideologies and to visit countries which followed different shades of ideologies. And, among them, I found the democratic socialist/social democratic ideology most beneficial, because of its endeavour to organise the living conditions of ordinary people on the basis of equality and equal justice.

Ideologically, some of the core principles of democratic socialism/social democracy, like Freedom, Equality and Solidarity, are drawn from the watchwords of the French Revolution, like Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. With them, the socialists have added two more principles - Democracy and Justice.

In the socialist movement these terms carry wider

connotations. For example, in the social democratic parlance, the term freedom implies opposition to all kinds of dictatorship. It also implies freedom from fear and want, freedom from ignorance and exploitation, people's enjoyment of political and civil rights, guaranteed by an independent judiciary, and so on. From the perspective of socialists, all these freedoms are essential for a person to lead the life of a worthy citizen.

Similar is the term equality. It implies equal value of all human beings. It means that all men and women should have equal rights, equal responsibilities and equal opportunities to develop in freedom and equality. Equality is also a pre-condition for the full development of a personality.

Similarly wide is the meaning of justice. Justice includes distributive justice, which means that jointly achieved social product should be evenly distributed to bring about a social equilibrium among various groups in society. Justice also implies the establishment of a welfare state system for building caring societies.

Similar is the term democracy. It means, democratic functioning at all levels of organisation in society. Universal adult franchise is an essential part of it. Democracy should not be limited to periodic elections. It should take the form of a participatory system.

And finally the term solidarity. For socialists, the term solidarity means collective responsibility of individuals for one another and for the community. Indeed, solidarity is the fulcrum of social democracy. Conceptually, solidarity is togetherness, supported by a mentality of sharing a part of one's own earnings and services, for the benefit of fellow humans. It also implies joint effort to collective wellbeing. Indeed, in a solidarity based society mutual assistance among people will be a permanent feature, which would engender a new form of relationship, based on cooperation, mutual concern and mutual sharing. As is in the case of concern and support among family members, solidarity can be fruitfully promoted among people, whether in a state, region or in the world, for attaining the highest level of wellbeing for the people.

While I have explained the wider meaning of the core principles of socialism or social democracy, I must underline that all these principles are of equal importance. A joint realisation of them, through a string of appropriate programmes, will result in the establishment of a social democratic society.

The best way to measure the worth of an ideology, or a system based on it, is to test its social relevance by using the yardstick of how much is its potential to enhance the quality of life of ordinary people and help the elevation of the whole population.

It is in this context that I would like to present before you the validity of the welfare state system, and the vision it provides for future. The welfare state system is the applied form of the principles of social democracy. Therefore, basically, the welfare state system is a socialist or social democratic construct.

What does a welfare state system connote? It connotes that a benign democratic state would assume the main responsibility of the welfare of the whole population of the state, through appropriate, public funded institutionalised mechanisms. It means that the government would assume direct responsibility for the provision of social security, health care, medical care, education, social services, pensions, family allowances, child allowances, etc., for everyone in the state. And all these provisions would be funded substantially from the state revenues. A welfare state system accepts the role of the state both as a regulator and, also as a provider. It accepts that a judicious and benign intervention of the state, in the economy and social life, is necessary, since the system involves a huge transfer of state funds to the local authorities, for providing the welfare state benefits to the people. Adoption of a welfare state system is also a recognition of the social rights of every person in the state, to enjoy a fair share of the fruits of growth in society. It also provides the incentive for the promotion of a mentality, among the people, to share a part of the fruits of their labour with fellow humans, in a spirit of solidarity. Indeed, the establishment of a welfare state system is a civilised democratic solution to the prevalent inequality and injustice in the world.

As to how such a welfare state system can be built up for the benefit of the whole population, I would like to illustrate by focusing on the way Sweden, and other Scandinavian countries like Denmark, Norway and

Finland, have developed such a system in during the last 80 years. If I take Sweden as a case study, the turning point was the Great Depression, a severe economic crisis, of late 1920s and early 1930s, which caused untold suffering to ordinary people in the country. In order to meet the challenges of Depression, and the consequent high unemployment and people's miseries in the country, the Swedish socialists came out with a programme based on full employment and the construction of a welfare system in the country. The main focus of this programme was the common man and his needs and aspirations to lead a meaningful life, based on equality, justice and solidarity. In the parliamentary elections held in Sweden in 1932, the Swedish Social Democratic Party was voted to power. And they remained in power for the next 44 years continuously, either alone or in coalition. It was during this period that they have built up the welfare state system, which we find in Sweden today. It is the result of a systematic, long-term planning with a vision, and with people's informed support.

The bedrock of the Swedish welfare state system was laid on a full-employment policy, with a resolve to put every able bodied person in the country to productive work. It has ensured growth and prosperity, and promoted equality in society.

The Swedish socialists have conceived the welfare state system to promote equality and distributive justice in Sweden, and to increase the State's responsibility for people's well-being. The Swedes call their system, as cradle-to-the-grave welfare state system. They call it so because the welfare state benefits begin to reach a person as soon as the person is born. The sequence of it is like this: As soon as a child is born, the mother receives a gift packet from the Government, with the official seal on it, containing baby clothes and other baby care items needed for the new born. After the child's birth, the parents begin to receive a child allowance, every month, for ensuring healthy growth of the child. They receive this allowance till the child reaches 17 years of age. The child's education is free; the study material is free; daily school lunch is free; and the public transport for school going children is free. After the completion of education, it is the responsibility of the government to find him/her a gainful job, failing which, till such time a job is provided, the government is duty bound to pay a maintenance allowance to him/her. When a person becomes a wage-earner, he/she becomes a tax-payer and thereby becomes a financier of the welfare state system. On retirement, a person gets about *65 per cent* of salary as pension, which means that

the person can maintain almost the same standard of living after retirement as well. Healthcare of all senior citizens is free. Social services provided to them are also free. When a person dies, the funeral/burial expenses are also met by the state. That is how the cradle-to-the-grave welfare state system operates in Sweden.

Social security system in Sweden encompasses the right to work, right to education, a decent place to live and so on. Under the system, the entire population is insured against illness. Everyone gets equal opportunity for education. The system protects all employees from work-related accidents and sickness. All employees are entitled to compensation for industrial injury. Housewives are entitled to annual holidaying anywhere in the country at the governmental expenditure. All mothers receive maternity grants. Under a family law, either father or mother is entitled to 7 months' leave with full pay, after the birth of a child.

There is a highly developed pension scheme in Sweden. Under the old-age pension scheme, all old people are entitled to a pension. Similarly, all disabled people, after the age of 16, are entitled to a pension. If a person is fully disabled, he would get a full disability pension, which is equal to the old-age pension. Similarly, parents are entitled to childcare allowance, if they themselves nurse their disabled children.

In Sweden, medical care is free, except a nominal prescription fee.

A notable feature of the Swedish welfare State system is that it is attuned to promote egalitarianism in society. The steeply progressive income-tax system, and the solidarity wage-structuring, has substantially reduced the income disparity between the take-home pays of the low-paid and high-paid employees.

I went to Sweden in 1985 to study the changes which the welfare state system has brought about in that country. At that time, the Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme's Economic Adviser, Dr Klaus Eklund, showed me some charts which he prepared for the Prime Minister. First, he showed me a chart, pertaining to the gross salaries of wage-earners in Sweden, which showed a big difference between the salaries of the lowest-paid and the highest-paid employees in the country. Then, he showed me another chart, which showed the take-home pays of all wage-earners, after applying the steeply progressive income-tax. In that chart, the income ratio

between the lowest-paid and the highest-paid employees came down to 1:4. Then he showed me another chart, showing the comparative position of incomes between the lowest and the highest income-receiving families. The income difference between families was astonishingly low - the ratio between the low-income and high-income families was only 1:2. Now, due to globalisation, and due to the activities of the multi-national companies there, there are some changes in these ratios in recent years, but not big changes. However, no other country or system in the world has achieved such a high level of income equality. This has been achieved democratically, through the parliamentary reform process. It blurred the class distinctions in Sweden.

Similarly, the government has paid special attention to people's housing need. This was done through the establishment of the state-owned Housing Banks, and also through the promotion of cooperative house-building schemes. In this matter, the Government followed a motto, that: "No one should make a profit of somebody's housing need." Do we follow any such motto? Look at the flourishing real estate business in our country.

This is how the Swedish welfare state system functions. More or less the same is the state of the welfare state systems in other Scandinavian countries like Denmark, Norway and Finland.

The key to the successful construction of the welfare state system in Sweden, and other Scandinavian countries, is its universal **application**, which has made everybody a partner in the programme, both as a contributor and as beneficiary. The welfare state benefits are universal and non-discriminatory. All people are entitled to social benefits as a matter of social right. The wealth of the community and the State's resources are used for the benefit of the whole population, and not of a section, nor of a few sections, of it.

What is the impact of the welfare state system on the society and social behavior? The welfare state system in Sweden and Scandi-navia has shown that it is good economics, good politics and good sociology. It is a splendid example of how public spending on welfare creates general conditions for economic growth and how preventive policies reduce potential social problems and engenders the development of a healthy, stress-free society. It has virtually freed the people of the region from worrying about their own security or about the future security of their children and grand-children, as they are sure that the

welfare state system will take care of all of them, when time comes. Therefore, people in this region are generally free from stress-based diseases, which are increasingly a phenomenon in all non-welfare state societies.

At another level, the impact is more profound. The welfare state system has brought about a remarkable change in the psyche and ethos of all Scandinavian countries. In this context, we must recall that historically, Scandinavia is known as the homeland of the legendary Vikings, who were nightmares of the then mighty powers like Russia, Prussia, France, England, etc., through their forays for plundering those countries, between 8th and 11th centuries. But, today, under the impact of social democracy and the welfare state system, these people present the picture of the most honest, courteous, civilised and peaceful humans in the world. They now hesitate even to use an offensive language against their adversaries. That is my experience, during the last 3 decade of my active interactions with them. As there is not much disparity in income and standard of living between the people in the state, their general behavior and interaction with each other, are marked by mutual respect. They are totally free from corruption. Indeed, people in these countries have no incentive, nor any compulsion, to become corrupt.

I have explained the welfare state system in Sweden and Scandinavia, and its impact, in detail to underline how important, and how practical is the construction of a welfare state as the most civilised system in the world. Equally laudable is the fact that the welfare state system has taken all these Scandinavian countries, among the top ten in the human development index in the world.

There is no doubt that from all angles, and from among all the systems the world has tried, the welfare state system is the best one. This is because it takes care of everybody equally, irrespective of their socio-economic background, and age and gender differences, with equal facilities and equal entitlements, based on distributive justice and human solidarity. This has been demonstrated in all societies where the welfare state system has been established.

Therefore, the pertinent question is: When a section of the world population enjoys the fruits of a superior, universal welfare state system, is it fair to deny such benefits to the rest of the population in the world, by not adopting similar system in their countries? The answer is 'No'. Therefore, I urge the political class across the

world to take the initiative and move on to establish welfare state systems in their countries.

I have no doubt that the welfare state system, based on equality, justice and solidarity, provides a great vision for future reconstruction of the world, on egalitarian lines. It is, indeed, the most civilised, and the most civilising, system in the world.

Pertinently, I am happy that a wind of change in favour of democratic socialism and welfare state system is blowing even in the United States, the citadel of inequality-breeding capitalist system in the world. With Senator Bernie Sanders as the torch-bearer, millions of young Americans today are demanding reform of United States into a welfare state, based on equality and distributive justice. The surge of enthusiasm with which they have supported Bernie Sanders' demand for providing all Americans with free health care, free education, stable gainful jobs, etc., is a clear sign of impending change that is beckoning the United States in the coming years. Eight decades after the New Deal Reforms of 1930s in US by President Roosevelt, under the decisive influence of the American socialist leader Norman Thomas, the American youth, under the leadership of Bernie Sanders, is marching forward to put the hitherto stalled New Deal reform process back on rails, to lead the United States also to become a modern welfare state. That way, Bernie Sanders' contest for Democratic Party nomination for US Presidential elections in November 2016, signals a turning-point for the future of welfare state system in the world.

Where does India stand in this spectrum? What are the prospects of transforming India into a welfare state system? No doubt, India has every potential to become a welfare state. It is immensely rich in resources, including in human resources. In fact, India should have moved up considerably in the scale of building up a welfare state system in the country, if there were nurtured a national vision in that direction, and a political will to realise it.

The Indian Constitution contains a number of provisions in the 'Preamble', and in its Chapters on Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy, for building up a welfare state system in India. The Preamble, for example, has envisaged social economic and political justice for all people, and wanted the state to work for the wellbeing of all people. It has envisaged that India should become a society based on equality and justice. In pursuit of that objective, many provisions

have been made in Chapters on Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution. Equality of opportunity, right to freedom, right against exploitation, etc. are all parts of it.

More distinctly, the Directive Principles of State Policy is pointing the way for the development of India into a welfare state. Article 38 of the Constitution says that “The state shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting ... a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of national life.” Similarly, Article 39 speaks about the rights of all people for adequate means of livelihood, equal pay for equal work, healthy work environment, protection of children against exploitation and material abandonment. Under this Article, it is incumbent on the state to ensure that “the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good.” Article 41 makes the state **responsible** to make effective provisions “for securing the right to work, to education, and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want.” Similarly, Article 42 and 43 make the state responsible for provision of maternity relief, and for securing all workers jobs, “a living wage, conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities.” Article 45 provides for compulsory education for all children up to 14 years. Similarly, there are also provisions which stipulate that children should be provided with opportunities and facilities to grow and develop in a healthy manner, and in conditions of freedom and dignity.

These provisions in the Constitution make clear that the architects of our Constitution wanted India to move towards a welfare state system, and made suitable provisions in it to build it.

Despite the presence of these provisions in the Constitution, the progress of India made in this direction has been negligible. The main reason is that those who occupied the seat of power here did not display enough political will to do it. It is axiomatic that a fruitful implementation of a programme is best done by those who have a deep commitment to that programme. Though in 1950s, during Jawaharlal Nehru’s prime ministership, the country saw the infusion of the rudiments of a welfare state system, through a limited expansion of free public education, free public healthcare services, labour-intensive

state industrial policy, etc., they remained more or less half-hearted measures. The ruling Congress party followed a lukewarm approach towards it mainly because, unlike the Indian socialist parties, the Congress party was not ideologically equipped or committed to pursue the welfare state agenda in the country. Perhaps, it could not comprehend the dynamism of the welfare state system. Therefore, it was found pursuing rather a narrow path of remaining in power with rich man’s money and poor man’s vote. It seldom pursued a vision beyond that. Tokenism and expediency characterised its basic approach. Unlike what the Swedish Social Democratic Party and its Government did in Sweden during its long years in power, the Congress party and its governments in India made no serious attempt to make the establishment of a welfare state system in the country a national vision, and to make the people to share that vision. In that sense, India has wasted about 70 years of its independence. During the last 25 years, even that limited, rudiment, welfare state measures, have been undermined to promote market forces and private enterprises. Under Dr Manmohan Singh’s stewardship, steps were taken, since 1991, to increasingly roll back the state from the sphere of public welfare services. In pursuit of that, government hospitals have been starved of funds, staff and medicines, to promote extortionist private hospitals. Funding of children’s education has been systematically transferred from public funds to the shoulders of parents, or of children themselves, who are forced to take education loans from banks. In addition, a new category of self-financing colleges have been mushroomed all over the country, which take big bribes, in the name of capitation fee and donation, for admissions, have been promoted. I have no doubt that such education shops can only corrupt our system beyond repair, like the poisoning of the sub-soil water.

However, today, childcare, care of the old, infirm and the handicapped, etc., are of marginal responsibility of the Indian state. The budget allocation for public welfare in India has been kept around a meagre 4 per cent of the national budget, compared to 37 per cent in the national budget of a welfare state like Sweden. However, cumulatively, the welfare state content in India has been steadily slashed down during the last 25 years. Public healthcare services have been weakened to such an extent that even poor people are forced to approach the new extortionist private hospitals for simple ailments. This situation must change.

I have no doubt that if market forces and private service providers establish a firm grip on the public

welfare sector, the democratic state, as a political entity, will lose its centrality for organising a welfare state system for the benefit of the whole population. That will be detrimental to the poorer sections of our society. Therefore, the centrality of the state to provide such poor people with free high quality services, through public institutions, must be preserved and promoted at all costs. We must realise that richer the welfare state, better will be the conditions of the poor in the country, and *vice versa*. Therefore, it is imperative that the Indian state should be kept strong, resourceful and sovereign.

As Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam said, India should have a national vision about its future. In my view, that national vision should be to transform India into a caring welfare state. The objective should be to build a new society based on equality and distributive justice. It should follow the principle of universalism, so that everybody participates in it both as a contributor and as a beneficiary. It should be pursued under the framework of human solidarity in the country, which will spectacularly change the face of India during the next 30 or 40 years.

In the pursuit of building a welfare state system, India should adopt a full employment policy. It entails that all socio-economic and technology policies in India would remain employment friendly all the time. It is my conviction that a full-employment policy and a drive for achieving full-employment hold the key to India's prosperity, greatness, and social peace in the 21st Century.

Similarly, India should affirm its faith in the public sector in areas of public utilities, and position the public sector as a strong pillar of India's welfare state system.

India has all the potential to become a successful welfare state. But, for its realisation, we should develop a national vision of it through large-scale open debate on the virtues which the welfare state system promises for the present and future generations in India. Politically, to realise that vision in letter and spirit, it is imperative to build up an All-India political party, like a Socialist/Social Democratic Party, for example, which has an abiding faith in the establishment of a welfare state system in India.

IV

In conclusion, I would say that at present the welfare state system is conceived and established at national levels, taking the nation state as a unit of its planning and

development. In my view, this national approach, though valid to start with, is an inadequate framework for future. We all know that our planet Earth is endowed with bountiful natural resources and products, much more than what is needed for everybody to lead a happy and contented life. Various continents hold rich divergent natural resources. But, they are complementary. Pooling of these natural resources would show the richness of the bounty, with which the nature has blessed the humanity. Yet, in the absence of a co-ordinated global welfare state system, the vast majority of people in the world are deprived of their due share of the benefits of these resources, including knowledge resources like technology. Therefore, inter-continental produces do not get evenly distributed among countries and continents, and their peoples. The vested interests in the world have erected many walls, including patenting laws, to prevent people from unfettered enjoyment of their collective wealth, and fruits of inventions and discoveries in the world. They are also instrumental in preserving inequality in the world. But, we have to recognise the fact that the world is shrinking fast due to communication revolution. As a result, physical barriers are bound to give way to the urge of humanity for equality and distributive justice.

Keeping that also in view, we have to find a comprehensive solution to the prevalent inequality and mal-distribution of resources and produces in the world. The application of equity, justice and solidarity internationally and inter-continentially is the solution. We have to ensure that whether a person is born in Asia, Africa, America, Australia or Latin America, he/she should have equal rights and equal facilities to lead a comparable, meaningful, life in the world, based on equality, justice and solidarity. We have to seek ways and means of how to expand the welfare state system universally across the world. Pooling of destinies and resources of people across the world by invoking principles of equality, equal justice, and inter-continental solidarity, is the right way to re-organise people's lives in the world. The 'One World' concept, which Wendell Willkie envisaged in 1943, will have to be elevated to a qualitatively higher level of a 'Global Welfare State System', anchored in inter-Continental solidarity. In short, for the future wellbeing of the humanity, it is imperative to plan and establish a global welfare state system. My next book is going to be precisely on this theme.

Thank you.
Bhubaneswar
9 July 2016

Movements and Institutions: Their Interlinkages.

T. K. Oommen

I

An institution may be viewed as a cluster of interrelated roles resulting from the institutionalization of socially desirable and legitimized values, norms, rules and procedures. But institutions are not eternally stable and institutional legitimacy is continually questioned. Thus, the response to institutionalization may manifest itself in different forms: conformity, differential interpretation, acceptance of values but rejection of the institutional role-incumbents and opposition, among others. This means institutionalization can occasion both bureaucratization and mobilization, that is, the process of institutionalization may and often does provide the moment for movements to emerge.

Movements are conscious collective actions informed of ideology, aided by an organizational weapon and initiated by a core person/group to bring about change in any direction (past/future) using any means (violent/non-violent). In other words, movements are deliberately initiated and guided collective mobilizations to bring about relatively rapid social transformation. But to consolidate and stabilize the gains of a movement one needs the instrumentality of the institution. Often the organizational core of the movement provides the nucleus of the institution. We may say that a movement contains within it the embryo of an institution. In the process of institutionalization of a movement, the characteristic activity of the movement, namely, mobilization may be relegated to the background and becomes less salient.

While it is useful and necessary to make an analytical distinction between a movement and an institution it should not render us impervious to the empirical reality on the ground. It is equally important to avoid the confusion between a movement and the numerous

events which constitute it. Thus the Quit India 'movement' is but one event of mobilization in the numerous events in anti-colonial movement; there were other events such as Salt Satyagraha or Champaran Satyagraha. It is equally pertinent to keep in mind that the vitality of movements vary across time; sometimes they are calm and on other occasions they are turbulent. No movement can sustain its high vitality for a long time.

Analysts from and of liberal democracies counterpose the state with the party, the party with the movement, movements with institutions, and obstinately insist that this should be so not only for these societies but for other societies as well. But this is simply not true. Let me recall a well-known example.

The primacy of the political party in socialist systems attests to its importance as a structure/institution. The party is projected as the most important agent for initiating, guiding and leading collective actions. That is, an institution is viewed as an instrument of collective mobilization. This is reflected in the formation and functioning of front organizations for the youth, peasantry, women, students or workers of political parties even in non-socialist polities.

It is instructive to recall here that the conventional party-movement dichotomy was obliterated in some cases in the West recently as exemplified in the relationship between the Green Movement and the Green Party. While the conceptual distinction between the two is maintained by the supporters, they seem to recognize the organic linkage between the Green Movement and the Green Party.

II

In contemporary mainstream social science collective actions and movements are viewed as being disengaged from institutions and structures. This vein of thinking and mode of conceptualization cannot adequately account for several aspects of the emerging social movements.

For example, the establishment of socialist and welfare states often necessitates that the state itself sponsor mobilizations, movements, and even 'revolutions'.

In the 'new states' of Asia and Africa, movements

are often piloted by organizations or associations of primordial collectivities. While these associations ordinarily operate as institutions, the mobilizational aspect is often encapsulated in them. Thus, one scarcely comes across the sharp disengagement believed to exist between movements and institutions.

There are several reasons for conceptualizing institutions and movements as disengaged entities. First, the inadequate accounting of the time element in the analysis. The transformation of movements into institutions, and vice versa, is generally gradual and seldom sudden. There is a social state between the two phases - movements and institutions - and social scientists have scarcely paid attention to this dimension of social reality. It is crucial to recognize the interim state between 'solid state' (institutions) and 'fluid state' (movements).

Second, movements are usually defined and perceived as large-scale or mass efforts. Be that as it may, most movements, however large they might become eventually, would usually have small beginnings in the form of a small group, association or sect. That is, the formation of an institution or structure could be the starting point of a movement. Alternatively, a movement may trigger off from a sudden event. But soon an organization becomes a necessary accompaniment for the survival of the movement. That is, there exists a processual linkage between institutions and movements. Thus, one can conceive of empirical situations wherein the intertwining between movements and institutions is perennially present.

If institutions do not 'produce' movements, that is, if they do not respond to the challenges posed to them periodically, they will become structurally and culturally obsolete; they will perish. Therefore, institutions require movements for their very survival through periodic replenishment. Movements provide institutions with the possibility of re-legitimation, if and when the latter experience an erosion of their legitimacy. On the other hand, unless movements crystallize into institutions, unless the visions of movements are translated into reality through institutional mechanisms, they will embody mere aspirations. That is, institutions are the instruments movements employ to translate ideology into programme, theory into praxis, without which they remain shells without substance. In fact, every movement is in search of a structure — party, institution — capable of translating its vision into reality.

Movements emerge not only to correct the deficits of praxis in the prevailing institutions, but to identify the gaps in theory as well. That is, movements not only produce collective actors but also provide them with new values. These values are to be rendered 'collective' to begin with, for which the involvement of people is a prerequisite. But if the resultant mobilization is left unchartered it will not lead to the pursued goal, the institutionalization of a new set of values. Mobilization and institutionalization are counterposed in contemporary social science theory, often forgetting that they fall into a continuum. The prevalent tendency is to view movements and mobilizations as degenerating into institutions and institutionalization. In contrast, it should be noted that institutionalization of values pursued by movements is possible only through building appropriate institutions.

It is a truism that movements surface when institutions fail and the emerging collective conscience is articulated through movements. Yet, if a movement does not create institutions embodying the new values it upholds and articulates, it serves no purpose; it vanishes without any impact. Sometimes movements tend to retain their 'glory' by dissolving themselves after achieving their goal. But what really happens is that even as a movement is disbanded formally, it actually takes on a new incarnation either in the form of a political party or as a new movement with a new goal. It should be emphasized here that if a movement wants to translate its ideology into reality it needs an institutional vehicle, for example, a party. This in turn leads to institutionalization of power and authority in a few hands which is an unavoidable prerequisite. But the tendency in social science writings has been to decry this development as pathological and undesirable.

Institutions and movements are reciprocally linked in three significant ways. First, institutions and structures are cleansed by movements. What are often labelled 'fundamentalist' or 'revivalist' movements are essentially attempts to rescue institutions from their current 'degeneration' and render them back to their original state of pristine purity as defined by the visionaries of these movements. Movements which challenge the basis of authority in the existing institutions succeed only in cleansing the old structure. Conversely, institutions tend to correct movements from their 'adventurism'. It is well known how the rebels in institutions are contained or liquidated depending upon the nature and intensity of threats posed by them to institutions.

Second, movements deliberately create institutions which are new vehicles to fulfil the present visions and aspirations. Similarly, institutions may float movements to sustain their legitimacy. Third, movements tend to redefine old institutions, the effort being not simply to purify and inject institutions with new verve and vitality, nor to abandon them completely and create new ones, but to recreate them. The break from the past is evident but the link is not simply tenuous. On the other hand, institutions tend to revitalize movements in such a way that the balance between stability and change is maintained.

It is important to remind ourselves here that the cleansed, created, and recreated institutions co-exist: accretion rather than displacement takes place. Further, movements require institutions to concretize their visions; institutions need movements to sustain their legitimacy. It is helpful to recall here some empirical evidence from Indian politics.

The Indian National Congress (INC) was the organizational weapon of the Indian national liberation movement. But this over-arching movement encapsulated within it three types of solidarity, each of which created a series of movements. While civic and occupational collectivities, such as the peasantry, the students or workers, and socio-biological collectivities, such as youth or women, did not pose any threat to the original vision of the INC, primordial collectivities did pose such threats. As a consequence communalism (that is, the claim of religious collectivities that they are political communities), crystallized as a countervailing solidarity to nationalism. The Indian polity could encompass within it the communal interests of all religious groups except those of the Muslims. And Muslim communalism was legitimized as nationalism when a new structure representing it, the state of Pakistan, emerged. But the process did not stop here, and with the crystallization of a new solidarity based on language, a new movement emerged, which in turn gave birth to a new structure — the state of Bangladesh. Similarly, in India a multiplicity of solidarities which lay frozen were animated, several of which created new structures representing their ideas and interests — political parties, trade unions, women's organizations. Thus, the interpenetration between movements and institutions is obvious.

After independence, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the chief architect of the anti-colonial struggle, advised the freedom fighters to dissolve the INC and constitute

themselves into a body of voluntary workers for the social reconstruction of India. A minority of his followers did dissociate themselves from the INC and launched a new movement to pursue the second major Gandhian objective, namely, sarvodaya (upliftment of all), as the first, namely, swaraj (political freedom) had already been achieved. However, the majority of the freedom fighters either continued with the INC, converting it into a party, or established new parties. Almost all political parties in free India emerged out of the INC. Thus, the Congress Socialist Party, the precursor of the Communist Party of India (CPI) functioned as a 'group' within the Congress party in the beginning. The CPI later split into two leading to the creation of the CPI(M) which also split subsequently and the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) was born. The Indian National Congress too split several times, giving birth to several region-based caste-oriented and person-centred parties. But what is important to note here is that in each of these cases the new party and the old one were linked through a movement and/or common mobilization. While the new segments of parties claimed to be the genuine ones upholding the original vision, the old segments of parties invariably tried to discredit them. Mobilizations and counter-mobilizations were inevitably involved in this process.

That is, with the emergence of new parties, movements did not disappear. Many of them only redefined their goals and re-invented their enemies. In fact, most of what are labelled as 'movements' in India are collective actions initiated and guided by these parties through their front organizations. Alternatively, a large number of new 'movements' are the result of splits and factionalization of political parties. But this does not mean that once they move from the fluid state to the solid state they remain in that state forever. These parties often function as movements even as they develop elaborate party bureaucracies.

The attempts to differentiate between parties and movements in principle but combine in practice, have created enormous problems for the smooth functioning of governments in India. Hence, the formal distinction in membership sought to be made between the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (a militant Hindu voluntary organization) and the Jana Sangh (a political party sponsored by it) by some of the constituents of the Janata Party (which was a coalition of several political parties) led to the fall of the Janata government (1977-79).

The situation in different regions and states of India is no different. The relationship between the Dravidian movement and Dravidian parties of Tamil Nadu, in south India, the Akali movement and the Akali party in Punjab in north India, the Assam movement and the ruling party in east India demonstrate the intricate

and visible linkage between parties/ institutions and movements in contemporary India. And yet the prevalent tendency is to counterpose them as if they belong to different social species, which imparts a sense of estrangement between conceptualization and empirical reality.

III

The prevalent tendency to view movements and institutions as mutually antagonistic is essentially in line with the natural history or life-cycle approach to the analysis of social movements, by now conventional in social science. The argument runs roughly as follows: The development of an organization, however rudimentary, is inevitable for the realization of movement goals. But the emergence of such an organization inevitably sets in motion influences which defeat the very purpose which occasioned it. A paradoxical situation arises: that which is needed as an instrument — that is, an organization — for the translation of movement ideology into specific programmes often tends to become instrumental in frustrating the very purpose for which it had emerged. Thus, the emergence of movement organizations lead to routinization of charisma, development of bureaucratic structures, persistence beyond the purpose for which it emerged, all of which invariably lead to the institutionalization of social movements. In this strand of thinking, institutions are viewed as degenerate entities emerging out of movements.

In contrast, it is necessary to define and perceive institutions as indicators of goal fulfilment of movements. As and when institutions become rigid and non-responsive to the purpose for which they emerged, it becomes imperative to challenge and de-legitimize them. That is, the relationship between movements and institutions is dialectical and multipolar. Second, there is no inherent tendency towards institutionalization of a movement and even when it occurs, it does not necessarily stop or even decelerate the process of mobilization which is so fundamental and primary to the very survival of a movement. In fact, mobilization and institutionalization co-exist and, furthermore, the process of institutionalization provides new possibilities for mobilization.

The institutionalization of a movement is believed to occur when the goals it pursues are achieved, or an elaborate machinery for the implementation of movement goals emerges, or associational proliferation of movement goals crystallizes, or associational proliferation takes place leading to the substitution of the movement by these associations.

The basic thrust of my argument is that the process of mobilization and institutionalization are to be viewed essentially as two different dimensions of a movement rather than mutually inimical processes. However, the emphasis on different movement aspects would vary at different phases of a given movement.

As a movement moves from the mobilizational phase to the institutionalization phase, several aspects undergo changes. Yet it seems safe to conclude that: (a) at the initial stages of a movement, mobilizational activities are likely to continue unabated. In fact, the process of institutionalization may provide new occasions for the continuance of mobilizational activities, in so far as the lag between the induction of a set of norms and their actual acceptance by the critical collectivity is universal; and (b) the pace of mobilization may continue and persist, if the degree of institutionalization is kept within certain limits, that is, if bureaucratization of social relations are not pursued beyond a point. In the final analysis, mobilization is not displaced by institutionalization but both go hand in hand to a large extent and often the latter process may accentuate the former. Admittedly, movements and institutions are to be viewed as processually linked. Institutions often trigger off movements; movements encapsulate within them seeds of institutions. Therefore, to characterize them in mutually exclusive terms is to create a wedge between concept and reality.

The Clandestine Congress Radio: An untold story

Madhuker Upadhyay

Coincidences almost always surprise. More so, if they are in completely unrelated fields separated by thousands of miles, even continents. That is what Radio and the Congress have in common.

In the closing years of the nineteenth century two mega developments were making modest beginnings. Across the Atlantic, and in Europe, experiments were being conducted in Wireless Telegraph Technology. It had taken just a few toddlers' steps but the realisation of its potential as the medium of communication for the future was not uncertain. Wireless communication was already being discussed and planned as the next big thing on the horizon.

Around the same time in India, a group of people had several meetings discussing the British Rule and the aspirations of the common people. Theosophical Society under the leadership of A. O. Hume was working on the idea of matching the two. It was decided in Madras to have a formal pressure group to be called The Congress. In 1885, a telegraph company headed by Thomas Alva Edison applied for patent in Wireless Transmission and the same year, at a meeting in Bombay, Indian National Congress was formed with seventy odd people in attendance. In the next ten years, Radio became a reality and a force to reckon with and so did the Congress. It had become a force that could not be ignored.

The two grew in their respective areas unconnected and it was not until the next fifty-odd years after their birth that Congress and Radio converged in Bombay during the freedom struggle. It was amidst rumours that though the Congress was entirely an indigenous people's movement, Radio had a Japanese connection. For the British, in the backdrop of the raging world War, this became more worrisome than the activities of the Congress.

Rumours are probably one of the worst sources one can rely on while dealing with history. Yet, it cannot be denied that, at times, they play a major role in shaping up events that change the course of nations. Rumours of the fall of 'John Company' were rife in 1857 and it added to the passion of many segments of the society. The

East India Company rule seemed to be on the run, thirty days looked numbered. '*Sitara Gir Padega*' was the common refrain of the people. Historians may argue and describe the 1857 revolt as 'failed'; the truth, however, is that it ended the hundred year old Company rule in India.

During World War II, yet another rumour was that the 'Japanese are coming' to India. Historian Indivar Kamtekar quotes a document saying 'British are preparing to run away from the country.' Rumours were one common thread amongst many that links the two Indian wars of independence separated by good eighty five years. Rammanohar Lohia called the Quit India movement 'the history of the unarmed common man' and wrote 'our unarmed and leaderless people rose in a magnificent revolt.' In a letter to Linlithgow he said, 'passion is an elusive substance. Hounds cannot track it, nor bullets kill it...Happen what may, this passion will haunt you until you break.'

For a variety of reasons, Indian struggle for independence was perhaps one of the most complex and colourful freedom movements in the world. It was a queer mix of common people and great personalities, so diverse in their approach that they became too much for the British to handle simultaneously. A Vice-regal report in the late forties summed up the unparalleled mosaic saying it had an 'Enigmatic' M. K. Gandhi, 'Charismatic' Jawaharlal Nehru, 'Down to earth' Sardar Patel and a 'Cold' M. A. Jinnah. Apart from these strong personalities, it had movements within movements. Many smaller, yet significant battles were being fought on social, cultural and economic fronts.

Matured as a political outfit that had support of the countless masses, The Congress was leading the movement when the Second World War broke out. The leadership was of the opinion that freedom from the British was well within its grasp which 'just got delayed' because of the War. The general upsurge of the masses and the positivity among the political big-wigs had started reflecting in many ways. In 1930, the Congress passed the Lahore resolution demanding 'Poorna Swaraj' and Mahatma Gandhi headed for Dandi to break the Salt

Act. This generated tremendous response shaking the foundation of the all-powerful empire.

Early next decade, with the demand for complete independence gaining momentum and the people getting restless forced the Congress leadership to take the next big step. In the Bombay Gowalia Tank convention, the Mahatma gave the 'Quit India' and 'Do or Die' call electrifying the already charged atmosphere.

Barely a few hours after the Congress resolution was passed, the police and administration came down heavily on the leadership arresting hundreds of thousands of people across the country. Also, the administration put gag orders on newspapers. Despite this, the news of arrest of leaders and police atrocities travelled far and wide. Situation became even more difficult to handle as rumour mills started working over time.

A couple of days before the convention, it was a fairly common assumption that all major Congress leaders may be arrested soon. A party worker, Vitthaldas Madhavji Khakar, popularly known to his friends as Babubhai, had gathered a few young sympathisers to discuss the possible scenario and other ideas about reaching out to the people. Bringing out yet another newspaper, to them, was a futile idea. They were aware of the poor rate of literacy among the masses.

But they had seen the impact of the spoken word. Mahatma Gandhi was not a great orator but his choice of words and the transparent conviction behind them, turned him into a communicator par excellence. Nehru and Patel had mastered the art of speaking. Jayaprakash Narayan too was known for his convincing oratory skills. Some of the younger leaders, particularly Achyut Patwardhan and Rammanohar Lohia, the two who evaded arrest and became underground, were able to establish direct contact with the masses through their idiomatic language. Not to mention Subhas Chandra Bose whose thunderous voice mesmerised the people. The big question was how to reach the people with the words of wisdom and use the power of motivation of these hugely popular leaders? Most were behind the bar, unlikely to be released any time soon.

Khakar's group of young sparks, barely in their twenties, put all heads together thinking about a solution to this communication conundrum. One in the group, slightly older who was trained in radio technology and had assembled a transmitter earlier, was asked by

Babubhai Khakar about setting up a transmission machine and the time it will take to do so. The idea about the clandestine Congress Radio started to take shape. Other than Khakar, Vitthaldas Jhaveri, Nariman Printer and Usha Mehta were part of the team. They also had the privilege of support from Usha Mehta's uncle, Ajit Desai who was a radio technician and freedom fighter known to many in the Congress.

Despite more than fifty years of existence, radio in those days was still high-end technology not available to many. Within four years of the first radio news broadcast on Empire Radio (Later BBC), radio stations were set up in Bombay and Calcutta as private ventures. Madras had a station under licence before that. It was only in the thirties that the government took over the radio operations. Getting licences for radio broadcast, in those days, was not difficult and any trained person could get the same. But all those licences were either impounded or cancelled as the Second World War broke out. Printer was trained in London and had one such radio license to be used for training but, like everyone else, he was to dismantle and deposit the transmitter with police authorities. Khakar was aware that Printer dismantled the transmitter but did not surrender it in police station.

On August 9, 1942, the group decided to fast track the preparations for their radio station. The station was named 'The Voice of Freedom' and since the location had to be kept secret, the tagline was 'Speaking from somewhere in India.' Arranging finances certainly was an issue but they moved thinking it was not materially important. More pressing concern was getting material needed for getting a transmitter up and running.

Once convinced, Printer moved swiftly. Assisted by Babubhai Khakar, in charge of the Congress Radio operations, he could assemble the transmitter ready for broadcast within a week. On August 13, 1942, they went 'On Air' with the words 'This is Congress Radio speaking from somewhere in India on 42.34 meter bands.' The voice was not that of Usha Mehta. Official and court records state it was a 'Parsee lady who did not wish to be identified.' Printer himself did some broadcasts in the initial days. A quick learner, Mehta understood the basics of broadcasting in a short time and became the voice of Congress Radio till the day police swooped on them and all were arrested.

Some senior Congress leaders saw potential in this initiative and contacted them. In a meeting with Radio

in-charge Khakar and others, underground leader Rammanohar Lohia assured them to 'support the endeavour financially.' Others also stepped in assuring regular supply of news material and speeches of leaders recorded elsewhere. According to Madhu Limye, as leader of the radio group Khakar was 'answerable directly to Rammanohar Lohia.' Lohia was so hands-on dealing with Congress Radio he once sorted out an ego clash within the group. Vitthaldas Jhaveri was trying to set up a separate transmitter and broadcast independently. A technical hand of the Chicago Radio Company was helping him when the matter was brought to the notice of Lohia. In order to avoid duplication of work, Lohia separated broadcasting from recording. Vitthaldas was entrusted with recordings while Babubhai and others were assigned broadcasting.

The Congress Radio experiment was short-lived and lasted less than three months. Police raided and seized the transmitter. The pressure was such that even in that small period of time everybody along with the transmitter moved to six different locations to avoid detection and arrest. They started from Sea View Building in Chowpatty, moved to Ratan Mahal on Walkeshwar Road and then to Ajit Villa on Laburnum Road. The broadcast continued for ten days from Parekh Wadi at Girgaum Back Road and finally shifted to Paradise Bungalow near Mahalaxmi Temple. It was from this bungalow they were picked up by the police on November 12, 1942.

In fact, in a raid at an earlier location Printer was arrested and under serious questioning turned informant. Usha Mehta ranted 'that traitor' on seeing him with the police during the Paradise Bungalow raid.

The British government was not unduly worried about the Congress Radio but suspected that the agents of the enemy 'Fifth Columnists' may be behind it. They were also surprised at the speed of making the transmitter and going On Air. A team was, however, constituted monitoring the broadcasts to see if Japan had any role in this daring adventure. Studying the broadcasts, senior official H. V. R. Iyengar said the Radio had 'No enemy

links.' In his opinion the personality and antecedents of the people connected with the Congress station and the nature of its broadcast suggested it was the work of 'Congress and Congress Socialist people and that it derived its inspiration from Congress and Congress Socialist leaders and not from the enemy.'

Madhu Limaye's reading of Congress Radio experiment was that the 'transmissions generally were unclear. It may not have caused great harm to the government but it was a challenge nonetheless for the power and prestige of the rulers. This certainly was a symbol of resistance and morale booster for the people.'

After the arrest of the protagonists, police prepared a charge sheet largely based on Printer's submissions and other investigations. Case number 7 of 1943 came up for hearing in the court of special judge, N. S. Lokur and it listed 'Emperor Vs Others.' There were five names in all for trial and on top of the list, not surprisingly, was Babubhai Madhavji Khakar. Vitthaldas Jhaveri, Usha Mehta, Chandrakant Jhaveri and Nanak Motwane were also made accused in that order.

Before delivering the judgement, Justice Lokur lamented the fact that 'men like Printer, Mirza and R. A. Mehta, who played a very prominent part in the conspiracy and actively carried out its objects in various ways, had to be examined as witnesses instead of being placed in the dock to be tried along with the accused.' He also noted that many of the witnesses seemed to have a 'soft corner' for the accused.

Justice Lokur convicted the brain behind the Congress Radio, Babubhai Khakar to undergo rigorous imprisonment for five years, Usha Mehta for four years and Chandrakant Jhaveri for a period of one year. Accused No. 2, Vitthaldas Jhaveri, a partner in the well known Bombay firm of jewellers and accused No. 5, Director of the Chicago Radio and Telephone Company, Nanak Motwane were acquitted of all charges and discharged.

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It is a real shame
Kuldip Nayar

**Freedom from AFSPA
in J&K and Manipur**
Pushkar Raj

**Commercialisation
and communalisation
of education**

**Ten Lessons from
Chernobyl and Fukushima**
David Krieger

Premchand and Pay Commission
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Implications of raising Balochistan and Gilgit issues

Sandeep Pandey

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has raised the issue of Balochistan, Gilgit, Baltistan and Pakistani occupied Kashmir in his Independence Day speech on 15th August, 2016 in response to Pakistan dedicating its Independence Day, celebrated a day earlier, to 'Freedom of Kashmir.' This is the first time India has officially expressed support for the cause of Balochistan. People in these areas are unhappy with the Pakistani government. While there is a full fledged movement in Balochistan going on to demand autonomy from Pakistan, people in Gilgit-Baltistan want basic civic rights and democracy.

Pakistan has said that this is a proof of India's involvement in Balochistan. While it may be not a well known fact in India, people in Pakistan widely believe that just like Pakistan aids secessionist movement in J&K, India is helping the separatists in Balochistan. It is also a common belief that India through the Afghanistan border provides military and other assistance to the freedom fighters there through its intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing. Pakistani government has blamed

India for a recent suicide attack in Quetta killing 80 people, believed to have been perpetrated by Taliban. Such allegations are as common as in the Indian media, fed by government agencies, Pakistan is blamed for any violence in Kashmir or terrorism incident in India.

Modi has obviously responded to obnoxious Pakistani statements on Kashmir offering aid after the violence in the aftermath of Burhan Wani's killing. For long India-Pakistani relations have been marked by tit-for-tat policy. So there is nothing new about it but what is new about the Balochistan statement is that from now on India will have to support the cause of people fighting in Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir on the issue of human rights violations in these areas, unless it was an impulsive reaction to the pre-Independence day Pakistani adventure. If India is taking a moral high position then it'll have to stand by the people of Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and PoK like it has done with Tibetans taking on the Chinese wrath.

The question which then will be raised is if India is so concerned about the human rights violations by the Pakistani Army and actually supports the cause of freedoms in Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and PoK then why does it carry out human rights violations in its own Kashmir? India as a sovereign country has a right to deny entry to UN Human Rights Commission in Kashmir only if it responsibly dealt with its people. Using pellet guns on its own people including women and children is no sign of a mature government sensitive to human rights concerns.

The right wing nationalists are complimenting Modi for giving a befitting reply to Pakistan but in the long run such belligerent attitude will not help. If we accept the fact that dialogue and not war will solve the India-Pakistan problem, then Modi has just taken us away several steps from the process for establishing peace and friendship. Of course, the Pakistani side is equally to be blamed for provoking India.

In a way Modi has done a repeat of Vajpayee. Before India tested the nuclear weapons in Pokaran, India enjoyed a traditional military superiority over Pakistan. However, chest thumping declaration of having made a nuclear weapon gave a chance to Pakistan to carry out its tests too, thereby starting a nuclear weapons arms race which has acted as a leveler in terms of destructive power of two neighbours now. So far as India concerned itself with only Kashmir, Pakistan was seen as an intruder and India received international sympathetic support on this issue. Now India's public position of Kashmir being an integral part of India will be weakened as from now

(Continued on Page 3)

It is a real shame

Kuldip Nayar

There were great hopes from the largest ever Indian contingent but when it came to the performance it fell well short of expectations. Hockey, which we taught to the West, is nowhere in the subcontinent. With change of rules, in the name of making the sport more attractive, the West has come to monopolize hockey. But it would be unfair to blame it on the rule changes alone. The bane of the problem with our players is lack of stamina and scientific approach.

Women seem to do better than men but that is in spite of the hard work demanded. In the next few years, our dismal performance will be in sharp contrast to even smaller nations that are mere dots on the world map. Counting by population, India ranks the last in Olympic medal number. There are more reasons for this.

We, in India, have a budget of roughly Rs 250 crore per state apart from the central budget of Rs 1500-odd crore for sports. There is sports infrastructure in a few states but they lack maintenance and regular use. The states and the centre have no holistic approach to sports. The result is that sports are just an item in the budget but nothing from the point of view of excellence in any particular discipline.

Cricket has come up because the public is crazy about it just as it was about hockey some years ago. This only underlines the fact that there is no proper planning or scientific approach to sports. Hockey was the iconic sport for India until the Moscow Games in 1980 when the

country won their last gold medal, for the eighth time. Subsequent to that there was a great decline in the sport as India never reached even the semifinals in any Olympics to this date.

In contrast, India won the first World Cup in 1983 in cricket and since then the sport has started looking up. Today, cricket has thrown up several opportunities and icons which make the game even more lucrative. That explains why cricket is only next to religion in India in terms of frenzy. With the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) making a lot of money, there was never any need for government support.

But, at the same, too much politics has seeped into sport, including cricket. Leaders of different political parties are holding one post or another in every national federation and cricket is no exception. This has had an adverse effect on the sports as such because of politicians using them for their name and fame.

Unfortunately, the situation prevailing is that some ministers or top bureaucrats' association is sought by every sport federation in the country for bringing in money to them. In return, these politicians also attain stature and importance by clinging to the posts offered by federations. In other words, it is a win-win situation for both.

The recent Supreme Court ruling in the aftermath of Justice Lodha panel report on BCCI and its functioning is an eye-opener. The

recommendations of the panel, to be implemented, put restrictions on politicians and bureaucrats occupying any top positions in BCCI or, for that matter, in federations. It is an open secret that people like Sharad Pawar, Arun Jaitley, Farooq Abdullah, Rajiv Shukla and many others have been an integral part of whatever the setup has been. They are primarily there because they have been able to get funds from official and other sources.

Once they vacate, what machinery will federations have to generate funds in the face of very little financial assistance provided by the state? Corporate funding is too little and too meager, cricket being the only exception. But the biggest drawback is the absence of sports development in rural India. This is the place where the raw talent is galore but there is no proper way to tap it.

Unfortunately again, India does not have any sports culture. The government has only added to the woes of federations as it has withdrawn whatever little funding they provided for hosting international events in junior sections. How does the government expect excellence without proper support to nurture young talent? Just by allocating Rs. 300 odd crore for the Olympians that qualified for the Games under TOPS will not help and that too three months prior to Rio.

Only a sustained effort and consistent funding, spread over years, will help get us medals. Take the case of China. It picks up talent at a very young age and nurtures to the point of seeing the boys and girls winning medals at Olympics. The moment they are inducted in national centres they become the state subject and

they have to worry about nothing, not even education. But in India, we stress on academics at the expense of sports.

In a country starved of medals—we won six medals at London—there are some silver lining performances like that of Dipa Karmakar, the first ever Indian gymnast to make it to the Olympics and also the final of the vault event. Her fourth position is no less than winning a medal because she had been training with little facilities back home in Tripura.

Looking at the future, India should think of ways and means to achieving

(Continued from Page 2)

on both countries will accuse each other of interfering in their internal matters. With Modi's posturing India is going to lose certain credibility on Kashmir issue. Whether we like it or not Pakistan has been able to make inroads in the Kashmiri psyche whereas India does not have any emotional relationship with Balochis. At best it can offer a long distance moral support.

India will also have to face the uncomfortable question from both dominant parties in Tamil Nadu and internationally on why did it not stand up for the rights of Tamilians when they were being massacred by Sinhalese dominated Sri Lankan government? Tamilians in Sri Lanka are ethnically closer to people of Tamil Nadu than people from Balochistan are to people anywhere in India. Balochis are fighting for an independent country with Balochis from Iran and Afghanistan.

As a matter of principle India must support the people of Balochistan, Gilgit, Baltistan and PoK just as it is supporting Tibetans. At the same time

glory on the Olympic arena by choosing young talent in fewer disciplines and concentrating fully rather than frittering away precious little funds on all 28 Olympic disciplines. Additionally, the government can make a sport policy—not the one they are insisting on now—that will guarantee a career option to sportspersons. Just giving away piecemeal incentives will not fetch medals. And we should wait until six months prior to the next Olympics to realize that the preparation we started is again late, like it has been the case so far. Let's forget Rio, think about Tokyo and start preparing from today.

it must also support Tamilians in Sri Lanka. But instead of admitting our failure in having won the hearts of people of Kashmir if we continue to blame Pakistan for all the wrongs in Kashmir, we are not going to be able to solve this problem. As we kept alienating Kashmiris, Pakistan's interference increased. Just as Pakistan's failure to keep people in Balochistan, Gilgit, Baltistan and PoK happy is giving India a chance to raise the issue now.

Leaders of both Pakistan and India must realise that we are not engaged in some competition where we can score points over each other with our display of nationalism fervour of the jingoistic kind. There are real people in Indian J&K, PoK, Gilgit, Baltistan, Balochistan and Sri Lanka. The two governments must respect the sentiments of the people and cooperatively solve the issues so that local people's aspirations are taken care of. A right wing dominated thinking which treats it as a prestige issue is doing this only at the cost of people's lives and sensitivities.

Freedom from AFSPA in J&K and Manipur

Pushkar Raj

As India celebrates its anniversary of independence from the British rule, it is worthwhile to ask when the people of Jammu and Kashmir and Manipur will get freedom from the Armed Forces (Special Power) Act 1958 (AFSPA) which is no less than being living under the colonial rule.

The law that the British conceived in the wake of Quit India movement of 1942, was first promulgated in 1958 to counter a parallel government established by the militant groups in the Naga Hills. In a war like situation the security forces were empowered to assert the sovereignty of the state against an armed 'internal enemy'. But presently in J&K and Manipur there are elected governments. In such a situation, AFSPA's use in the civilian areas does not stand scrutiny at first sight.

It needs no repetition that the AFSPA is a draconian piece of legislation and when in operation, a citizen is under a constant shadow of fear that he may be turned into a victim by the security forces at any time while going about his normal daily chores such as travelling to the office or visiting friends. As the region is declared a 'disturbed area', the security personnel can randomly question people and can be rude to the extent of causing bodily injury, rape and death while at the same time going unpunished, for under the law they enjoy impunity.

Sixteen years back in November 2000, what is now known as 'Malom Massacre' ten innocent people, including an eighteen year old national bravery award winner waiting at a

bus stop, were killed. Evidently, it was a retaliatory use of force against the innocent people who were unarmed and going on their daily errands. It was ghastly act of terrorizing and punishing innocent citizens under the shield of AFSPA. No one ever got punished!

For the last twenty six years, AFSPA is in operation in Kashmir. Thousands have got maimed, killed and disappeared. There are officially acknowledged unmarked graves and visible disfigured faces. Pellet gun wounds have left thousands of young men scarred in body and soul. It is justified to ask whether government is using AFSPA as a substitute for a policy on Kashmir. If so then government has been executing a blunder.

As a policy AFPSA can never succeed because the repressive laws have a tendency to alienate general public of a region, thereby expanding the support base of discontent of which militancy could be one of the off shoots that may also have some covert community support.

Secondly, under the protection of laws like AFPSA the acts of omission and commission by the security forces allegedly result in mass killings, rapes, disappearances and torture. In the process the state loses legitimacy and moral authority to rule. This is what has happened in Kashmir presently. The elected Chief Minister of the state is unable to face her own people.

Interestingly, the AFPSA has come under scrutiny and fire of the judiciary

many a times. Jeevan Reddy committee (2004) and Santosh Hegde committee (2013) questioned its content and operation. Irom Sharmila has undertaken, perhaps world's longest fast, against the law. The Supreme Court too recently held in its judgment that there cannot be an absolute immunity from trial by a criminal court (*The Hindu*, 9 July 2016). Then why is that the Indian government is not listening and treating its own citizens as enemy?

It seems that the laws like AFSPA suit the establishment. The contention gets credence from the statement of Irom Sharmila, who in an interview said that the government and the army are colluding to defraud people implying that the both are beneficiaries of the 'disturbed areas' grants from the centre without financial and administrative accountability (*The Hindu*, 5 March 2013).

In Kashmir too, militancy has become an industry that serves an elite while common masses continue to be fodder for fire. The continuation of AFPSA seems to serve and benefit a powerful section of the establishment of the state including the Army, political leadership, police and civil administration as well as the 'separatists'. No wonder J&K continues to be India's one of the top corrupt states. It also serves to brand victimized population as 'anti-national' therefore deserving punishment without invoking moral outrage in rest of India against the killings.

(Continued on Page 6)

Commercialisation and communalisation of education

Continuing with the nefarious design of commercialising and communalising education in line with brahminical-hindutva agenda of the RSS, the BJP-led NDA government has released a document titled ‘Some Inputs for Draft National Education Policy 2016’ purportedly seeking response from the general public on or before 16th August. The fact that this document is released only in English and not in any other languages spoken by the people of our country shows the true anti-democratic mindset of the government. This also exposes the fact that all high talk of ‘participatory’ policy making is nothing but a sham as the government only intends to impose the agenda dictated by corporate capital on one hand and RSS on the other.

It should be noted that the MHRD did not officially release the T.S.R. Subramanian Committee Report on Draft New Education Policy (NEP 2016). Rather it brought out its own document ‘Some Inputs for Draft National Education Policy 2016’. The government document if becomes a policy will demolish not only every semblance of equality, social justice, scientific temperament, diversity and federalism in our education system that people of this country have struggled for, built and protected since the days of reformation movements but also the very possibility of realising the dreams of the founders of the constitution to establish a nation on the basis of the values. If this document is not exposed and the government designs are not thwarted, they could create a fertile ground for entrenchment of all out fascism.

- The document replicates the techno-corporate spirit of Ambani-Birla Report released during the NDA-I regime advocating rampant privatisation and commercialisation through Public-Private Partnership (PPP).
- Multi-standard institutions, in terms of infrastructure and teaching faculty, would continue both in public and private sectors.
- It seeks to centralize curricula, bureaucratize administration through the proposal to set up an Indian Educational Service (IES) cadre directly under the MHRD, corporatize accreditation and tribunalise justice to facilitate possible multi-lateral and ‘plurilateral’ agreements in education either under World Trade Organization or outside it thus intensifying neo-liberal globalization in education.
- It seeks to promote PPP by instituting 10 lakh EWS and 10 lakh ‘open’ scholarships for reimbursement of costs of private institutions.
- The document speaks in weak terms about allocating 6% GDP for education. However, it does not even hint at the cumulative gap of financial resources accumulated over the last decades. This huge gap can be bridged only by allocating at least 15% of GDP for education. Instead of this, the government only indicates of further cutting public resources by promoting commercialization.
- The democratic rights of students especially in higher education institutions have been attacked in favour of corporatized model of management to curb any voice of protest in university campuses. It also opens door for intense privatisation, FDI and fee hike in public institutions.
- Though the government document talks of social justice, nowhere it talks about need of reservations, applying reservations to all institutions and at all levels and applying rule of reservation in private educational institutions.
- There is no mention of hostels and other affirmative measures to bring the poor and socially disadvantaged to the schools, colleges and universities.
- The heavy dropout of the children before they complete class X (All 47.4, SC 50.1 and ST 62.4) though is noted but not addressed. The Gross Enrolment Ratio in Higher Education remains very low at 23.6 percent in 2014-15 for all sections while the GER for SCs is 18.5% and STs is 13.3% again is simply noted without measures to address the problem.
- The government proceeds with its project of re-establishing Manu Dharma not only by denying education to the SCs, STs, and all disadvantaged sections and minorities — religious and linguistic but also

- confining the sections to skill training which would reproduce caste system. Dropouts will be encouraged by rigorous screening akin to brahminical practices and the children, mostly from disadvantaged sections, will be diverted for 'skilling'.
- Tests at upper primary and above with professional counsellors to direct students to vocational/ skilling courses will further ensure that disadvantaged will simply be unable to reach secondary and higher secondary therefore the claim that universalizing at this stage will mean only 'completion' by 'enrolled students'.
 - Open schools, open colleges and open educational facilities on one hand and skilling on the other hand will be the main thrusts of the government and all disadvantaged will be pushed towards these thrust areas.
 - Increasing majority of the disadvantaged sections on all counts, caste, religion, region, gender and linguistic-cultural group will be denied formal, liberal and professional education and will be diverted to 'skill education' from class V itself permanently shutting doors of formal education for the vast majority. This is indicated clearly by intention to retain the 'no-detention policy' of RTE Act only till Class V after which children from targeted sections and areas will be sent for skill development.
 - Already the government has legitimized child labour by changing the law that will push children into caste-based, family based occupations at age 10 yrs - i.e. into a childhood of labour and 'alternate schools'
 - In fact, the document seeks to completely subvert 'education' in favour of 'skill' which is in consonance with the agenda of making India a hub of cheap and skilled labour which is a favourite 'vision' of the current PM.
 - The very Preamble of the document ignores the plural philosophical traditions of the country and presents a false Sanskritized brahminical history deliberately ignoring the rich diversity and history of languages of the people. Marginalisation of the non-brahminical cultures, languages, regions and knowledge systems is the 'hallmark' of the Preamble of the government document.
 - The medieval period of Indian history (which RSS consider as Muslim period) is not even referred to in the document and it makes a clear indication of the government approach to mitigate the contributions of the period in development of the civilization of this land. The communal approach which this government pursues leads to neglect or playing down of contributions of all religious and linguistic minorities, tribes and suppressed casts and marginalized sections.
 - Similarly there is no reference to the diverse struggles of national liberation leading to India's freedom and the ideas of republican citizenship, democracy, secularism, socialism and social justice that the struggle inspired.
 - Every child's right to be taught in mother-tongue is finished. States will decide whether 'regional' language, English, or 'multi-lingual' (only for tribal children) schooling will be provided up to class V. There after the child has no option for mother tongue or regional language
- Now, it is high time to expose the government document and intensify struggle for democratic, secular, egalitarian, scientific and enlightened education system rooted in socio-cultural, religious and linguistic plurality of India, in consonance with the values enshrined in the Preamble of the Constitution, and affirmed in the Fundamental Rights and Fundamental Duties and especially for developing scientific temper, humanism and spirit of enquiry and reform to build a democratic and progressive society.
- All India Forum for
Right to Education**
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- (Continued from Page 4)*
- Recognizing that the unrest in Kashmir and Manipur is for justice, democracy, , rule of law and right to be heard; and it is the only way to break the present jinx as Rajiv Gandhi showed in regard to Nagaland and Atal Bihari Vajpaec in the past attempted in relation to Kashmir with accolades. It is about respecting the values enshrined in the preamble of our constitution and extending them to our own people who are also part of an 'independent' India. Unless we do so, Independence Day will have little meaning for the people of Kashmir and Manipur.

Ten Lessons from Chernobyl and Fukushima

David Krieger

George Santayana famously said, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” The same may be said of those who fail to understand the past or to learn from it. If we failed to learn the lessons from the nuclear power plant accident at Chernobyl more than three decades ago or to understand its meaning for our future, perhaps the more recent accident at Fukushima will serve to underline those lessons. Here are ten lessons drawn from the Chernobyl and Fukushima disasters.

Nuclear power is a highly complex, expensive and dangerous way to boil water. Nuclear power does nothing more than provide a high-tech and extremely dangerous way to boil water to create steam to turn turbines.

1. Accidents happen and the worst-case scenario often turns out to be worse than imagined or planned for. Although the nuclear industry continues to assure the public that nuclear power plants are safe, the plants continue to have accidents, some of which exceed worst-case projections.
2. The nuclear industry and its experts cannot plan for every contingency or prevent every disaster. Although it was known that Fukushima is subject to earthquakes and tsunamis, the nuclear industry and its experts did not plan for the combination of a 9.0 earthquake and the larger-than-expected tsunami that followed.
3. Governments do not effectively regulate the nuclear industry to assure the safety of the public. Government regulators of nuclear industry often come from the nuclear industry and tend to be too close to the industry to regulate it effectively.
4. Hubris, complacency and high-level radiation are a deadly mix.
5. Nuclear power plants can catastrophically fail, causing vast human and environmental damage. The corporations that run the power plants, however, are protected from catastrophic economic failure by government limits on liability, which shift the economic burden to the public. If the corporations that own nuclear power plants had to bear the burden of potential financial losses in the event of a catastrophic accident, they would not build the plants because they know the risks are unacceptable. It is government liability limits, such as the Price-Anderson Act in the US, that make nuclear power plants possible, leaving the taxpayers responsible for the overwhelming monetary costs of nuclear industry failures. No other private industry is given such liability protection.
6. Radiation releases from nuclear accidents cannot be contained in space and will not stop at national borders. The wind will carry long-lived radioactive materials around the world and affect the people and environment of many countries and regions. The radiation will also affect the oceans of the world, which are the common heritage of humankind.
7. Radiation releases from nuclear accidents cannot be contained in time and will adversely affect countless future generations. The radioactive materials from nuclear power plant accidents, as well as from radioactive wastes, are a legacy we are bequeathing to future generations of humans and other forms of life on the planet.
8. Nuclear energy, as well as nuclear weapons, and human beings cannot co-exist without the risk of future catastrophes. The survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have long known that nuclear weapons and human beings cannot co-exist. The Fukushima accident, like that at Chernobyl before it, makes clear that human beings and nuclear power plants also cannot co-exist without courting future disasters.
9. The accidents at Fukushima and Chernobyl are a wake-up call to phase out nuclear energy and replace it with energy conservation and more human- and environmentally-friendly forms

of renewable energy. For decades it has been clear that various forms of renewable energy are needed to replace both nuclear and fossil fuel energy sources. Now it is clearer than ever. The choice is not between nuclear and fossil fuels. The solution is to disavow both of these forms of energy and to move as rapidly as possible to a global energy plan based upon various forms of renewable energy: solar cells, wind,

geothermal, ocean thermal, currents, tides, etc.

The nuclear power plant accident at Chernobyl was repeated, albeit with a different set of circumstances, at Fukushima. Have our societies yet learned any lessons from Chernobyl and Fukushima that will prevent the people of the future from experiencing such devastation? As poet Maya Angelou points out, "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlearned,

but if faced with courage doesn't need to be lived again." We need the courage to phase out nuclear power globally and replace it with energy conservation and renewable energy sources. In doing so, we will not only be acting responsibly with regard to nuclear power, but will also reduce the risks of nuclear weapons proliferation and strengthen the global foundations for the abolition of these weapons.

-TRANSCEND Media Service

Premchand and Pay Commission

Uma Shankari

Sometimes writers are better conscience keepers of the nations than others. Take the plight of farmers. Many writers wrote about them in their novels, short stories and plays: Munshi Premchand, Shivaram karanth, Rabindranath Tagore. In every language one can find such writers. They wrote about farmers: about the poverty and the hardships, the cheating by middlemen, the miseries of the women, the exploitation by money lenders, the gullible peasant, the caste violence, etc. ... many films too have been done on the miserable plight of farmers: Do bigha zamin will ever be a classic. We continue to live in Premchand's country. But we seem to have lost our conscience. How otherwise can one explain the silence about the 7th Pay Commission?

The government servants, the beneficiaries of the 7th pay Commission have almost 24% increase in their pay and allowances; the minimum pay would be Rs.18000 per month instead of Rs.7000; more than double. The maximum pay would be Rs.2,50,000 per month instead of rs.90,000; again more

than double. At one shot their incomes are doubled. But some of them are still cribbing; they are seeing injustice in the calculations.

Come on, can't you see the injustice in the larger society?

Farmers and citizen groups (who sympathise with farmers) in this country are asking in what way are they less than the government servants or sportsmen or actors/actresses that they should live on miserable incomes? They are saying: we are not beggars, begging for food; in fact we are the ones who grow food for the people of this country; and some for people of other countries as well. People do eat food, isn't it, three times a day? How can this society let us live like beggars? Doesn't this society have a conscience?

Farmers are demanding a guaranteed income at par with the government servants. Their slogan has been: "Announce Farmers Income Commission before 7th Pay Commission". They want an Act, a legislation, which will guarantee a

minimum level of income on par with the Government servants.

In making such a demand the farmers are not being greedy or lazy. They don't want unholy doles. They are saying, let there be an Act and a statutory Commission (like the Pay Commission), a Farmers Income Commission, which, after conducting due surveys and studies, after taking into account the subsidies, the insurance, the credit, etc. etc. available to the farmer, will **objectively** recommend a guaranteed income at par with the minimum pay of government servants; and let the government of the day implement and enforce them. They are not asking a minimum guaranteed income for all families. Not for families whose incomes exceed the minimum level of income of government servants. Therefore income tax paying farmers are already out. Farmer families who earn an income in the organised sector- teachers, doctors, etc. are already out. Only for those families whose incomes fall below the minimum declared income may be protected by the Act.

Why are they making such a demand today?

“The National Sample Survey Organisation, in its situation assessment survey of farmers (SAS), conducted once every 10 years, assesses the major sources of income of an average Indian farmer. The latest required information is available for agri-year 2012-13. The SAS 2002-03 results are also available, which we use for comparison purposes. The income of farming households is shown under four heads: Cultivation of crops, farming animals, rural non-farm activities (RNF) and wages/salaries (WS).

The SAS 2012-13 counts 9 crore agricultural households in India, with each earning on an average Rs 77,112 per annum. This was more than three times of what it earned in 2002-03, that is Rs 25,380. In real terms (using the consumer price index of agri-labourer or the CPI-AL as the deflator with base 2004-05), however, the average agri-household’s income increased from Rs 26,901 pa in 2002-03 to Rs 38,096 pa in 2012-13. The 10 year compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of the respective incomes was 11.8 per cent in nominal terms and 3.5 per cent in real terms. This means that it took about six years for nominal incomes to double and it would take about 20 years for real incomes to double!” (Source: Ashok Gulati, Shweta Saini, June 20 2016)

That is, in real terms, even after ten years, the average monthly income of agricultural household has increased from around Rs. 2500 in 2003 to Rs. 3100 in 2013. What a shame! It is even less than the statutory minimum wage, which is Rs. 160 per day. That is a daily wage

earner earns more than the farmer! The present day government has announced that it will double farmers income in the coming 5 years. Even if it happens it will still be around Rs. 6000! And for it to happen there should be a 11% growth in the farm sector! The present rate of growth in the farm sector ranges from zero to 4%. It is but natural that farmers are seething with anger and frustration.

Large numbers of farmers are leaving agriculture. They are of course free to leave farming for better paying jobs. But are these jobs available? The employment growth in the organised sector has been pathetic. “Since 1990, in spite of massive investment in the private organised sector, its direct employment increased from 7.5 million then to 9.5 million now while the workforce has increased from 250 million to 450 million. It has almost led to a jobless growth.” (Source: Arun Kumar, Tribune)

It is not that the people who leave agriculture are sitting idle; they end up as underpaid, undernourished part-time workers, joining the unorganised urban labor market and providing cheap labour for the corporate industry and commerce. Neither the government nor the employers take any responsibility for their survival or their welfare. They are left to their own devices in this devil-may-care economy. And the government has no qualms or even pretensions about it. After all, just the other day it was ready to remove the word “socialism” from the very Constitution of the country, quietly and clandestinely.

Across the world, governments have adopted different systems of income security for farmers to

ensure parity between agriculture sector and other sectors, and to ensure food production and self-sufficiency. Even countries poorer than ours take care of their farmers. But government after government in India are still doling out piecemeal measures, a loan waiver here, a half-hearted crop insurance there. Every year the both state and central governments keep saying they have increased the budget for agriculture, but the farmers’ incomes remain pathetic. What should they do? Whom should they complain to?

If India doesn’t ensure income security now and forces its small farmers to quit agriculture, we will end up giving huge subsidies to big corporates later — as it is happening in the U.S. and European Union. Perhaps that is what the governments in India are wishing to do; let down its farmers, party with the corporates.

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PM Modi's address from the Red Fort

PM Narendra Modi spoke for a couple of hours from the rampart of Red Fort on the 69th anniversary of our Independence Day. He is a forceful speaker but not inspiring as Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi and Atal Bihari Vajpeyi were. The rest like Morarji Desai, Charan Singh, Rajiv Gandhi, VP Singh, PV Narasimha Rao, HD Devagowda and IK Gujral were ordinary and the most insipid was Munmun Singh (Manmohan Singh). Gulzari Lal Nanda (Acting PM) and Chandra Shekhar did not get an opportunity to address the nation on Independence Day from Red Fort.

Narendra Modi just narrated and exaggerated his government's developmental achievements but cleverly avoided current burning issues like

(i) China's continuing incursions into Indian territory and atrocities on Tibetans and violation of human rights;

(ii) Pakistan's continued terrorism in J&K and elsewhere in India through terror modules;

(iii) Indiscriminate killing and rape of Kashmiris by our army and the Central police forces; blinding or semi-blinding of at least 100 Kashmiris by pellet guns including a girl studying in her first floor room;

(iv) Killing of Muslims in many States on suspicion of cow slaughter and eating of beef (80 per cent of beef export companies are owned by Hindus and Jains and they include some BJP leaders too);

(v) Killing, rape and other atrocities on Dalits - the Una incident in Gujarat may prove to be the graveyard of the BJP government and party in Gujarat;

(vi) Atrocious treatment of the Central Universities, IITs, IIMs

and autonomous institutions under HRD by the ex-Minister Smriti Irani, a second grade TV actress who is not even a graduate.

At Lucknow in October 2015 I had predicted that the BJP would be defeated and Laloo-Nitish combine would come to power. The miracle of Delhi is likely to be repeated by AAP in Punjab where it had hardly any presence, resignation of Navjot Singh Sidhu from the BJP is ominous. I predict that if the Congress, the Laloo-Nitish Combine, Mayawati, Mamata Banerji, Biju Patnaik and the DMK form an alliance the BJP will be routed in the next General Election in 2019. They lack a charismatic leader like NT Rama Rao. Even the Congress will fare better if Priyanka were to be made the leader in place of her dull brother. But the 'palace politics' has its own limitations and faults. I am not in active politics since 1956 but understand it.

—C. B. Tripathi

Let's await court's ruling.

I refer to the above article by renowned thinker and Journalist, Kuldip Nayar (*Janata* July 24, 2016).

His comments are, as usual, based on firsthand knowledge, but age withers the memory which is often based on perceptions. I too was a small time participant in the freedom movement as an active and prominent member of Bombay National Guards, volunteer organization comprising of young and enthusiastic freedom fighters, but unattached to any political party. Therefore, I too have some recollections about Gandhiji's assassination on 30-01-1948.

I was, like others, working with my employers when the ticker flashed Gandhiji's assassination. I, and other volunteers, rushed to the office of our captain, late Shri Vagal to seek guidance on further action though we were aware that none could do anything. I, thereafter, closely followed the progress of the case till Nathuram Godse's hanging. The sequence of events was as under:

1. Nathuram Godse, Badge, and another person whose name I do not remember now resigned from RSS and thereafter conspired to

kill Gandhiji. They were angered by the proposed fast threatened by Gandhiji to pressurize the Government of India to pay the amount due to Pakistan.

2. Godse was the leader and he first touched Gandhiji's feet and then shot him.

3. Badge turned approver and the trial was held 'in camera' right up to hanging.

Any cognizable offence is an offence against the State and,

(Continued on Page 14)

<i>Open Letter</i>

Why do moderate Ulema stay silent...

Janab Maulana Khalid Rashid Firangimahali Saheb,
All-India Muslim Personal Law Board general secretary

I have been watching you on television channels in the last few days, defending Islam as a religion of peace, calling the so-called Islamic State “un-Islamic”, expressing sentiments and opinions that I entirely agree with. But this has made me wonder why do you and your fellow ulema keep completely silent when self-styled Khalifa al-Baghdadi and his followers say repeatedly that “Islam has never been a religion of peace, not even for a day,” and that “it has always been a religion of war and conflict.”

I didn’t see you or any other ulema questioning your Nadwi colleague from Lucknow, the influential Salman Nadwi when he became the first Indian Muslim alim (Islamic scholar, singular of ulema) in July 2014 to convey his allegiance to the same Khalifa, addressing him as Ameer-ul Momineen, leader of the global Muslim community. No wonder, his name now figures in the list of ulema who have influenced Indian Muslim youth who have joined and some even migrated to the so-called Islamic State.

I didn’t see you questioning the notorious tele-evangelist Dr. Zakir Naik when he said: “all Muslims should be terrorists” or when he said: “Quran allows Muslims to have sex with female slaves.” Indeed, you all kept quiet when Naik made hateful remarks like the following: “People in the west eat pork and hence behave like pigs. Pigs are the only animals in the world that invite their friends to have sex with their

partners. Westerners also do the same.” Naik has made insulting other religions in the guise of comparative study or interfaith dialogue his speciality. But I find almost the entire fraternity of Muslim ulema coming out in his defence when it was discovered that his discourse inevitably inspired several people around the world who took to the path of terrorism.

Worst of all, you and all other ulema kept quiet when Maulana Abdul Aleem Islahi of Hyderabad asked Muslims to pray for the Islamic State. In a press release available online he said: “Condemnation of their (Islamic State’s) action may not be called sagacity and will be considered against the spirit of Islam. ... they have tried to fulfil the dream of a large section of Muslims and their determination has infused a new life into the concept of Caliphate. Their announcement (of caliphate) has surpassed Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Abul Ala Maududi’s powerful writings and speeches about Caliphate and has realized the concept practically. ... This has sparked a new life in the dormant political life of Islam and this might have certainly heartened religious Muslims as more or less after one hundred years Caliphate has come to exist (sic). In other words, Islamic Caliphate is no longer a concept but seems to have become a reality.”

Most disturbing of all is your and other ulema’s complete silence over a seemingly very well-reasoned,

coherent fatwa, citing verses from Quran and narrations of Hadith, of the Hyderabad Maulana, seeking to prove that Islam asks beleaguered Muslims to fight and not sit helplessly when they perceive being under attack by non-Muslims whom he calls “infidels” and “idol-worshippers” or kafirs and mushriks respectively.

In a booklet entitled “Use of Force in the light of Quran,” written in response to Dr. Nejatullah Siddiqi’s essay renouncing offensive violence in the name of Islam, Maulana Islahi, says:

The summary of whatever Dr Saheb (Dr Nejatullah Siddiqi) has written is that ... no matter what the flag bearers of Hindutva may do, taking any step against them or confronting them with the use of force will be wrong from the point of view of Shariah and harmful for the Muslims.

On Page 10/11, in a chapter entitled “Jihad is not violence,” he says, “In the light of the Quran and hadith, calling punishment for crime violence is very wrong. It is an un-Islamic idea. In fact, the punishment that is given for preventing the criminal from committing crimes is not violence and atrocity but a benevolent act and a blessing. However, whatever meaning the word ‘violence’ may convey, calling violence permissible only in two situations by Dr (Nejatullah Siddiqi) Saheb is also extremely erroneous and is akin to striking a hard blow at the purpose of the prophethood of the

holy Prophet. Please see Surah Tauba, Chapter 9 of the Quran, verse No. 29:

”And fight against those who do not have faith in God and in the Day of Judgment and declare haram what God and his prophet have declared halal, and among those people of the Book do not accept the true faith until they pay the Jizyah with their own hand and are subdued.” (Quran 9: 29)

“In this verse, fight has been ordained against those under three conditions until they pay jizyah: a) they do not profess faith in God and Day of Judgment; b) do not accept as haram what God and his prophet have declared haram; c) do not accept Islam as their religion.”

One of the cornerstones of moderate Islam is the often-quoted verse “La ikraha fiddin,” (Let there be no compulsion in religion.): Quran 2: 256. But the way Maulana Islahi turns it around is worth noting. He says: “This does not mean that ahl-e-Kufr, (infidels) should be left totally free on earth with their un-belief and should not be made accountable. If this were true, what do we mean when we say that the religion of God has been revealed to dominate the world?

“It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islam) to make it superior over all religions even though the Mushrikoon (polytheists, idolaters, etc.) hate it.” (Quran. 9: 33)

“What will this verse mean then and what relevance will the obligation of jihad have?

“It is the duty (of Muslims) to

struggle for the domination of Islam over false religions and subdue and subjugate ahl-e-kufr-o-shirk (infidels and polytheists) in the same way as it is the duty of the Muslims to proselytise and invite people to Islam. The responsibility to testify to the Truth and pronounce the Deen (religion) God as entrusted with the Muslims cannot be fulfilled merely by preaching and proselytising. If it were so there would be no need for the battles that were fought.

“And fight them until there is no fitnah (mischief) and [until] the religion, all of it, is for Allah. And if they cease - then indeed, Allah is Seeing of what they do.” (Quran. 8:39)

“Jihad has been made obligatory to make the Deen (religion) dominate and to stop the centres of evil. Keeping in view the importance of this task, the significance of Jihad in the name of God has been stressed in the Quran and Hadith. That’s why clear ordainments have been revealed to Muslims about fighting all the Kuffar (infidels).

“United, fight the polytheists as they fight against you.” (Quran. 9:36)

On Page 17, Maulana Islahi says: “Let it be known that, according to Islamic jurisprudence, fighting the infidels (kuffar) in their countries is a duty (farz-e-Kifayah), according to the consensus of ulema.”

Maulana’s entire essay is a call for the Indian Muslims to fight the forces of Hindutva. But none of you ulema, Maulana Firangimahali Saheb, have refuted Maulana Abdul Aleem Islahi, as you have not denounced Dr. Zakir Naik or Maulana Salman Nadvi. Not even

when it became known that Maulana Islahi had inspired the Indian Mujahedin group. Perhaps your problem is that you cannot, as you yourself cannot but believe in what Maulana Islahi says. What Maulana Islahi or Zakir Naik are saying is primarily based on the current theology, the theology that you all have studied and teach in your madrasas and universities. How you can condemn that.

The most authoritative book of Islamic jurisprudence to date, *Al-Mausu’ah al-fiq-hiyah al-Kuwaitiyyah* (Kuwaiti Encyclopaedia of Islamic Jurisprudence), prepared in Kuwait by a consensus of ulema from all schools of thought, after nearly half-a-century’s effort, and whose Urdu version was released on 23 October 2009 by Vice President Hamid Ansari in Delhi, defines Jihad thus: “Terminologically, Jihad means to fight against a non-Zimmi unbeliever (a kafir who is not paying jizya to an Islamic State), after he rejects the call towards Islam, in order to establish or raise high the words of Allah.”

Clearly, the consensus Maulana Islahi claims for his Islam supremacism, exclusivism and xenophobia is not wrong. Making Islam dominant over all other religions is indeed the goal of all ulema, past and present. All the intolerance and xenophobia of political Islam flows from there. It’s only when one studies these theological tomes one can see that it is not possible for you ulema to refute your Jihadi ideologues in any meaningful way. Making dishonest, false statements of peace and pluralism to the non-Muslim media is also allowed under the Doctrine of Taqaiyya mainly derived from the

Quranic verse: 3:28: “Let not the believers take the disbelievers as auliya (supporters, helpers, etc.) instead of the believers, and whoever does that will never be helped by Allah in any way, unless he does it out of fear or taqaiyah (pious dissimulation). And Allah warns you against Himself (His Punishment) and to Allah is the final return.” This doctrine used to be mainly part of Shia jurisprudence, but it seems Sunnis have also adopted it under the onslaught of global media that is now asking informed questions.

Nothing is thus going to change, unless all you ulema are prepared to move forward from your present position, renounce the theology of violence and exclusivism, intolerance and supremacism, that exists today in the form of Islamic theological literature and help us ordinary folk evolve a new theology of peace and pluralism. Islam is undoubtedly a religion of peace and pluralism, love for all and spiritualism. It does indeed teach harmonious co-existence. But Islamic theology of today, as taught in madrasas and universities, doesn't. The theology that you ulema have studied and teach to our hapless children is a theology of supremacism. Islam is in crisis today. It has become practically synonymous with terrorism.

Wake up, Maulana Firangimahali Saheb, and start taking remedial action at least now. If you can't do that, at least stop deceiving the world through your peaceful pronouncements. We are now living in a world of internet. Scholarship is available on fingertips. Everyone is a scholar. You can't hide anything.

The Islamic State is making efforts to recruit Indian youths to

carry out terror attacks in Iraq, Syria and even within India

To tell you the truth, you are not deceiving any one, not the least our children who are running away to the so-called Islamic State, even when you call it the “un-Islamic State.” Intelligent, educated, they all know the truth. You recite peaceful Meccan verses of pluralism, co-existence, good-neighbourliness, exhortations of patience in times of adversity, etc., in your appearances on television or when forced to issue a fatwa against terrorism. But you teach in your madrasas, tafasir (interpretations) of Quran like, say, the Tafsir Jalalain, considered one of the most authentic. It explains the Doctrine of Abrogation, widely accepted by ulema, whereby peaceful Meccan verses are said to have been abrogated by the later Medinan verses of war. By and large the doctrine is based on the following verse of the Quran: 1: 106, in which God says: “None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar: Knowest thou not that Allah Hath power over all things?”

The so-called sword verse alone, according to Jalalain, abrogates no less than 19 Meccan verses exhorting peace and patience in the face of persecution. This Verse (Quran 9:5) says: “When the sacred months are over, slay the idolaters wherever you find them. Arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them. If they repent and take to prayer and render the alms levy, allow them to go their way. God is forgiving and merciful.”

One of the Jalals, Jalal al-Din ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr al-

Suyuti (1445-1505) interprets 9:73 (O Prophet, fight against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be harsh upon them. And their refuge is Hell, and wretched is the destination) as a case of postponing the fight until Muslims become strong. His argument is that “when Muslims were weak, God commanded them to be patient.” Another revered Quran exegete, taught in all madrasas and departments of Islamic studies in universities, is Ibn-e-Kathir (1301-1372). He says that the sword verse (Quran 9: 5) “abrogated every agreement of peace between the Prophet and any idolater, every treaty, and every term...” Similarly, Ibn Juzayy (d. 1340), another respected Qur’an exegete says: The Verse of the Sword’s purpose is “abrogating every peace treaty in the Qur’an.””

Then there are ahadith (plural of hadith, so-called sayings of the Prophet pbuh) that terror ideologues use to justify terror and you Maulana Firangimahali and your fellow ulema consider akin to revelation.

Take, for instance, the most widely quoted hadith in this context: “I have been commanded to fight all mankind till they testify that there is none worthy of worship but Allah, and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, and they establish prayer perfectly and pay zakat. If they do this, they have protected their lives and their wealth from me except for Islamic laws and their reckoning will be with Allah the Almighty.”

– Sahih Bukhari (Vol.1. Book 2, Number 24, page 402) as well as (Sahih Muslim, 31:5917), the two books of Hadith considered the most reliable and authentic by all ulema.

My problem with this Satanic Hadith is: Can the prophet (pbuh) do or say something against the express exhortations of the Holy Quran, as he seems to be doing in this case, violating the universal declaration of Quran, quoted above, Quran 2: 256; "La ikraha fiddin," (Let there be no compulsion in religion) and many other similar Meccan verses of peace, pluralism and co-existence, teaching Muslims to be patient while facing persecution? I would say, NO, the Prophet can never do or say anything that violates universal declarations of the Quran, which is the word of God revealed to him.

But you Maulana Firangimahali and your fellow ulema would say the following: "this hadith ("saying" of the prophet) is as good as a revelation and since it came, like similar war-time verses, later than the previous universal declarations of freedom of religion, pluralism and co-existence, it has abrogated not only the above but many other peaceful verses revealed earlier at Mecca when the foundation of the religion of Islam was being laid." You all will say this because all the universally revered exegetes of Quran say the same thing, except Mu'tazilah (rationalist) scholars like Abu Muslim Al-Asfahani. You read these secondary Islamic literature, the exegeses and interpretations by Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, (Jamie Al-Bayan: 7/646), Ibn-e-Kathir (1/207 and 2/774), Jalalain (51 mention of abrogation in numerous places in Tafsir al-Jalalain), Al-Qurtubi (Al-Jamie Li Ahkam Al-Quran 10/157), etc., believe in these analyses and exegeses unquestioningly, and teach this in your madrasas. *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*:

Do you know how many children in India have started calling their

parents kafir? And for good reason. You teach the children Jihad in the sense of Qital against all infidels and polytheists (kuffar and Mushrikeen) and ask them to practice peace and pluralism, and co-exist with the same kuffar and Mushrikeen. Please be honest, call for war against the so-called infidels and idol-worshippers, as Maulana Abdul Aleem Islahi,

Khalifa Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and other Jihadi ideologues do, or renounce your theology of violence and supremacism and let us common Muslims evolve a new and coherent theology of peace and pluralism, co-existence and acceptance of all religions as valid paths to eternal salvation.

Yours Sincerely,
A concerned Muslim
Sultan Shahin, Founding Editor, New Age Islam

(Continued from Page 10)

therefore, against the people of India. The people have a right to know, understand and form their own opinion on the proceedings. I have still not understood the logic and intention of Nehru Government to black out the entire trial. Leading mourner was Nehru. It is a different matter that the Sardar was pushed to the background but he, as Dy. Prime Minister and Home Minister wasted no time in banning the RSS outfit.

The Court set aside the ban. Thereafter also several attempts

were made to ban RSS, but the Court came in the way. Finally, the Governments gave up.

My memory too might have been influenced by perceptions but I must make it clear that I belong to OBC and never was a supporter of anti-Dalit or other anti-minorities attitudes or actions and never a member of RSS. I, therefore, look forward reactions which may enable me to stand corrected at this fag end of my life.

—**B. M. Rao**

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Rohini Gawankar

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**Complicating
Kashmir issue**
Sandeep Pandey

**Congress must set its
house in order**
Kuldip Nayyar

A night in Istanbul
Megh Apte

**Human nature:
an evolutionary paradox**
John Scales Avery

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Dalits' emancipation from humiliating vocations

A Dalit Asmita Yatra was taken out in Guajrat by the Una Dalit Atyachar Ladat Samiti from Ahmedabad to Una, where the obnoxious incident took place on July 8, when some Dalits were beaten for skinning dead cows, between July 31 and August 15, 2016. Symbolically, on the Independence Day the Dalits demanded that they must be freed from the task of disposal of cattle carcasses and instead they should be given land so that they may survive by doing agriculture, in any case a more respectable vocation than what they have been traditionally doing. Any landless Dalit is in any case entitled to receive land from the panchayat. Essentially the demand is to implement the provision in law for Dalit. Even in cases from around the country where Dalits have been given land titles by Panchayats they are not able to take control of their land sometimes. Encroachment over Dalit land is a fairly common problem. The police and administration tend to favour the powerful upper caste people who encroach upon the land of Dalits, just like they did in the Una incident.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was for nationalization of land. As land

reforms have not taken place in spite of the implementation of land ceiling law and the people fear that any surplus land will be given to private corporations rather than landless labourers, it may not be a bad idea to revive the call for nationalization of land, following Dr. Ambedkar. There should be a way of more equitable use of land. This will give Dalits the opportunity to give up vocations which are inhuman.

The young convenor of the Ladat Samiti, Jignesh Mevani says that he doesn't want it to just remain a Dalit movement. He would like to invite other progressive forces to join this movement for emancipation of Dalits. He invokes Shaheed Bhagat Singh also in his speeches. There is appeal for promoting inter-caste and interfaith marriages and also to strengthen Dalit-Muslim unity as Muslims too have been at the receiving end of the cow protection campaign. In fact, so long as it was only Muslims getting killed or attacked by cow vigilante groups the Prime Minister kept quiet. It was only when the Una incident received bad publicity and threatened the electoral prospects of BJP in forthcoming elections in Punjab and UP, that Narendra Modi in quite an

unexpected about turn came down heavily upon these groups.

However, the PM's outburst doesn't seem to have had any effect on the cow vigilante groups. Hindu Jagarana Vedike has killed Praveen Poojary, interestingly a BJP worker, who was accused of carrying cattle in a vehicle for slaughter house. So, it appears that PM's apparent anger was more for public consumption than actually intended to stop such incidents. In any case Vishwa Hindu Parishad and other Hindutva groups have condemned PM's accusation that 80 per cent of cow vigilantes are anti-social elements by the night. It certainly cannot be denied that they take law into their own hands. The faith seems to be given more importance than our Constitution.

The Dalit Asmita Yatra received good response in Gujarat and has given a platform to Dalits for assertion of their rights. The method of protest they have chosen, of abandoning the cattle carcasses, reflects the agony of their profession. Earlier Dalits are known to have given up this task in 19 villages of Mehsana district of Gujarat. Unless they give up these menial jobs their children will not be able to go to schools and generation after generation they will remain in the same tradition.

Now it is up to the class which is the consumer of leather items to worry about how they would remove the skin of dead cattle so that it may be used by leather industry. The cow vigilante groups have also protested against the use of cow leather for making various items. With the Dalits in Gujarat having resolved on a big scale not to skin dead animals, it has already become a problem for the government there. It is thinking of employing machines to perform the task and dispose of the dead body. The leather industry may be under serious threat because of the misplaced enthusiasm of the cow vigilantes and a right wing government not too keen to suppress the 'Hindu' sentiment.

In any case, a number of humiliating tasks which are performed by Dalits including getting down into sewer lines to clean them should have been mechanised long back. Just as this Yatra was to end in Una news came in of four people dying in Madhapur in Hyderabad because of suffocation when they had entered a manhole to clean it. It is really shameful that in the era of modernisation when most inhuman tasks involving drudgery are being mechanised, we still make live human beings enter the hell which is sewer line. This is another task that

the Dalits must be freed from.

It is only when the Dalits are freed from the inhuman tasks that it will give a chance to Dalit children to think about a more respectable future for themselves by adopting alternative careers after getting educated. Wherever Dalit families have got a chance they have left such humiliating professions. But the problem is that most Dalits engaged in menial tasks live in conditions of poverty which don't allow them to unshackle from their situation. Even a Free and Compulsory Right to Education Act, which got implemented in the country in 2009, is not able to pull all their children out and get them admitted to schools. When 23 Valmiki community which is traditionally involved in sanitation work, children were to be admitted along with another 8 Muslim children to the prestigious City Montessori School in Lucknow last year under the RTE, the school opposed their entry tooth and nail. Only by a Court order 13 Valmiki children got admitted to the school in 2015. The school again wanted them out in the current academic year. The Supreme Court has reprimanded it for this. The elite class has made the life of children of sanitation workers miserable, humiliating them at every step.

Complicating the Kashmir issue

Even after lot of criticism, the government continues to use pellet guns in J&K against protestors. Recent victims include a 8 years old Junaid whose lung has been ruptured and Adil who has been blinded. 30 patients, victims of pellet guns, in a day clearly shows that government is in no mood to relent.

This reflects the tenor of

statement by Arun Jaitley made in Samba of Jammu region where he said that militancy and stone pelting need to be dealt with firmly and no laxity should be shown in dealing with such situation. Although Narendra Modi, in a meeting with opposition leaders the next day in Delhi, said that he shared the pain of Kashmiris. He said it is a matter of distress whether the lives lost are of our youth, security personnel

or police. But the PM is now known to initiate damage control when situation worsens and starts affecting his political prospects. Rajnath Singh, earlier said that instead of stones, bricks and firearms in the hands of Kashmiris he would like to see pen, computers and jobs. Both Rajnath and Jaitley have blamed Pakistan for fomenting the current trouble in Kashmir.

It is unbelievable that BJP leaders hold such simplistic ideas about Kashmir. Their approach is only going to worsen the situation.

When Rajnath or Modi say they would like to see development in J&K, do they really think economic prosperity is the answer to unrest in Kashmir? If economic well being would have guaranteed happiness then youth of Punjab would not have taken to drugs. Mental happiness is no less important than physical well being for peace to return to the valley. That can happen only when a political solution which is agreeable to Kashmiris is arrived at. Most commentators say it will have to be some kind of autonomy.

Jaitley must be asked why did women and children pick up stones? Stone pelting was people's answer to use of force against them by the Indian government. Jaitley must thank people of Kashmir as most of them have shown restraint and not picked up guns. Only a small minority indulges in the kind of violence which can kill security forces. It is a pity that while security forces can easily save themselves from stones, or at least will not suffer fatal injuries, they have no qualms about using pellet guns against people with serious consequences. No security personnel are getting killed, except for the two who died initially, in the present round of everyday violence. Only the number of civilians getting killed is going up. Kashmiris are right in doubting whether they are considered equal citizens of India, when pellet guns are used only against their agitation and not elsewhere in the country. No sensitive government would use such inhuman methods against their own citizens. Israelis use it against

Palestinians but then Israel doesn't have the kind of relationship with Palestine which India claims to have with Kashmir.

BJP seems to know only one way to deal with the problem - to remain tough. The curfew, already the longest in the history since J&K became part of India, has been there for more than a month and half now. Police have given up. People are directly facing the brunt of military and paramilitary. Security forces which are trained to face enemy at the border, start treating people like enemies. It doesn't look likely that security forces being present there in such large numbers will help create an atmosphere which can pave the way for normalcy to return. BSF has been called out after 13 years which is not a good sign.

Modi has appealed for peace to return to valley so that dialogue could begin. Jaitley thinks that the stone throwing protestors are the aggressors but in reality the security forces are the bigger aggressors given their power of ammunition. So, it is in the hands of government to bring peace to valley. The government only cuts a sorry figure by blaming Pakistan for even the stone pelting implying that Pakistan is able to influence proceedings in Kashmir while it has completely failed to have an impact.

Defence Minister Manohar Parikkar has also referred to Pakistan as 'hell,' to which south Indian actress and former Congress MP has given a very rational reply. There are protests against her and an advocate has sought sedition case to be filed against her. This has now become a trademark strategy of the Hindutva brigade. First a

controversy is created. Then if questions are raised about this, the Hindutva brigade will take to streets and create a scene. Nobody will question the original action. Only the reaction will be attacked. For example, there is noise about registering case against Akhlaq's family in Dadri but nothing is said about the people who killed him in the first place.

But commendably Ramya has stood her ground. The irrational behaviour of Sangh Parivar affiliates will have to be pointed out and questioned whatever the cost required to be paid. They are masquerading Hindu nationalism as the only form of nationalism, which is quite in variance from the idea of nationalism which our freedom fighters believed in. Actually, since the BJP has come to power there is sheer display of hooliganism in the name of nationalism and it must not be tolerated. Communal harmony was integral part of our nationalism legacy which is now sought to be dismissed in the name of minority appeasement.

Ramya is right. People in Pakistan are just like us. People don't hate each other. It is the governments which have created an atmosphere of enmity. Why should the people be dragged into it?

In Pakistan 48 per cent people enjoy the benefit of improved sanitation whereas the figure for India is merely 34 per cent. Proportion of underweight children in India is 43 per cent whereas in Pakistan it is merely 31 per cent. Hence for certain poor sections of population Pakistan may not be so much of a 'hell'.

—Sandeep Pandey

Between the Lines

Congress must set its house in order

Kuldip Nayar

Can the Congress Party be retrieved? This was the question posed to me. Another one is whether or not the party is relevant. Answering the last question first, I said that a 150-year-old organization which has loyal members even in the remotest rural areas cannot be irrelevant. The Congress led the independence movement and has ruled the country for more than five decades.

For my generation, Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel who were the top two leaders of the Congress are icons and I cannot forget the sacrifices the people made under their leadership. Their words counted and people would gather at their call whenever or wherever they made. Then, the Congress was India and India was the Congress.

The situation began to change after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri, who succeeded Nehru. I had the privilege of working as the press officer with Shastri. He had doubts about Nehru's succession plans and would often say that *unke dimaag me to un ki putri hai* (he has his daughter in mind). But, Shastri would, add that it would not be easy.

This turned out to be true because after the death of Nehru, Morarji Desai was the first one to throw his hat in the ring. Congress president K. Kamaraj did not want Morarji who he considered intractable and not accommodative for a country where it was essential to be conciliatory to take the people of

different religions, castes and regions together.

Shastri did succeed Nehru but died early because of heart attack at Tashkent where he had gone to sign a peace agreement with General Ayub Khan, martial law administrator of Pakistan. My feeling is that had he lived, relations between India and Pakistan would have normalized. I recall that after hearing the sudden death of Shastri, Ayub came to dacha where the Russians had put up the Indian Prime Minister up.

General Ayub said in my presence that "had he (Shastri) lived Pakistan and India would have become long-lasting friends." Ayub also became the pallbearer of the coffin that carried Shastri's body to the aircraft which flew it to Delhi. I think Ayub did echo the feelings of Pakistan because when I visited the country subsequently people recollected Shastri's friendship.

Zulfikhar Ali Bhutto, then Pakistan's foreign minister, was the spoiler. He did not want to sign a treaty which would shun violence in settling issues between India and Pakistan. And he flew straight from Tashkent to Islamabad and propagated that Ayub had sold the country to India. What Ayub had conceded was that the differences between India and Pakistan would be settled peacefully.

Shastri had made Ayub to write on the peace draft he had brought

along "without resorting to arms." The hand-written words in the text are retained by the National Archives of India. Although many people in Pakistan doubt this but the fact remains that General Ayub did sign the peace treaty because he, as the army chief, knew what the devastation the wars caused.

With such long and big heritage, the Congress Party cannot be written off. In fact, the very history of independent India begins with the movement which helped the country roll back the British Raj. It is true that the Congress has come down from the pedestal it had once occupied but it does not mean that it has become irrelevant.

Can the party be retrieved is a difficult question to answer. It had two major segments of followers: Dalits and Muslims. Mayawati, the dalit leader, has cornered the people whom the Hindu religion itself had categorized as *sudras* (untouchables). In fact, there is no religion in the world which makes discrimination against its own people as part of its traditions.

In fact, if the Hindus were to analyse they would find that the Muslims are converts from Hinduism because it did not treat them as equals, something which the Islam did. Today when the RSS raises the banner of *ghar wapsi*, it should realize that such a thing cannot happen until the Hindus give up untouchability which is rampant in

rural India. People of different castes may have begun sitting on the same bed, yet they still have separate wells and separate cremation grounds.

The Muslims, after the establishment of Pakistan, have sought a party which is secular. The Congress, however, was not as firm in its ideology as it was during the days of Nehru and Patel. Still the Muslims had no choice because the only alternative available to them after the Congress was the Communist Party. But this did not fit into their scheme of things and was too totalitarian and disciplinarian.

For a religion which has a holy book to follow, there was very little leeway. Islam attracted converts because it gave a sense of equality. *Hadeesh* (the spoken words) did give room for personal interpretations. But the loyal say that there could be no deviation from the book of roughly 1400 years old because these were the world of Allah.

Yet the Islam over the years has changed. If it could sever from the rigid path, Hinduism should have no problems of in overhauling itself in the face of modern challenges. However, discrimination against dalits is so deep that I do not expect many strides in this field. This is a challenge before the Hindus.

The experience so far has been far from happy. At the time of elections, some appeals are made and even top Hindu leaders from the Congress eat at the houses of dalits. But all this wears off once the polls are over and people are back to their old moorings of discrimination.

If the Congress wants to retrieve its lost influence, it would have to cleanse its own house. Secularism has become just a word and many Congress leaders are as rabid as the BJP fanatics. Secularism is a commitment, an aptitude of mind.

We have included secularism in the preamble of the constitution, but we are far from practising it. And, sometimes, I feel that India is trying to follow Pakistan where people wear religion on their sleeves to prove that they are firm Muslims.

Drop FIR against Amnesty

PUCL condemns the actions of the Bengaluru Police in foisting a case of sedition, creating enmity and other charges against Amnesty International India and unnamed staff for holding a meeting on 13th August, 2016 in Bengaluru on human rights abuses in Kashmir in which families of victims participated. From the statement of Amnesty it is evident that the police had been informed about the meeting, were present at the venue and had observed firsthand the event and therefore had knowledge that the allegations of the VHP about the meeting were politically motivated and false. That the Karnataka police chose to register a FIR despite all this only highlights the dangers of arming the state with such draconian laws like the anti-sedition laws.

The 13th August, 2016 event itself was in the backdrop of the 2015 Amnesty International report "Denied: Failures in accountability for human rights violations by security force personnel in Jammu and Kashmir". The Report focused on the travails of families of persons who lost their loved ones due to excesses by security forces. This report is in the public domain. Families of victims of State violence were present to narrate in first person, the situation in Kashmir and the difficulties in claiming justice and accountability in cases where innocent people are killed in

encounters or enforced disappearances. The meeting itself included showing video films of testimonies of other victim families, a panel discussion, musical performance and skit.

PUCL sees the recent registration of an FIR for sedition against Amnesty International, India and the witch hunt into the finances/ funding of the organisation as yet another instance in the long string of events where the State has used right wing majoritarian groups to stifle dissent, prevent discussion and control debate. There is a visible pattern across the country — from the incidents in JNU, Hyderabad Central University, Allahabad University, or the witch hunt against Teesta Setalvad and Javed Anand and their organisation CJP, Indira Jaisingh and Anand Grover of Lawyers Collective, Green Peace and now Amnesty International — where, in every meeting discussing human rights violations suffered by minorities and dalits, or excesses of security forces whether in Kashmir, North East or in Maoist regions, a small fringe group creates a commotion, which is used to first disrupt the meeting and thereafter to harass the organisers by slamming cases against them. Seldom is any action initiated against the individuals who disrupt meetings in the first place.

For instance, in the present incident, the local police were informed and were present at the meeting. Why were the disruptors not removed by the police present in the venue or why was no FIR registered against the persons who appeared to have come prepared to disrupt and actually disrupted the meeting?

It also needs to be highlighted that the repeated invocation of the anti-sedition offence (sec. 124 A IPC) over any other section of IPC is mainly to create a public opinion that those who demand accountability of the state and its agencies, including the police, paramilitary and security forces, are essentially “anti-national”. This creates a negative image about them amongst common people; the ‘anti-national’ tag, in turn, ensures that the state can further persecute them without much adverse public opinion.

It is in this context that we need to also notice that irrespective of political party in power, most governments tend to abuse the extremely coercive, anti-democratic, anti-sedition provision, sec. 124A IPC to silence dissent and crush criticism. There is little difference between a BJP government invoking sedition provisions against Dr. Binayak Sen in Chhattisgarh or the AIADMK government invoking sedition laws against peaceful, anti-nuclear protestors in Koodankulam in Tamil Nadu or cartoonist Aseem Trivedi being arrested in Maharashtra or the case launched by the TMC government in West Bengal against academics; more recently in the last one year itself, is the sedition case against JNU Students Union leader, Kanhaiya Kumar in Delhi, the Tamil folk singer

Kovan in TN for criticising the government’s liquor policy and against Hardik Patel for rallying the anti-reservation struggle involving Patels or Patidars in Gujarat; the latest to join this long list of infamous sedition cases is the present case against Amnesty International India launched by the Congress government in Karnataka. In all these cases, what weighed were political considerations of the ruling parties and governments dealing a death blow to the rule of law and functioning of the criminal justice system.

It has been a long held position of PUCL that the anti-sedition law (sec. 124A IPC) should be repealed immediately. It is ironical that in Britain itself the sedition clause has

been repealed while India continues to retain it.

PUCL appeals to all concerned citizens, democratically minded groups and human rights movement to once again give a call for repealing sec. 124 A IPC and to launch a mass citizen’s campaign to make ordinary citizens aware of the dangerous, anti-democratic nature of this archaic, colonial era provision of law.

PUCL also demands that the Government of Karnataka and the Karnataka Police immediately withdraw the FIR lodged against Amnesty International, India for the meeting organised by it on 13th August, 2016 in the United Theological College in Bengaluru.

–Prabhakar Sinha

V. Suresh

People’s Union For Civil Liberties

Saffron agenda

Muslims for Secular Democracy (MSD) strongly protests the decision of the Brihan Mumbai Municipal Corporation to make Surya Namaskar compulsory in the over 1,200 schools run by the civic body.

The BJP claims Surya Namaskar is beneficial in leading a healthy life, improves concentration and has nothing to do with any religion. While the combination of yogasana postures involved may well be beneficial for good health, Surya Namaskar does mean “salutations to Lord Surya (The Sun), the giver of energy to the world” and is widely regarded as “a wonderful regular routine of exercise, prayer and worship given in the scriptures”.

It is for this reason that very many Muslims find Surya Namaskar objectionable since Islam forbids bowing before or worship of anyone except God.

MSD believes that notwithstanding its posturing, the BJP’s decision to impose Surya Namaskar on all students irrespective of religion is an integral part of its saffronisation agenda.

It therefore supports the demand for a rollback of this unconstitutional decision of the BJP and its ally, the Shiv Sena.

–Hasan Kamaal, Javed Siddiqi, Noorjehan Safia Niaz, Javed Anand, Feroze Mithiborwala.

A night in Istanbul

Megh Apte

History is laden with incidences wherein the ruling classes due to their decisions caused discontent amongst their subjects. There have been numerous tales where kings have been assassinated because they wielded excessive power, and there have been incidences when the people as a collective unit have run a revolution due to the abuse of power by the establishment. The French and the Russian Revolutions coupled with the Arab Spring are examples of just how powerful a weapon the people can be. But, there are incidences when the guardians of the frontier turn rogue and decide to run the country themselves, for this is what happened on the night of 15th July 2016 in Turkey.

Turkey is a medium sized country which falls under both Europe and Asia, though for trade, politics and alignment, it comes under the jurisdiction of the European Union, the historic city of erstwhile Constantinople, known today as Istanbul, has an unique feature of being the only city in the world to be a part of two continents. The beautiful and the magnificent river which is called as the Bosphorus by those living in Istanbul separates the Asiatic and European area of Istanbul.

Turkey has a 99.8 % Muslim population, of which 80% are the one belonging to the Sunni sect and the remaining 20% belong to the Shia sect. However, these two sects have lived in harmony as compared to the bloody history these two sects share amongst themselves in the Middle

Eastern countries of Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The secularists and the Kurds (who have been demanding for the creation of an independent Kurdistan within Turkey) comprise the minority within Turkey.

The President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan who was elected in 2014 as Head of State has rather turned the destiny of Turkey towards authoritarianism as opposed to the democratic ideals it was based upon, Mr Erdogan is the first leader since Kemal Ataturk to wield such tremendous power. The saying, 'power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely' would need a small modification, as Ram Jethmalani, a very senior lawyer in India, rightly said in the Supreme Court, that modification being: All power corrupts — and the *fear* of losing power corrupts absolutely! This fear has made Mr Erdogan paranoid about every independent institution in place whose job is to maintain a system of checks and balances and to ensure the presence of rule of law. In addition to it, he has suppressed the media to such an extent that the tiniest criticism is seen as a security threat. His party, Justice and Development Party has been heavily under the scrutiny of its political opponents, Mr Erdogan's policies have been an extremely nutritious fodder for the opposition for their election campaign.

Fast forward to 15th July 2016, and a small faction of mid-level military officers tried to stage a coup d'état, which is a French word which translates as seizure of power. This

was not some rudimentary attempt; after all, Turkey has endured the test of time wherein the generals have ruled the country; this was a sophisticated and a well planned conspiracy. I say well planned because, the moment the coup was taking place, Mr Erdogan was on a vacation on a seaside resort overlooking the Aegean Sea. The rebel factions had F-16 fighter jets, tanks and a well stocked supply of ammunition with them, which was indeed alarming. These fighter jets carried out an air strike on the Turksat broadcasting station so as to create an Iron Curtain, however, the strike could not permanently damage the station as a result of which the private broadcasting networks were able to air the news that a coup was being staged. The moment the news started trickling through, Mr Erdogan resorted to Apple's Facetime and urged his countrymen to stand up to this threat against democracy, which is all the more ironic, given Mr Erdogan's distaste for the social media and internet activism. The Turkish people gave an overwhelming response to this message and the coup was failed, but Mr Erdogan should not delude himself, this response was given in order to save Turkey from a military regime and not to save Mr Erdogan.

The aftermath

The next morning, retribution was easily visible on the streets of Ankara and Istanbul after the rebels had been overcome. Mr Erdogan in a public address declared 'This uprising is a gift from God to us because this will be a reason to

cleanse our army'. Mr Erdogan certainly did not mince his words when he made this statement for 6000 servicemen had been arrested, amongst them 100 were generals and admirals, he has not stopped there, 8000 policemen have been sacked, 3000 Judges and prosecutors have been suspended or detained. University professors, teachers and civil servants (about 350 from the Prime Minister's office) have been pushed out of service. These incidences beg the question, what if the coup was something planned by Erdogan himself? So as to make the incident as a blank cheque to oust democracy and establish an authoritarian regime, the latter form of government is on its way since a three month (with effect from 20th July 2016) state of Emergency has been imposed in the country.

The blame of having incepted the coup has been put on Fetullah Gulen , who is a Muslim cleric having gone into self-exile in the United States since 1998. Mr Gulen and Mr Erdogan were partners in crime when the going was good, however, on attaining power, Erdogan realized that Gulen was becoming a power centre himself and Gulen was accused of running a 'parallel state' within the established government. Gulen is a person who has openly professed an idea of an Islamic Caliphate in the past which gives Erdogan all the more reason to suspect him.

Turkey's relationship with NATO, EU and USA

Historically, Turkey played a crucial role in the Cold War, it was the place closest to the erstwhile Soviet Union where the United States could establish a military base.

Even today, in its fight against the Islamic State (IS), the US views Turkey as a valuable ally. After all, the base at Incirlik in southern Turkey is used to carry out air strikes on IS. Turkey has however been not a part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). If Turkey were to apply to the NATO today, they would not succeed, the reason being, NATO lays down a set of criteria known as the 'members action plan', the criteria laid down in it need to be strictly followed by an aspiring applicant .

The criteria are as follows

- Ø A stable democratic system
- Ø Pursue the peaceful settlement of territorial and ethnic disputes
- Ø Have good relations with neighbouring countries
- Ø Show commitment to the rule of law and human rights
- Ø Establish a democratic and a civilian control of their forces
- Ø Have a market economy

Of all these criteria which have been laid down, Turkey fulfills only the last criteria. Over the past few months Erdogan has been overtly suspicious of America since the US has an alliance with the Syrian Kurdish militia known as the People's Protection Units, it is recognized by America as the most effective ground force against IS in Syria. However, there is a slight problem since this militia is also demanding an independent Kurdistan. Such alliances are viewed by Turkey as acts of having 'double standards' since America is directly supporting separatist views in Turkey.

To make matters worse, Turkey has been facing a strained relationship with the European Union as well, who is its largest trading partner. Turkey has made a deal with the European Union which included, Turkish effort to reduce the inflow of refugees to Greece in exchange for accelerating the abolition of short term visas for Turkish tourists and businessmen and fund Turkish efforts to support refugees. The criticism the deal faced was that the EU had designated Turkey as a 'safe country' for refugees, this failed coup has put a dent to that reputation as well.

Economic analysis

There is one thing any sort of coup holds in common, they are always unexpected by their nature, whose objective is to catch the government unawares. The past three years have seen successful coups in Egypt and in Thailand and several failed ones in other countries. Jonathan Powell and Clayton Thyne of the University of Kentucky have collected immense data on this subject and have reached to the conclusion that between the years 1950 and 2010 there have been 457 coup attempts in total, out of which 227(49.7%) were successful and 230(50.3%) were unsuccessful, however post-2003, plotters of a coup have attained a decent hit rate of 70%, which indicates a certain amount of sophistication the plotters have attained over the years which is indeed an alarming sign.

Coups have been not so regular over the years. Their heyday was the mid-1960s, when nearly 15 took place every year, this can be easily

equated with the Cold War, since the 1960s was the time when US—Soviet relations were most strained and both countries tried to create unrest in the countries which belonged to the Eastern and the Western bloc. However, the current trend is that the occurrence of coups is declining, the main reason, the world has got richer. Looking at a sample size of 121 countries, John Londregan and Keith Poole, of Carnegie Mellon University, concluded in 1990 that coups were 21 times more likely to take place in poor countries as compared to rich ones. Using another group of countries, Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler of Oxford University found in 2007 that the risk of coups fell about by 27% as the level of income per person doubled. By the same token growth rates matter. Raising it by one percentage point reduces the risk of a coup by 4.4%. The corollary is, of course, that slower growth rate raises the risk of a coup. There is no automatic threshold, North Korea is a perfect example where the soldiers have not rebelled against their leader despite having a disastrous growth rate.

Lessons

1. Turkey has a long march ahead of itself now, this failed coup may be the making or breaking of a country. Erdogan has the chance to instill a spirit of democracy and constitutionalism. Constitutionalism essentially means having a system of checks and balances in place in order to prevent abuse of power by one wing of the government viz. Legislature, Executive, and the Judiciary. Mr Erdogan can start unmuzzling the press which has been suppressed for so long.

2. The jihadist elements which will now be more active due to this failed coup need to be carefully surveilled.
3. The power of the army needs to be curtailed by way of legislation so that such an incident does not happen again.
4. If the majoritarian attitude of Erdogan does not cease, Turkey is destined for doom since nothing ever comes out of ethnic discord and hatred for the minority. For, a country is judged by how it not treats its majority, but how it treats its minority.
5. The NATO needs to relax some of its criteria for membership since they are slightly hypocritical in nature. Many of the other NATO members have violated those criteria on numerous occasions.
6. A military government so close to the European Union would have set a very dangerous precedent since the gateways of terror would be wide open and the threat of war would be more imminent. I make this statement because, however despotic, spineless Nawaz Sharif might be as the Prime Minister of Pakistan, he still is a 'democratically' elected leader, he is accountable to the people to a very limited scale, but still he is. Opposed to that, a government headed by the Inter Services Intelligence and the Pakistani Army would be a major headache for the Indian subcontinent since both the countries have got nuclear weapons.
7. The refugee crisis needs to be handled more maturely by the

European Union, otherwise it will cause growing discontent amongst the people as already demonstrated by the people of Great Britain.

8. Mr Erdogan needs to balance his own political ambitions with the ambitions of his subjects, if the vested interests overwhelm public interest and if there is a damage to the economy of Turkey, Mr Erdogan can see himself being the next Hosni Mubarak, the Turkish people will have the final say in the second round and there will be no army to save Mr Erdogan this time.

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Human nature: an evolutionary paradox

John Scales Avery

Today, human greed and folly are destroying the global environment. As if this were not enough, there is a great threat to civilization and the biosphere from an all-destroying thermonuclear war. Both of these severe existential threats are due to faults in our inherited emotional nature.

From the standpoint of evolutionary theory, this is a paradox. As a species, we are well on the road to committing collective suicide, driven by the flaws in human nature. But isn't natural selection supposed to produce traits that lead to survival? Today, our emotions are not leading us towards survival, but instead driving us towards extinction. What is the reason for this paradox?

Some stories from the Bible

The Old Testament is the common heritage of the three Abrahamic religions, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Some of the stories which it contains can be seen as attempts to explain the paradoxes of human emotional nature: Why are we born with emotions that drive us to commit the seven deadly sins? Why are pride, envy, wrath, gluttony, lust, sloth and greed so much a part of human nature? The story of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden attempts to answer this question, as do stories about the role of Satan in the world.

According to the biblical account, Adam and Eve ate apples from the Tree of Knowledge and were therefore expelled from the Garden

of Eden. This story can be seen as containing elements of historical truth.

Humans were originally hunter-gatherers. Populations were so sparse that gathering roots, berries and fruits from their environment gave them enough to eat. Occasionally they obtained additional protein from the meat of animals that they were able to kill. Then agriculture was invented. Populations rapidly became so dense that humans were no longer able to live simply by gathering fruit from the Garden of Eden. Expelled from the garden, they were henceforth forced to sweat for their daily bread.

What about "original sin" and the role of the Devil in the world? In the Bible, the Devil, or Satan, appears as a fallen angel who tempts humans to commit sins, i.e. to break the rules of their societies. The existence of Satan is the biblical explanation of the presence of evil in the world. An alternative explanation is given by the doctrine of "original sin", which maintains that humans are born with a sinful nature.

Like the story of the Garden of Eden, these biblical concepts may also chronicle true historical events in human evolution. A sinful human is sometimes described as "behaving like an animal". In fact, what is regarded a sin in humans can be a necessary survival trait in an animal. It would be ridiculous to say "Thou shalt not steal" to a mouse or "Thou shalt not kill" to a tiger.

Our emotions have an extremely long evolutionary history. Both lust and rage are emotions that we share with many animals. However, with the rapid advance of human cultural evolution, our ancestors began to live together in progressively larger groups, and in these new societies, our inherited emotional nature was often inappropriate. What once was a survival trait became a sin which needed to be suppressed by morality and law.

Today we live in a world that is entirely different from the one into which our species was born. We face the problems of the 21st century: exploding populations, vanishing resources, and the twin threats of catastrophic climate change and thermonuclear war. We face these severe problems with our poor cave-man's brain, with an emotional nature that has not changed much since our ancestors lived in small tribes, competing for territory on the grasslands of Africa.

The expression of emotions in man and animals

In the long run, because of the terrible weapons that have already been produced through the misuse of science, and because of the even more terrible weapons that are likely to be invented in the future, the only way in which we can ensure the survival of civilization is to abolish the institution of war.

But is this possible? Or are the emotions that make war possible so much a part of human nature that we

cannot stop humans from fighting any more than we can stop cats and dogs from fighting? Can biological science throw any light on the problem of why our supposedly rational species seems intent on choosing war, pain and death instead of peace, happiness and life? To answer this question, we need to turn to the science of ethology: the study of inherited emotional tendencies and behavior patterns in animals and humans.

In *The Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin devoted a chapter to the evolution of instincts, and he later published a separate book, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. Because of these pioneering studies, Darwin is considered to be the founder of ethology, the study of inherited behavior patterns.

Behind Darwin's work in this field is the observation that instinctive behavior patterns are just as reliably inherited as morphological characteristics. Darwin was also impressed by the fact that within a given species, behavior patterns have some degree of uniformity, and the fact that the different species within a family are related by similarities of instinctive behavior, just as they are related by similarities of bodily form. For example, certain elements of cat-like behavior can be found among all members of the cat family; and certain elements of dog-like or wolf-like behavior can be found among all members of the dog family. On the other hand, there are small variations in instinct among the members of a given species. For example, not all domestic dogs behave in the same way.

"Let us look at the familiar case of breeds of dogs", Darwin wrote in *The Origin of Species*, "It cannot be

doubted that young pointers will sometimes point and even back other dogs the very first time they are taken out; retrieving is certainly in some degree inherited by retrievers; and a tendency to run round, instead of at, a flock of sheep by shepherd dogs. I cannot see that these actions, performed without experience by the young, and in very nearly the same manner, without the end being known (for the young pointer can no more know that he points to aid his master than the white butterfly knows why she lays her eggs on the leaf of the cabbage). I cannot see that these actions differ essentially from true instincts..."

"How strongly these domestic instincts habits and dispositions are inherited, and how curiously they become mingled, is well shown when different breeds of dogs are crossed. Thus it is known that a cross with a bulldog has affected for many generations the courage and obstinacy of greyhounds; and a cross with a greyhound has given to a whole family of shepherd dogs a tendency to hunt hares."

Darwin believed that in nature, desirable variations of instinct are propagated by natural selection, just as in the domestication of animals, favourable variations of instinct are selected and propagated by kennelmen and stock breeders. In this way, according to Darwin, complex and highly developed instincts, such as the comb-making instinct of honey-bees, have evolved by natural selection from simpler instincts, such as the instinct by which bumble bees use their old cocoons to hold honey and sometimes add a short wax tube.

In the introduction to *The Expression of the Emotions in Man*

and *Animals*, Darwin says "I thought it very important to ascertain whether the same expressions and gestures prevail, as has often been asserted without much evidence, with all the races of mankind, especially with those who have associated but little with Europeans. Whenever the same movements of the features or body express the same emotions in several distinct races of man, we may infer with much probability, that such expressions are true ones, — that is, are innate or instinctive."

To gather evidence on this point, Darwin sent a printed questionnaire on the expression of human emotions and sent it to missionaries and colonial administrators in many parts of the world. Darwin received 36 replies to his questionnaire, many coming from people who were in contact with extremely distinct and isolated groups of humans.

The results convinced him that our emotions and the means by which they are expressed are to a very large extent innate, rather than culturally determined, since the answers to his questionnaire were so uniform and so independent of both culture and race. In preparation for his book, he also closely observed the emotions and their expression in very young babies and children, hoping to see inherited characteristics in subjects too young to have been greatly influenced by culture.

Darwin's observations convinced him that in humans, just as in other mammals, the emotions and their expression are to a very large extent inherited universal characteristics of the species.

Ethology

The study of inherited behavior patterns in animals (and humans) was continued in the 20th century by such researchers as Karl von Frisch (1886-1982), Nikolaas Tinbergen (1907-1988), and Konrad Lorenz (1903-1989), three scientists who shared the Nobel Prize in Medicine and Physiology in 1973.

Karl von Frisch, the first of the three ethologists, is famous for his studies of the waggle-dance of honeybees. Bees guide each other to sources of food by a genetically programmed signalling method, the famous waggle dance, deciphered in 1945 by von Frisch.

Among the achievements for which Tinbergen is famous are his classic studies of instinct in herring gulls. He noticed that the newly-hatched chick of a herring gull pecks at the beak of its parent, and this signal causes the parent gull to regurgitate food into the gaping beak of the chick.

Tinbergen wondered what signal causes the chick to initiate this response by pecking at the beak of the parent gull. Therefore he constructed a series of models of the parent in which certain features of the adult gull were realistically represented while other features were crudely represented or left out entirely. He found by trial and error that the essential signal to which the chick responds is the red spot on the tip of its parent's beak. Models which lacked the red spot produced almost no response from the young chick, although in other respects they were realistic models; and the red spot on an otherwise crude model would make the chick peck with great regularity.

In other experiments, Tinbergen explored the response of newly-hatched chicks of the common domestic hen to models representing a hawk. Since the chicks were able to recognize a hawk immediately after hatching, he knew that the response must be genetically programmed. Just as he had done in his experiments with herring gulls, Tinbergen experimented with various models, trying to determine the crucial characteristic that was recognized by the chicks, causing them to run for cover. He discovered that a crude model in the shape of the letter T invariably caused the response if pulled across the sky with the wings first and tail last. (Pulled backwards, the T shape caused no response.)

In the case of a newly-hatched herring gull chick pecking at the red spoon the beak of its parent, the program in the chick's brain must be entirely genetically determined, without any environmental component at all. Learning cannot play a part in this behavioral pattern, since the pattern is present in the young chick from the very moment when it breaks out of the egg. On the other hand (Tinbergen pointed out) many behavioral patterns in animals and in man have both a hereditary component and an environmental component. Learning is often very important, but learning seems to be built on a foundation of genetic predisposition.

To illustrate this point, Tinbergen called attention to the case of sheepdogs, whose remote ancestors were wolves. These dogs, Tinbergen wrote, can easily be trained to drive a flock of sheep towards the shepherd. However, it is difficult to train them to drive the sheep away from their master. Tinbergen

explained this by saying that the sheep-dogs regard the shepherd as their "pack leader"; and since driving the prey towards the pack leader is part of the hunting instinct of wolves, it is easy to teach the dogs this maneuver.

Driving the prey away from the pack leader would not make sense for wolves hunting in a pack; it is not part of the instinctive makeup of wolves, nor is it a natural pattern of behavior for their remote descendants, the sheep-dogs.

As a further example of the fact that learning is usually built on a foundation of genetic predisposition, Tinbergen mentions the ease with which human babies learn languages. The language learned is determined by the baby's environment; but the astonishing ease with which a human baby learns to speak and understand implies a large degree of genetic predisposition.

On aggression

The third of the 1973 prizewinners, Konrad Lorenz, is more controversial, but at the same time very interesting in the context of studies of the causes of war and discussions of how war may be avoided. As a young boy, he was very fond of animals, and his tolerant parents allowed him to build up a large menagerie in their house in Altenberg, Austria.

Even as a child, Lorenz became an expert on waterfowl behavior, and he discovered the phenomenon of imprinting. He was given a one day old duckling, and found, to his intense joy, that it transferred its following response to his person. As Lorenz discovered, young waterfowl have a short period immediately

after being hatched, when they identify as their “mother” whomever they see first. In later life, Lorenz continued his studies of imprinting, and there exists a touching photograph of him, with his white beard, standing waist-deep in a pond, surrounded by an adoring group of goslings who believe him to be their mother. Lorenz also studied pair bonding rituals in waterfowl.

It is, however, for his controversial book *On Aggression* that Konrad Lorenz is best known. In this book, Lorenz makes a distinction between intergroup aggression and intragroup aggression. Among animals, he points out, rank-determining fights are seldom fatal. Thus, for example, the fights that determine leadership within a wolf pack end when the loser makes a gesture of submission. By contrast, fights between groups of animals are often fights to the death, examples being wars between ant colonies, or of bees against intruders, or the defense of a rat pack against strange rats.

Many animals, humans included, seem willing to kill or be killed in defense of the communities to which they belong. Lorenz calls this behavioural tendency a “communal defense response”. He points out that the “holy shiver”, the tingling of the spine that humans experience when performing a heroic act in defense of their communities, is related to the prehuman reflex for raising the hair on the back of an animal as it confronts an enemy, a reflex that makes the animal seem larger than it really is.

Konrad Lorenz and his followers have been criticized for introducing a cathartic model of instincts. According to Lorenz, if an instinct is not used, a pressure for its use builds

up over a period of time. In the case of human aggression, according to Lorenz, the nervous energy has to be dissipated in some way, either harmlessly through some substitute for aggression, or else through actual fighting. Thus, for example, Lorenz believed that violent team sports help to reduce the actual level of violence in a society.

Although the cathartic model of aggression is now widely believed to be incorrect, it seems probable that the communal defense response discussed by Lorenz will prove to be a correct and useful concept. The communal defense mechanism can be thought of as the aspect of human emotions which makes it natural for soldiers to kill or be killed in defense of their countries. In the era before nuclear weapons made war prohibitively dangerous, such behavior was considered to be the greatest of virtues.

Generations of schoolboys have learned the Latin motto: “*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*” — it is both sweet and proper to die for one’s country. Even in today’s world, death in battle in defense of country and religion is still praised by nationalists. However, because of the development of weapons of mass destruction, both nationalism and narrow patriotism have become dangerous anachronisms.

In thinking of violence and war, we must be extremely careful not to confuse the behavioral patterns that lead to wife-beating or bar-room brawls with those that lead to episodes like the trench warfare of the First World War, or to the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The first type of aggression is similar to the rank-determining fights of animals, while the second is more akin

to the team-spirit exhibited by a football side. Heroic behavior in defense of one’s community has been praised throughout the ages, but the tendency to such behavior has now become a threat to the survival of civilization, since tribalism makes war possible, and war with thermonuclear weapons threatens civilization with catastrophe.

In an essay entitled *The Urge to Self-Destruction*, Arthur Koestler says: “Even a cursory glance at history should convince one that individual crimes, committed for selfish motives, play a quite insignificant role in the human tragedy compared with the numbers massacred in unselfish love of one’s tribe, nation, dynasty, church or ideology... Wars are not fought for personal gain, but out of loyalty and devotion to king, country or cause...”

“We have seen on the screen the radiant love of the Führer of the Hitler Youth... They are transfixed with love, like monks in ecstasy on religious paintings. The sound of the nation’s anthem, the sight of its proud flag, makes you feel part of a wonderfully loving community. The fanatic is prepared to lay down his life for the object of his worship, as the lover is prepared to die for his idol. He is, alas, also prepared to kill anybody who represents a supposed threat to the idol.”

The emotion described here by Koestler is the same as the communal defense mechanism (“militant enthusiasm”) described in biological terms by Lorenz. In *On Aggression*, Konrad Lorenz gives the following description of the emotions of a hero preparing to risk his life for the sake of the group:

“In reality, militant enthusiasm is a specialized form of communal aggression, clearly distinct from and yet functionally related to the more primitive forms of individual aggression. Every man of normally strong emotions knows, from his own experience, the subjective phenomena that go hand in hand with the response of militant enthusiasm. A shiver runs down the back and, as more exact observation shows, along the outside of both arms. One soars elated, above all the ties of everyday life, one is ready to abandon all for the call of what, in the moment of this specific emotion, seems to be a sacred duty.

“All obstacles in its path become unimportant; the instinctive inhibitions against hurting or killing one’s fellows lose, unfortunately, much of their power. Rational considerations, criticisms, and all reasonable arguments against the behavior dictated by militant enthusiasm are silenced by an amazing reversal of all values, making them appear not only untenable, but base and dishonorable. Men may enjoy the feeling of absolute righteousness even while they commit atrocities.

“Conceptual thought and moral responsibility are at their lowest ebb. As the Ukrainian proverb says: ‘When the banner is unfurled, all reason is in the trumpet’.

“The subjective experiences just described are correlated with the following objectively demonstrable phenomena. The tone of the striated musculature is raised, the carriage is stiffened, the arms are raised from the sides and slightly rotated inward, so that the elbows point outward. The head is proudly raised, the chin stuck out, and the facial muscles

mime the ‘hero face’ familiar from the films. On the back and along the outer surface of the arms, the hair stands on end. This is the objectively observed aspect of the shiver!

“Anybody who has ever seen the corresponding behavior of the male chimpanzee defending his band or family with self-sacrificing courage will doubt the purely spiritual character of human enthusiasm. The chimp, too, sticks out his chin, stiffens his body, and raises his elbows; his hair stands on end, producing a terrifying magnification of his body contours as seen from the front. The inward rotation of the arms obviously has the purpose of turning the longest-haired side outward to enhance the effect. The whole combination of body attitude and hair-raising constitutes a bluff.

“This is also seen when a cat humps its back, and is calculated to make the animal appear bigger and more dangerous than it really is. Our shiver, which in German poetry is called a ‘heiliger Schauer’, a ‘holy’ shiver, turns out to be the vestige of a prehuman vegetative response for making a fur bristle which we no longer have. To the humble seeker for biological truth, there cannot be the slightest doubt that human militant enthusiasm evolved out of a communal defense response of our prehuman ancestor.”

Lorenz goes on to say, “An impartial visitor from another planet, looking at man as he is today: in his hand the atom bomb, the product of his intelligence, in his heart the aggression drive, inherited from his anthropoid ancestors, which the same intelligence cannot control, such a visitor would not give mankind much chance of survival.”

There are some semantic difficulties connected with discussions of the parts of human nature that make war possible. In one of the passages quoted above, Konrad Lorenz speaks of “militant enthusiasm”, which he says is both a form of communal aggression and also a communal defense response. In their inspiring recent book *War No More*, Professor Robert Hinde and Sir Joseph Rotblat use the word “duty” in discussing the same human emotional tendencies. I will instead use the word “tribalism”.

I prefer the word “tribalism” because from an evolutionary point of view the human emotions involved in war grew out of the territorial competition between small tribes during the formative period when our ancestors were hunter-gatherers on the grasslands of Africa. Members of tribe-like groups are bound together by strong bonds of altruism and loyalty. Echoes of these bonds can be seen in present-day family groups, in team sports, in the fellowship of religious congregations, and in the bonds that link soldiers to their army comrades and to their nation.

Warfare involves not only a high degree of aggression, but also an extremely high degree of altruism. Soldiers kill, but they also sacrifice their own lives. Thus patriotism and duty are as essential to war as the willingness to kill. As Arthur Koestler points out, “Wars are not fought for personal gain, but out of loyalty and devotion to king, country or cause...”

Tribalism involves passionate attachment to one’s own group, self-sacrifice for the sake of the group, willingness both to die and to kill if necessary to defend the group from its enemies, and belief that in case

of a conflict, one's own group is always in the right.

Tribalism

If we examine altruism and aggression in humans, we notice that members of our species exhibit great altruism towards their own children. Kindness towards close relatives is also characteristic of human behaviour, and the closer the biological relationship is between two humans, the greater is the altruism they tend to show towards each other. This profile of altruism is easy to explain on the basis of Darwinian natural selection since two closely related individuals share many genes and, if they cooperate, the genes will be more effectively propagated.

To explain from an evolutionary point of view the communal defense mechanism discussed by Lorenz, the willingness of humans to kill and be killed in defense of their communities, we have only to imagine that our ancestors lived in small tribes and that marriage was likely to take place within a tribe rather than across tribal boundaries. Under these circumstances, each tribe would tend to consist of genetically similar individuals. The tribe itself, rather than the individual, would be the unit on which the evolutionary forces of natural selection would act.

The idea of group selection in evolution was proposed in the 1930's by J.B.S. Haldane and R.A. Fisher, and more recently it has been discussed by W.D. Hamilton, E.O. Wilson and R. Dawkins. According to the group selection model, a tribe whose members showed altruism towards each other would be more likely to survive than a tribe whose members cooperated less

effectively. Since several tribes might be in competition for the same territory, intertribal aggression might, under some circumstances, increase the chances for survival of one's own tribe. Thus, on the basis of the group selection model, one would expect humans to be kind and cooperative towards members of their own group, but at the same time to sometimes exhibit aggression towards members of other groups, especially in conflicts over territory.

One would also expect intergroup conflicts to be most severe in cases where the boundaries between groups are sharpest where marriage is forbidden across the boundaries.

Tribal markings, ethnicity and pseudospeciation

In biology, a species is defined to be a group of mutually fertile organisms. Thus all humans form a single species, since mixed marriages between all known races will produce children, and subsequent generations in mixed marriages are also fertile. However, although there is never a biological barrier to marriages across ethnic and racial boundaries, there are often very severe cultural barriers.

Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, a student of Konrad Lorenz, introduced the word "pseudospeciation" to denote cases in which cultural barriers between two groups of humans are so strongly marked that marriages across the boundaries are difficult and infrequent.

In his book *The Biology of War and Peace*, Eibl-Eibesfeldt discusses the "tribal markings" used by groups of humans to underline their own identity and to clearly mark the boundary between themselves and

other groups. One of the illustrations shows the marks left by ritual scarification on the faces of the members of certain African tribes. These scars would be hard to counterfeit, and they help to establish and strengthen tribal identity.

Seeing a photograph of the marks left by ritual scarification on the faces of African tribesmen, it is impossible not to be reminded of the dueling scars that Prussian army officers once used to distinguish their caste from outsiders.

(to be Concluded)

TRANSCEND Media Service

Footprints of A Crusader (The Life Story of Mrunal Gore)

by
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**Let not Article 370 of Indian
Constitution be weakened**
Rajindar Sachar

**Who should be blamed
for alienating Kashmiris?**
Prabhakar Sinha

**Review of literature on student
organizations and politics**
B. G. Kulkarni

**Human nature:
an evolutionary paradox - II**
John Scales Avery

Dalit Uprising and After
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Kashmir first, Pakistan later

Kuldip Nayar

Home Minister Rajnath Singh has met around 300 people at Srinagar. Pakistan, too, has offered to have talks on Kashmir. Both steps, however laudable, are late by two to three years. The Kashmiris then wanted a settlement through a dialogue. Leaders like Yasin Malik and Shabbir Shah did take part in the conclaves held at Srinagar and New Delhi.

The topic at that time was to make New Delhi realize that the state had acceded to the Union of India only three subjects: Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications. But overzealous Jagmohan and governors like N. N. Vohra and his predecessors spread themselves all over. They did not keep in mind that accession was limited to only three subjects. The Kashmiri leaders were unhappy but felt helpless.

Today, the young generation has gone beyond what their elders had promised. The youth now want independence, with freedom to chalk out their foreign policy. In fact, their concept of sovereignty is like the

freedom which any country in the world enjoys. Their representatives invited me to Srinagar last month. I found them really agitated but quite clear about what they want.

To call them fundamentalists or anti-India will not be fair. True, they want Srinagar to be like Washington or London and they do no links with Islamabad. They argue that their foreign policy will be decided by the elected members of the State assembly and not dictated by New Delhi or, for that matter, Islamabad.

I told them that I believed their demand was understandable but how could India create another Islamic country on its border when it already has a bad experience of having one Islamic state, Pakistan. They shrugged their shoulders when I argued with them that the Lok Sabha, with a majority behind Prime Minister Narendra Modi, would not concede their demand. This was your problem they said.

The quantum of autonomy can be a matter of debate but certainly not

the accession. By going back to the very *raison d'être* of Pakistan, we would start another kind of a debate and might disturb the equanimity which Hindus and Muslims have achieved despite an unequal situation.

Those who pelted stones in Srinagar may be the misguided youth in one way. But they represent the aspirations for independence in the other way. They have gone far ahead of Yasin Malik and Shabbir Shah, who are in jail. The youth resent the very accession to India. But they are equally indignant against Pakistan, although some extremists are trying to cloud.

I think that till a couple of years ago, the matter could have been settled between the governments at New Delhi and Srinagar but today the Kashmiris would have to be part of any dialogue on the future of the state. The UN resolution for a plebiscite in Kashmir or the Shimla Agreement between Indira Gandhi and Pakistan's Zulfikar Ali Bhutto has lost relevance. The situation today is different.

It is regrettable that neither India nor Pakistan realizes this or, at least, gives that impression. It is now a triangular and all the three points will have to be touched for an amicable settlement. Another delegation to Srinagar may be a futile exercise because the Kashmiris feel that promises made earlier have not been made good.

Former chief minister Omar Farooq Abdullah, who now leads the National Conference, is quite right when he says that he finds no utility in delegations visiting Srinagar when

Let not Article 370 of Indian Constitution be weakened

Rajindar Sachar

The Supreme Court of India, notwithstanding some controversial decisions in the matter of constitutional interpretation has by far and large contributed to the upholding the rights and privileges of the States and individuals.

But with a decision Ajay Kumar Pandey Vs. State of J & K & Anr. decided by Constitution Bench on July 19th, 2016 there has arisen the apprehension of interfering with the autonomy of J & K, guaranteed under Article 370 of the Constitution of India.

The Constitution Bench has decided that the Supreme Court has the power to transfer a civil or criminal case pending in any Court in the State of Jammu and Kashmir to a Court outside that State and *vice versa*. It was common case that the provisions of Section 25 of the Code of Civil Procedure and Section 406 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which empower the Supreme Court to direct transfer of civil and criminal cases respectively from one State to the other, do not extend to the State of Jammu and Kashmir and cannot, therefore, be invoked to direct any such transfer. It was also common ground that Jammu and Kashmir Code of Civil Procedure, 1977 and the Jammu and Kashmir Code of Criminal Procedure, 1989 do not contain any provision empowering the Supreme Court to direct transfer of any case from that State to a Court outside the State or *vice versa*.

provisions of Article 139-A of the Constitution which empowers Supreme Court to transfer a case pending before one High Court to itself or to another High Court also has no application to the cases at hand as the Constitution 42nd Amendment Act, 1977 which inserted the said provision itself has no application to the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Thus while accepting that a litigant has no right to seek transfer of a civil or a criminal case pending in the State of Jammu and Kashmir to a Court outside the State or *vice versa*., still the Court not with standing these formulations went on to answer the question whether independent of all these provisions contained in the Codes of Civil and Criminal Procedure there is there still a source of power which the Supreme Court can invoke for directing transfer of a case from the State of Jammu and Kashmir or *vice versa*. The Court has held that it has such a power invoking the principle of "access to justice" being fundamental right and secondly the powers given under Article 142 of the Constitution. The court relied on *principle of our law that every citizen has a right of unimpeded access to a court and referred to Raymond v. Honey 1983 AC 1 (1982 [1] All ER 756) where Lord Wilberforce described it as a 'basic right'*. But with respect, the attention of the Supreme Court was not brought to the specific observations of Lord Wilberforce and its affirmation in this very case; emphasizing the exception that; "a

(Continued on Page 5)

It was common ground that the

citizen's right to unimpeded access can only be taken away by express enactment... and we accept that such rights can as a matter of legal principle be taken away by necessary implication." Here in the present case the provisions mentioned above specifically negative the right of a litigant to have a case transferred out of J & K, but still the court has held otherwise.

The Supreme Court then dealt with the question namely whether Article 142 of our Constitution empowers the Supreme Court to direct transfer in a situation where neither the Central Code of Civil Procedure nor the Central Code of Criminal Procedure empowers such transfer to/from the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The Court thereafter concluded that the powers under Article 142 are wide enough to empower the Supreme Court to direct such a transfer in appropriate situations, no matter whether Central Code of Civil and Criminal Procedures do not extend to the State nor do the J & K State Codes of Civil and Criminal Procedure contain any provision that empowers this court to transfer cases. It is unfortunate that the attention of the court was not drawn to a seven judge's bench case A.R. Antulay V. R.S. Nayak 1998 (2) SCC 602 where court held; *"Thirdly, however wide and plenary the language of the article, the directions given by the court should not be inconsistent with, repugnant to or in violation of the specific provisions of any statute. If the provisions of the 1952 Act read with Article 139-A and Section 406-407 of the CrPC do not permit the transfer of the case from a Special Judge to the High Court, that effect cannot be achieved indirectly."*

It is also unfortunate that the attention of Supreme Court was also

not drawn to an earlier five judges' judgment of Supreme Court (1998) wherein the court said, "Article 142, even with the width of its amplitude, cannot be used to build a new edifice where none existed earlier, by ignoring express statutory provisions dealing with a subject and thereby to achieve something indirectly which cannot be achieved directly,.....that the Court will take note of the express provisions of any substantive statutory law and regulate the exercise of its power and discretion accordingly. It must be remembered that wider the amplitude of its power under Article 142, the greater is the need of care for this Court to see that the power is used with restraint without pushing back the limits of the Constitution so as to function within

the bounds of its own jurisdiction."

More serious than the concern mentioned above, this judgment has in an indirect manner nullified the mandatory provision of Article 370 of the Constitution. J & K. Legislature has specifically provided that court will have no such power to transfer cases from J & K Courts outside the State. In such a situation to invoke the powers of Article 142 to pass orders contrary to J & K legislation is a serious breach of Article 370 having grave consequences. I hope the Union of India and State of J & K will seek review of this judgment to avoid serious constitutional and political consequences, so as to ensure people of J&K that there will be no weakening of their autonomy.

Who should be blamed for alienating Kashmiris?

Prabhakar Sinha

It is a self deception to underestimate the alienation of a large number of Kashmiris from India and a crime to blame them for it. Despite an urge for Azadi among a sizeable section from the beginning, the Kashmiris remained peaceful and created no problem for India from 1947 to 1989. During these 42 years, India fought two wars with Pakistan (in 1965 and 1971) without the Kashmiris creating any problem for India or showing a preference for Pakistan. Khalistanis took to terrorism in 1980s, but Kashmir did not take to arms before 1989. Who is to blame for the present crisis in Kashmir?

The blame lies with the rulers of India - past and present. We Indians

were ready to accept that misrule in East Pakistan led to its alienation from Pakistan and went to war with Pakistan to liberate it, but refused to learn from Pakistan's experience. The lesson to be learnt was clear. Don't take the people for granted. If Muslims of Bengal, who were in the forefront of the battle for a Muslim Pakistan, could rise in revolt against the country they had shed their blood to create, the Muslims of Kashmir, too, could do it if ill treated. They continued to be taken for granted and denied even the right to elect a government of their choice. It is no secret that the elections in the state with few exceptions were rigged. The rigging of the election of 1987 was a turning point. When Farooq Abdullah joined hands with the

Congress, he ceased to enjoy the trust of the Kashmiris, who were for Kashmiriat and had reposed their faith in the Abdullah family. He was now looked upon as a stooge of Delhi.

Muslim United Front (MUF) was formed to oppose the National Conference and Congress alliance to have a government representing the forces of Kashmiriat i.e. of the Kashmiris, who resented losing their identity and wanted to retain it. The front had a massive public support, but lost the election thanks to massive rigging. As if that was not enough the MUF leader Muhammad Yousuf Shah was arrested and persecuted (he is currently known as Syed Salahuddin, the Chief of Hizbul Muzaheddin and is directing the operation from Pakistan). It was natural for a people to be convinced that they could not shape their life and future through fair elections and have to explore other means. The other means they adopted was insurgency. The pertinent question is whether they chose it or were driven to it by Delhi and whether it is they or the Indian rulers who are responsible for insurgency and terrorism in Kashmir.

The anti-Muslim tirade of the Sangh Parivar and the hate speech of Modi's Ministers, M.Ps. and the leaders of the BJP have been frightening and alienating even the minorities of the country dealing a grievous blow to the cause of national integration. The Sangh and the BJP have kept the cauldron of anti-Muslim feelings boiling. The ban on eating beef, killing of Aqalakh in UP, asking any Muslim to go to Pakistan at the drop of a hat, portraying a slight rise in the

(Continued on Page 10)

Landmark decision

National Alliance Of People's Movements welcomes the Supreme Court's land mark decision quashing the forcible land acquisition of 1000 acres by the West Bengal government in 2006 for the Tata car factory. The decision by Justices V. Gopala Gowda and Arun Mishra that the land be returned to the original land owners of Singur, marks another chapter in the long history of resistances by the people's movements against forcible land acquisition in name of public purpose for private corporations. Singur marked a turning point in 2006 when the resistance against the Special Economic Zones were just gathering steam and it emboldened our collective struggles all around.

We congratulate farmers of Singur who fought the ten years long legal battle and kept the pressure for return of the land with the help of the Trinamool Congress led West Bengal government. We also welcome the fact that the farmers don't have to return the money and the Justice Gowda's observation that the land acquisition for a private company to build a car plant doesn't constitute 'public purpose'. This is in line with what we have been saying for long and only vindicates our position.

Since, the enactment of the new land law in 2013, the governments have been bypassing the law to acquire land for private corporations and not adhering to the consent clause and need for conducting social impact assessment and limiting it only to cash compensation. The NDA government even thrice brought Ordinances to amend the law to facilitate easy acquisition of the land

for private corporations and for profiteering in the name of the public purpose. Supreme Court's judgement today is again a vindication and reaffirmation of the positions we have taken, where anything and everything has been justified in the name of public purpose. Any forcible land acquisition for corporate profit in the name of public purpose and development of nation is not acceptable and is completely anti-farmer and anti-people and unconstitutional, as reiterated by Supreme Court judgement today.

A number of people's movements today have joined hands with the mass organisations of the Left parties on the need for protecting land rights and oppose forcible land acquisition across the country. This unity has led to defeat of the NDA government's design to amend the 2013 land law and extend support and solidarity to community organisations opposing forcible land acquisition. With the West Bengal government backing Singur farmers, and Left parties also standing with people's movements, we do hope that a collective consensus will emerge from West Bengal on a people-centric development agenda and industrialisation, where interests of the workers, peasants and farmers will be at the centre of it and not profit and corporate greed.

We once again congratulate the farmers of the Singur for their valiant struggle!

—Medha Patkar, Samar Bagchi, Prafulla Samantara, Dr Sunilam, Amitava Mitra, Gautam Bandopadhyay, Bhupender Singh Rawat, Madhuresh Kumar

(Continued from Page 2)

the reports prepared by the earlier ones are accumulating dust in the Home Ministry corridors. New Delhi will have to prove its bona fides first before the thread can be picked up from where it was left off earlier.

After all, what was the demand of Sheikh Abdullah who had to spend some 12 years at Kodaikanal in the south? He wanted New Delhi to recognise that the state had joined the Union by conceding of only three subjects. It was not for the Union to usurp more powers without consulting the unit that had acceded to it.

Maybe, much water has flowed down the Jehlum since. But the situation can be retrieved by rolling back all laws which go beyond the scope of the three subjects. The youth in Kashmir may not feel happy but this is one possibility, although a remote one, to bring back the state on its tracks.

During my talks with the students at Srinagar, I told them that it was not possible to meet the demand of full independence. India is already suffering from the pinpricks of Pakistan. By granting full independence to Kashmir, New Delhi will only be increasingly its problems. I also argued with the students that the land-locked valley would have to depend either on India or Pakistan for business.

In reply, they said that they would be like Switzerland, a tourist resort and would earn money from visitors of different lands. They would not have a standing army, the upkeep of which costs a huge amount. They would still have the problem of finding a market for their men and

material but they are oblivious to this fact at present.

New Delhi is quite right in demanding a discussion on terrorism before discussing Kashmir. The dialogue which Pakistan has offered can start with terrorism and also embrace Kashmir because they are the two sides of the same coin. The army which calls the shot in Pakistan may have its own agenda but cannot be opposed to a dialogue for

normalizing the border bristling with armies of the two countries.

India should sort out the problem in Kashmir first before sitting with Pakistan. This can be done by accepting what Sheikh Abdullah, friend of Jawaharlal Nehru, demanded. The Sheikh said that India should withdraw all laws that went beyond the scope of the three subjects originally acceded to the Union of India

Footprints of a Crusader (The Life Story of Mrunal Gore)

by

Rohini Gawankar

The life story of Mrunal Gore, one of the leading socialist activists, is an inspiration to men and women alike, but it is especially a model for activists, social workers and politicians. Coming from a middle class family with no political connections, Mrunal Gore blazed a unique path, beginning as a grassroots organizer of women in suburban Mumbai, a people's representative at the lowest level of self-government and moving ever higher, till she rose to the ranks of a Member of Parliament. Throughout the course of this amazing journey, she stayed true to values and principles, never using her power for personal or narrow gains, but always striving to do the maximum good for the majority of the people. The suffering and deprivations of the common man became the sparks that inspired numerous agitations and fights which Mrunal undertook against injustice and inequity. Told through the eyes of a personal friend, the story recounts all the important events and achievements of her life, while also highlighting the sterling qualities that made Mrunal Gore a role model for the generations that followed in her footsteps.

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Review of literature on student organizations and politics

B. G. Kulkarni

Review of literature is an important aspect of research. It throws light on previous researches that have taken place in the concerned field. It provides strong foundation to the theoretical framework for the present investigation. Every researcher reviewed the related literature from different resources that includes books, articles, dissertations, abstracts and thesis and most important in the modern times the internet access. It is in this context that an attempt has been made to present a detailed account of review of literature pertaining to student organizations and politics.

Haridwar Singh (1983) stated that students don't inherit democratic values by birth but they learn it through the process of political socialization. As a result of political socialization process the majority of students in India has developed a sense of perceiving the political system in right direction and has regarded democracy as the best form of the government. Besides it, they have also developed a strong sense of political efficacy, it may be assumed, would lead the students towards effective participation in the political decision making process of the country.

Binodanand Jha (1998) mentioned that student politics in India is not an independent phenomenon. It is closely allied to and even guided by an outside agency whose interests are not limited to those of the students, but are just part of its broader political programme. Excepting sudden,

sporadic and spontaneous outbursts, all planned student political activists are an extension of partisan interests. The main focus of this study is: student organizations are more political than student oriented. Such organizations may, however serve a useful purpose if they have truly ideologically committed cadre and the ideology perused by them is not inconsistent with the value of the Indian political system.

Ningthoukhongjam Urmila (2007) argued that like other states of India, Manipur students have been engaging in their own political action. But, unlike many others, the student politics in Manipur did not originate from the nationalist or independence struggle. It was only in post-independence period that some political parties like the Manipur Pradesh Congress and Socialist Party tried to rally the students in their party activities. But during the mid-60s with the formation of all Manipur Students' Union, the state witnessed a new turn in student politics. The history of the all Manipur Students' Union reflects not only the different activities of youth and students in the state, but also the changing political ideas which have penetrated the collective mind, the psyche of the student community.

Manoj Phukan (2005) made an attempt to examine as to under what circumstances the All Tai Ahom Students' Union began to get involved in politics of the state despite being a non-political organization and how far they have been successful in their declared

mission. It analyses the transformation of ATSU from a non-political body of Tai Ahom students to a highly politicized organization actively concerned with all political issues affecting Assam as a whole for uplifting not only the Tai community but for the Assamese society.

Rashid Ali Syed's (1997) study is perhaps the first full-fledged study of student leadership in India. It chiefly aims to explore the personal, social-economic, academic, extra-curricular, agitational and political backgrounds of student leaders under study. It also seeks to know the mind of these leaders both on student situation and on some wider issues facing the country. Attempt has also been made to strike a comparative note on the characteristics of both student leadership and student protest in India. The author brings out the dynamic aspects of student politics, both at the micro level and macro level.

D. K. Mohanty's (1999) study is based on student activists in Orissa with special reference to the city of Rourkela. The primary focus of the study is on the student activists who are politically oriented and politically articulate. The present work makes an attempt to analyze and evaluate student politics and leadership.

S. K. Pattnaik's (1982) study highlights on the political profile of the student such as ideological orientation, levels of political efficacy, levels and forms of political

participation and opinion about the place of politics in the campus. Various factors contributing to the process of politicization such as proximity to the corridors of power, existence of student wings of national political parties and inherent linkages of the political and educational systems etc, have been studied to explain the politicization of a student body.

Philip G. Altbach (2012) stated that the age of the student movement in India seems to have ended, and ideological politics play a very small part among the students. Almost all of the national student organizations are bureaucratic structures rather than functioning movements. No one, the governments, politicians and educators included, have been able to arouse the students. In essence, the Indian student community is without direction and without ideology. Life remains difficult on the subcontinent, and students are much involved in the day-to-day struggle for existence and future employment.

G. Palanithurai and M. A. Thirunavakkarasu (2010) in their study observed that sincere people are not coming forward for public space and as a result, bad ones come to the public space and people have no choice but tolerate them. Against this background, they made an attempt to document the leadership role of the youth at the grassroots. How does new leadership emerge from below, how do they develop new democratic culture, how do they build a new vision for development and how do they shape organizational culture? These are the major aspects covered in this document. It also discussed at length as to how they struggled to achieve success in their war against corruption, gender inequality and

social injustice. The main analysis of the researchers is on the Gandhian model of development, crisis management and the role of youths in strengthening the panchayats.

Rukchana Rahman (2008) in her paper critically examined how youth activism as a social phenomenon influences the democratic governance in Assam, particularly in the matter of popular participation. She also examined how youth activists motivate people to participate in democratic politics.

Prayag Mehta (1977) in his article analyzed that student activism has often been made use of by politicians to further their own interests. The alienated and angry youth sometimes gets stimulated to agitate on small issues and even on non-issues. However, student activism became meaningful and socially purposeful because of its contact with meaningful political-civic activities. Participation in such activities like election campaign, tend to enhance the sense of political efficacy, political involvement and awareness and consciousness. Such democratization may raise the level of student activism from pretty issues to a meaningful level.

Amanda Snellinger (2005) in his article briefly detailed the history of student political activity and the nascent relationship between the student organizations and their mother organizations, the political parties in order to demonstrate the limitations and the ideals attributed to students role in politics by the students, the politicians and the public. All of these actors draw on student politics historicity to either apply substance to their role or dismiss it as contrived political tactics. But within this articulation it is clear that the youth are perceived to have political capital and that has

been co-opted by the parties in turn curbing its potential to effect change.

Anil Rajimwale (2001) discussed questions related with origins, development and contributions of student movement in India. Very few people know that student movements have been precursors of some of the great movements and organizations in various parts of this country. Organizations existed in the remotest and most unexpected places and times. Assam, Bihar, Bombay, Orissa and several supposedly backward areas, which were not exactly as they are today, contributed number of fruitful youth/ student organizations way back in the late 19th early 20th centuries. There was tremendous amount of spontaneous grassroots level work inspired by endeavors to reform and improve the society, by struggling to achieve a free India. But it would be misplaced feeling to see only the political motivation for student movement. In fact student activism had much to do with debates, discussions, sports, culture, social reform, besides, of course student activism.

Padhy K. S. and Choudhary S. (1981) in their article discussed the process of political socialization of the students of Berhampur town of Ganjam district in Orissa. It is defined in this article that political socialization is a process by which an individual becomes acquainted with the political system and it determines his perceptions of politics and his reasoning to political phenomena. The study also reveals that the knowledge, attitude and values, which are inducted in the minds of the young students, contribute to the system's stability and persistence.

Philip G. Altbach (2012) in his article 'Student Politics and Higher

Education in India' stated that the emphasis of student movement has shifted from societal concerns to campus ones. Even organizations that have a basic ideological commitment such as the All India Student Federation have appealed to students on the basis of single issues, usually directly related to campus conditions. Further he argued that student political involvement continues in India, stimulated in large part by several stresses evident in Indian social and economic life, and student activism will continue as long as India suffers from social, economic and educational tensions and inadequacies.

Conclusion

This review of literature on 'student organizations and politics' indicates that,

1. The student politics in India originated from the nationalist or independence struggle.
2. The student politics in India is not an independent phenomenon. It is closely allied or associated with outside agency.
3. The Indian student activists have to acquire a wide social perspective.
4. Students learn democratic values through the process of political socialization.
5. Student organizations are bureaucratic structures rather than functioning movement.
6. Student politics is delinked with ideological politics.
7. Student activism will continue as long as India suffers from social, economic and educational tensions and inadequacies.
8. Student organizations have much to do with social reform, culture,

sports besides student activism.

9. The emphasis of the student movement has shifted from societal concerns to campus ones.
10. The Indian student community is without direction and without ideology.

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Human nature: an evolutionary paradox - II

John Scales Avery

Surveying the human scene, one can find endless examples of signs that mark the bearer as a member of a particular group, signs that can be thought of as “tribal markings”: tattoos; piercing; bones through the nose or ears; elongated necks or ears; filed teeth; Chinese binding of feet; circumcision, both male and female; unique hair styles; decorations of the tongue, nose, or naval; peculiarities of dress, kilts, tartans, school ties, veils, chadors, and headdresses; caste markings in India; use or nonuse of perfumes; codes of honour and value systems; traditions of hospitality and manners; peculiarities of diet (certain foods forbidden, others preferred); giving traditional names to children; knowledge of dances and songs; knowledge of recipes; knowledge of common stories, literature, myths, poetry or common history; festivals, ceremonies, and rituals; burial customs, treatment of the dead and ancestor worship; methods of building and decorating homes; games and sports peculiar to a culture; relationship to animals, knowledge of horses and ability to ride; nonrational systems of belief. Even a baseball hat worn backwards or the professed ability to enjoy atonal music can mark a person as a member of a special “tribe”. Undoubtedly there be many people in New York who would never think of marrying someone who could not appreciate the paintings of Jasper Johns, and many in London who would consider anyone had not read all the books of Virginia Wolfe to be entirely outside the bounds of civilization.

By far the most important mark

of ethnic identity is language, and within a particular language, dialect and accent. If the only purpose of language were communication, it would be logical for the people of a small country like Denmark to stop speaking Danish and go over to a more universally-understood international language such as English. However, language has another function in addition to communication: It is also a mark of identity. It establishes the boundary of the group.

Within a particular language, dialects and accents mark the boundaries of subgroups. For example, in England, great social significance is attached to accents and diction, a tendency that George Bernard Shaw satirized in his play, *Pygmalion*, which later gained greater fame as the musical comedy, *My Fair Lady*. This being the case, we can ask why all citizens of England do not follow the example of Eliza Doolittle in Shaw’s play, and improve their social positions by acquiring Oxford accents. However, to do so would be to run the risk of being laughed at by one’s peers and regarded as a traitor to one’s own local community and friends. School children everywhere can be very cruel to any child who does not fit into the local pattern. At Eton, an Oxford accent is compulsory; but in a Yorkshire school, a child with an Oxford accent would suffer for it.

Next after language, the most important “tribal marking” is religion. As mentioned above, it seems probable that in the early history of our hunter-gatherer ancestors, religion evolved as a

mechanism for perpetuating tribal traditions and culture. Like language, and like the innate facial expressions studied by Darwin, religion is a universal characteristic of all human societies. All known races and cultures practice some sort of religion. Thus a tendency to be religious seems to be built into human nature. Otherwise, religion would not be as universal as it is.

Religion is often strongly associated with ethnicity and nationalism, that is to say, it is associated with the demarcation of a particular group of people by its culture or race. For example, the Jewish religion is associated with Zionism and with Jewish nationalism. Similarly Islam is strongly associated with Arab nationalism. Christianity too has played an important role in many aggressive wars, for example the Crusades, the European conquest of the New World, European colonial conquests in Africa and Asia, and the wars between Catholics and Protestants within Europe (notably the Thirty Years War).

Many of the atrocities with which the history of humankind is stained were committed in conflicts involving groups between which sharply marked have involved what Iren us Eibl-Eibesfeldt called “pseudospeciation”, that cultural barriers have made intermarriage difficult and infrequent. Examples include the present conflict between Israelis and Palestinians; “racial cleansing” in Kosovo; the devastating wars between Catholics and Protestants in Europe; the Lebanese civil war; genocide

committed against Jews and Gypsies during World War II; recent genocide in Rwanda; intertribal massacres in the Ituri Province of Congo; use of poison gas against Kurdish civilians by Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq; the massacre of Armenians by Turks; massacres of Hindus by Muslims and of Muslims by Hindus in post-independence India; massacres of Native Americans by white conquerors and settlers in all parts of the New World; and massacres committed during the Crusades. The list seems endless.

Religion often contributes to conflicts by sharpening the boundaries between ethnic groups and by making marriage across those boundaries difficult and infrequent. However, this negative role is balanced by a positive one, whenever religion is the source of ethical principles, especially the principle of universal human brotherhood.

Many of the great ethical teachers of history lived at a time when cultural evolution was changing humans from hunter-gatherers and pastoral peoples to farmers and city dwellers. To live and cooperate in larger groups, humans needed to overwrite their instinctive behavior patterns with culturally determined behavior involving a wider range of cooperation than previously.

This period of change is marked by the lives and ideas of a number of great ethical teachers – Moses, Buddha, Lao Tse, Confucius, Socrates, Aristotle, Jesus, and Saint Paul. Mohammed lived at a slightly later period, but it was still a period of transition for the Arab peoples, a period during which their range of cooperation needed to be enlarged.

Most of the widely practiced religions of today contain the principle of universal human brotherhood. This is contained, for example, in Christianity, in the Sermon on the Mount and in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. The Sermon on the Mount tells us that we must love our neighbor as much as we love ourselves.

When asked “But who is my neighbor?”, Jesus replied with the Parable of the Good Samaritan, which says that our neighbor may belong to a different ethnic group than ourselves, or may be separated from us by geographical distance. Nevertheless, he is still our neighbor and he still deserves our love and assistance. To this, Christianity adds that we must love and forgive our enemy, and do good to those who persecute us, a principle that would make war impossible if it were only followed. Not only in Christianity, but also in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, the principles of compassion and universal human brotherhood hold a high place.

The religious leaders of today's world have the opportunity to contribute importantly to the solution of the problem of war. They have the opportunity to powerfully support the concept of universal human brotherhood, to build bridges between religious groups, to make intermarriage across ethnic boundaries easier, and to soften the distinctions between communities. If they fail to do this, they will have failed humankind at a time of crisis.

Human nature undoubtedly contains emotions of tribalism, which nationalist and fascist leaders find it very easy to exploit. But education, ethics and law can overwrite primitive and anachronistic emotional tendencies.

Our astonishing scientific and cultural advances have been achieved through the cooperative efforts of all of humanity. In addition to the darker traits in human nature, our species also has a genius for cooperation; and it is this genius for cooperation that is the key to a happy future.

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(Continued from Page 4)

population of Muslims as a threat, exhorting Hindu women to produce at least four children to compete with the Muslims and announcing a date by which there would be no non-Hindu in India may be an effective means to polarise the people on communal lines to win elections but is bound to frighten and alienate the minorities. These attacks by the Sangh Parivar and BJP Ministers and other functionaries accompanied by P.M Modi's deafening silence are bound to strike terror in the hearts of many members of the Muslims community. The strategy is a blatant attack on the national integration. Is it a wonder if some of the young Muslims turn to terrorism or are attracted by IS?

Is it natural for the Kashmiri Muslims to be attracted to an anti-Muslim India? The Kashmiris have not been enamoured of Pakistan despite its being an Islamic State, but if they have to choose between an India ruled by an anti-Muslim party determined to change India into a 'Hindu Rashtra' and a Muslim Pakistan, their choice is bound to be a 'Muslim Rashtra' rather than a 'Hindu Rashtra'. And if any Kashmiri feels repelled by India and is thinking of other options, the blame lies with Indian rulers rather than the Kashmiris.

Dalit Uprising and After Why Hindutva Would Not Be The Same Again

Subhash Gatade

*When I was born I was not a child
I was a dream, a dream of revolt
that my mother, oppressed for thousands of years ,
dreamt.*

*Still it is untouched in my eyes
Covered with wrinkles of thousand years, her face
her eyes, two lakes overflowing with tears
have watered my body.....*

–Sahil Parmar*

Well known Gujarati poet Sahil Parmar's poem 'When I Was Born' perhaps reverberates these days in Gujarat when we are witnessing a Dalit Upsurge- a first of its kind at least in that region's history. It will be a talk of folklore for times to come how flogging of dalits in a village in Saurashtra by Hindutva fanatics suddenly erupted into a mass movement of dalits which could catch imagination of the people cutting across different sections of society. An attempt is being made here to understand the dynamics of the movement and its likely impact on the future trajectory of Hindutva.

I

Love Cows, Hate Human Beings ?

There are moments in the trajectory of any authoritarian/fascist/rightwing project where one of its closely guarded secrets suddenly tumbles out in the open and then it becomes difficult for it to fix it. The Hindutva brigade today finds itself in a similar situation - thanks to the dalit upsurge in Gujarat which is still unfolding before our eyes.

The historic march to Una town of Saurashtra region - under the banner of *Una Atyachar Ladat Samiti* - might be over; thousands and thousands of dalits who had gathered there from different parts of the state and outside might have returned home but their resolve not to undertake the despicable caste practice of manual scavenging and disposing of cattle carcasses still

reverberates all over the state. And their demand before the state government that within next one month - by 15th of September - it starts distributing five acres of land to each rural dalit family for rehabilitation is reaching far and wide and gathering fresh support.

None from the Hindutva fraternity had ever imagined that in their so called 'model state' itself, they would be faced with such a challenge which would put their carefully crafted pan Hindu social coalition to test. It was beyond their comprehension that dalits - the most downtrodden section in the *Varna* hierarchy - who had been slowly roped in down the years in the Hindutva politics and a section amongst them had also become a

party to the anti-minority violence in 2002, would one fine morning turn their backs on them and would readily join hands with the 'other' demanding a life of human dignity and putting in jeopardy the very *raison detre* of the project.

And as can be expected in such a situation, they literally floundered when they were asked to react to this uprising. The multiple voices which emerged from the broader 'Parivar' were an indication of their confusion.

No doubt talking in multiple tongues has always been part of their overall strategy but this time it also demonstrated disorientation in their own ranks. The moot question became whether to uphold the

perpetrators - who were following the script - or support the victims. And thus one found the Prime Minister exposing majority of the cow vigilantes as being anti-social elements and asking the home department to prepare a dossier about them and another significant leader of the same 'family' denouncing such characterisation as being 'anti-Hindu'. The confusion was understandable. In fact, it was for the first time in recent times that Hindutva Supremacists are discovering that the more they push

one of their key agenda centering around cow politics - which has served them well till date - the more there is possibility that their dream of Hindu Unity would see further fissures. (Vidya Subrahmaniam describes it as 'A reverse Ram Mandir Moment' in her article on present situation in UP.http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/its-mayawati-versus-modi-in-up/article9022511.ece?ref=topnavwidget&utm_source=topnavdd&utm_medium=topnavdropdownwidget&utm_campaign=

[topnavdropdown](#)) Apart from Dalits, who have come under increasing attack at the hands of overzealous 'cow protectors' and are slowly turning against the 'Parivar' itself, large section of peasant population is peeved over the fact that politics around cow has made their life miserable as they are not able to do away with cattles who have become old or have stopped producing milk. One of the couplets by Saint Tulsidas captures Hindutva's plight beautifully '*Bhayal Gati Saap Chachunder Jaisi..*'.

II

“Rashtravadi toh hamare saath hain, humein Dalit aur pichhde ko saath lana hai.”

Everybody knows that there was nothing 'unusual' - as far as deprivations unleashed by Hindutva fanatics under the name of cow protection were concerned - about what happened to dalits from Mota Samadhiyala village when they were skinning a dead cow.

One can recollect that such attacks were common even in those days when BJP did not have majority of its own at the centre. A classic example has been killing of five dalits in Dulina (Jhajjar) - hardly fifty kilometres away from the national capital - who were similarly skinning dead cows, by a cow vigilante mob (2003) before Dulina police station itself with leading officers of the police and administration remaining mute witnesses. A leading Hindutva leader (dead sometime back) even 'justified' the killings by citing reference to ancient Hindu scriptures claiming that 'in Puranas cows were more valued than human beings'. The killings definitely led to an outrage, there were few symbolic

arrests as well but the commotion died down soon and in fact the perpetrators of this massacre were decorated as 'cow protectors'.

In fact, most such earlier attacks in recent times had been rather more brutal. To name a few, lynching of two young men near Latehar after their brutal torture near Latehar, Jharkhand by cow vigilantes; killing an adolescent near Udampur who was sleeping in truck by throwing petrol bomb under the suspicion that the truck was carrying beef; near riot like situation which emerged in Palwal, Haryana because of cow vigilantes' attack on a truck carrying meat or the way two transporters were fed cow dung laced with urine when they were found transporting cattle for sale near Gurgaon. Scan the internet to watch the 'valour' of these fanatics and you will find scores of such criminal attacks on innocents. Videos after videos are available which show how these self proclaimed cow protectors brutalised people for carrying cows from one place to other or because

of suspicion that they were carrying beef and how there has been no action against them from the law and order people.

But thrashing of Dalits from Mota Samadhiyala village by cow vigilantes, uploading the video of their 'valour' on social media has proved to be a turning point.

Anybody can see that the Dalit Uprising which the Una incident has triggered has inadvertently or so unearthed the 'well guarded secret' behind this exclusivist project - where it is clear even to a layperson now that for Hindutva, dalits or other marginalised are lesser human beings or the 'other', whatever might be its claims about the great *samrasta* it upholds. There is a growing realisation that the formal posturing of Hindutva politics, where it is presented/understood in the form of religious imaginaries where 'minorities - may be Muslim or Christian - are portrayed as the 'other' is one thing but essentially the whole idea of Hindu Rashtra is

an attempt to further legitimise the Brahminical project of hegemonising and homogenising of Indian society where secondary position of Dalits has received religious sanction also. An inkling of how they view Dalits and the backwards - when they are talking among themselves - can be had from the recent comments by PM Modi when he spoke at length at a meeting which was attended by 400 top leaders of the BJP, at the end of the 15 day patriotism drive. Newspaper reports tell us that he called on his party to continue playing nationalism card which is 'central to the BJP's ideology.' Perhaps the most telling comment made by him was the following: "*Rashtravadi toh hamare saath hain, humein Dalit aur pichhde ko saath lana hai.*" The

nationalists are with us, we need to bring Dalits and backward groups." (<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/nationalists-are-with-us-lets-reach-out-to-dalits-backwards-pm-modi-to-party-2993281/>)

Was it just slip of tongue or an admission of the truth that for Hindutva non-backwards, non-dalits i.e. upper castes have sole claim over nation and dalits as well as backwards to be outside its purview who need to be brought closer. (<http://scroll.in/article/814769/the-daily-fix-what-did-modi-mean-when-he-said-there-is-a-chasm-between-dalits-and-nationalists>)

Perhaps a marker of their continuing indifference or disdain

towards the plight of the dalits (forget those bollywood type dialogues where it was declared that 'Shoot Me but Do Not Shoot My Dalit Brothers') could also be gauged from the fact that when the Dalit Upsurge was at its peak in the state, the provocative statement by one of their own MLAs from Telangana who 'justified' the beatings and uploaded a video on facebook did not prompt them to take any action. His words were "*Jo Dalit gaye ke maas ko le ja raha tha, jo uski pitai hui hai, woh bohot hi achhi hui hai* [Those Dalits who were taking the cow, the cow meat, those who were beaten, it was a very good thing to happen]," (<http://scroll.in/latest/812903/anyone-who-kills-cows-deserves-to-be-beaten-says-bjp-mla-raj-singh>).

III.

Unpacking the Gujarat Model !

Recently Jignesh Mewani, convener of the 'Una Dalit Atyachar Ladat Samiti' which is spearheading this upsurge was in the capital to communicate the message of the movement to a broader audience and also garner support for the *Rail Roko* programme organised by the front from 15th September. He underlined the resolve of the dalits that they are firm in their decision not to clean up other people's dirt, nor to lift carcasses of dead cattle. He told the audience how twenty thousand dalits had gathered in their rally in Ahmedabad and have taken the oath not to undertake any such profession which they have been condemned to do because of *Varna* hierarchy and are further stigmatised because of that. In a tongue in cheek comment he added

"We (Dalits) are not going to clean up people's dirt any more. Modiji, now you are welcome to experience the spirituality that is supposed to be there in scavenging."

(http://www.telegraphindia.com/1160821/jsp/frontpage/story_103638.jsp#.V74anPI97IU)

Jignesh - who is an advocate and an activist - was referring to Karmayog, a collection of Modi's speeches to trainee IAS officers, brought out by a Gujarat PSU, in which he had said that scavenging was an "experience in spirituality" for the Valmikis (a sub-caste of Dalits). (See : <https://kafila.org/2014/02/12/modi-and-the-art-of-disappearing-of-untouchability/>)

Explaining the genesis of the movement and why the flogging incident of Dalits by self proclaimed cow vigilantes affiliated to a Hindutva organisation triggered the uprising he shared details of the lives of deprivation and discrimination and atrocities faced by Dalits under the much talked about Gujarat Model. According to him

- there are thousands of cases of atrocities against Dalits every year
- atrocities continued to rise during Mr Modi's chief ministership which lasted for 13 years
- there are more than 55,000 dalits who are still engaged in

the work of scavenging

- 1 lakh sanitation workers who are still not getting minimum wages
- dalits in 119 villages in Gujarat are living under police protection
- rate of conviction in cases of Dalit atrocities is merely three per cent.

According to him glaring example of denial of justice to Dalits has been the killing of three Dalits by the police with 'AK 47 rifles as if they were terrorists' in Thangarh in Gujarat in the year 2012 and despite the fact that more than a lakh Dalits demonstrated against these killings there was no action by the government against the accused police personnel. (As we go to the press one hears that Gujarat government has announced an SIT to look into the killings and has also raised compensation for affected families).

When someone in the audience posed a question about availability of land in the state, Jignesh shared figures about availability of land under various schemes and how dominant castes/classes have been in actual possession of such land meant for the exploited and the marginalised. According to him thousands of acres of land with the state which it got during *Bhudan aandolan* has also not been distributed. He also shared lesser known provision about SC-ST sub plan which talks about 'purchase of land for its distribution to the landless' in case of its unavailability. His simple poser which struck a deep chord with the audience was that 'if

under the name of Development the state can allocate thousands of acres of land at throwaway prices to the Ambanis, Adanis and the Tatas why dalits should be denied their rightful due.' He also explained how the recent changes undertaken by the state government under the land acquisition act have many 'draconian' provisions inherent in it where the 'consent' clause has been deleted - means if the government wishes to hand over land to the corporates for 'development' work, then it can simply take over the peasant's land supposedly for 'public goods', offer some symbolic compensation and need not seek her/his consent.

To the poser that if Dalits leave their 'traditional profession' which grants them some sort of 'economic security' he quoted Ambedkar who had asked his followers during the historic Mahad Satyagrah (1927) that they should get ready to 'die of hunger' to live a life of dignity but should never undertake such stigmatised professions.

Fresh facts have come to light suggesting that, in Gujarat, there has been extremely questionable progress in the allocation of surplus land to the landless, acquired from big landlords under the Gujarat Agricultural Land Ceiling Act, 1960. Based on RTI applications, the district registrar of land records, Junagadh, has admitted that out of 11 of 16 villages for which information was sought, "no survey of surplus land has taken place" for the last 24 years, hence there was no allocation.

In another instance, in Navsari district, Gujarat government declared that between 2006 and 2008, while Modi ruled the state, it had "allocated" land to 7,542 landless beneficiaries, but a year later, it admitted the land titles were yet to be given to 3,616 beneficiaries. "However, now, on the basis of an RTI reply, we know that things have not changed even in 2015.

In an article published in "Dalit Adhikar", a Gujarati periodical, Jignesh Mewani says, "Information with us suggests that the Gujarat government, in all, acquired 163,808 acres land under the Gujarat Agricultural Land Ceiling Act, 1960, and we feel most of it has been allocated to the landless only on paper. The landless, mainly Dalits, tribals and belonging to the other backward classes (OBCs), haven't yet got actual possession of land."

Mewani says, "Chief beneficiaries of the land-to-the-tiller policy have been upper caste Patels. About 55,000 Patels were allocated 12 lakh acres of land declared, mainly in Saurashtra and Kutch regions of Gujarat. But as for Dalit landless agriculturists, they have received not even 12 inches of land. Only a very small section, which is very close to the powers-that-be, has gained."

According to Mewani, "Let us give a sample of the Gujarat government's good

governance: We made in all 65 RTI applications between 2011 and 2015 to find out facts about allocation of just 6,500 acres of land in different villages. Yet, officials are refusing to give copies of land titles which may show that land has been actually handed to the beneficiaries.”

Associated with Jan Sangharsh Manch, a Gujarat-based human rights organisation, Mewani says, “Of the 163,808 acres of surplus land, 70,000 acres of land is under dispute with the revenue tribunal, Gujarat High Court and the Supreme Court. While this land may not be allocated, there is a need to answer as to why the rest of the land, too, remains unallocated.”

In fact, says Mewani, there are 15,519 acres of surplus land, on which there is “no dispute” at all, yet the Gujarat government is “refusing to act,” ..

(<http://www.milligazette.com/news/13251-gujarat-model-dalit-tribal-obc-landless-denied-surplus-land-patels-received-12-lakh-acres>)

Jignesh’s claims about continuous denial of justice to Dalits or the great hiatus which exists between claims by the government and the actual situation on the ground is a fact which even earlier reports by NHRC have admitted. A cursory glance at its 2009 report had declared that Gujarat accounted for 3,813 complaints of human rights violation of the total of 94,559 cases from across the country, which was less

than only Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. (*Indian Express*, 20th March 2009).

A 23-page confidential report submitted by the state Social Justice Department to the State Chief Secretary and legal departments provides glaring examples of ‘mishandling of cases registered under Prevention of Atrocities Act against SC/ST. (*Express*, September 15, 2006). The rate of conviction of cases under the Prevention of Atrocity Act against SC/ST in Gujarat is mere 2.5 per cent while rate of acquittal is 97.5 per cent.

The report provides details of how cases are not investigated properly by the police and the hostile role played by public prosecutors during time of trials.

- Act clearly stipulates that offence which are registered under this act cannot be investigated by an officer below the rank of Dy SP but more than 4,000 such cases have been investigated by Police Inspector or Police Sub Inspector.

- Acquittal of the perpetrator because victim not identified as member of SC or ST community. Reason, not attaching caste certificate of the victim with the case papers

- Public prosecutors’ false claims before the courts that act has been modified by the state government although it is known that it is a central act

- Granting of anticipatory bails although there is no such provision in the act. Interestingly the Parliamentary Committee on SC and ST affairs had also

expressed concern over such anticipatory bails granted ‘in atrocity cases in the state of Gujarat’.

In fact a detailed and systematic study of 400 judgements done by Vajibhai Patel, Secretary of Council for Social Justice (March 2005, Year 11, No.106, <http://www.sabrang.com>) had compelled the government to work on this 23-page report. It tells us that utterly negligent police investigation at both the higher and lower levels coupled with a distinctly hostile role played by the public prosecutors is the main reason for the collapse of cases filed under the atrocities act. It is worth noting that he has meticulously documented these judgements delivered under this act since April 1, 1995 in the Special Atrocity Courts set up in 16 districts of the state. The study also blasts the common perception that the inefficacy of this law is due to false complaints being lodged or compromises between the parties, in actuality it is a complicit State that has rendered the Act toothless.

(To Be Concluded)

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It's Kashmir again
Kuldip Nayar

Sharad Rao (1940-2016)
Qurban Ali

Dalit Uprising and After - II
Subhash Gatade

**Neoliberal assault
on knowledge:**
Madhu Prasad

Nuclear weapons in South Asia

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Shameless act by UP Government

Sandeep Pandey

When on August 1 the Supreme Court ordered eviction of official bungalows allotted to six former chief ministers of Uttar Pradesh within two months, the UP government instead of complying with the order brazenly decided to amend the Uttar Pradesh Ministers (Salaries, Allowances and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1981. The 2016 amendment says that a government residence shall be allotted to a former chief minister of state, at his/her request, for lifetime, on payment of such rent as may be determined from time to time by the Estate Department. Security requirement of former CMs has been given as a justification for this action.

Now security threat perception changes over time. As a former CM a threat to his/her life is likely to reduce. For example, among the six past CMs who would have been affected by the SC order if the amendment was not introduced, Narayan Dutt Tiwari probably doesn't face the kind of threat which requires any special arrangement for him. Hence giving a privilege for lifetime just based on one-time security assessment is not justified and is frittering away public resources.

Moreover, when an underprivileged person applies for housing under any urban or rural poor government housing scheme he/she has to submit an affidavit that he/she doesn't own any other house anywhere. Shouldn't there be a similar clause for former CMs if they were being provided with government housing lifetime? If they have their own house then at some point in time based on security threat assessment they should be asked to move into their own house. Even a former Prime Minister is only allowed to retain his/her official residence up to ten years after retirement.

It doesn't make sense to award a house for lifetime to a former CM or for that matter to anybody including a former President or a Vice President, who enjoy such a privilege at present. It is quite likely that after his/her death the relatives and followers would ask the house to be converted into a museum and then it will be occupied forever.

Another Bill was introduced to keep certain influential sections of society happy and more importantly so that it would not appear as if the government was worried only about

privileged former chief ministers. No need to say that the present CM also stands to benefit from this. The Allotment of Houses Under Control of the Estate Department Bill, 2016 was introduced and passed to provide houses to journalists, political parties, Speaker and Deputy Speaker of Legislative Assembly, gazetted officials, officers of judicial services and trusts. Among these except for trusts, who'll be charged market rent, rest all will have to pay 'such a rate as may be prescribed.' This is blatant misuse of power as Estate Department can prescribe arbitrarily low rents depending on how well connected the occupant is.

The government has also used the opportunity to introduce another amendment in the Uttar Pradesh Ministers (Salaries, Allowances and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act to increase the salaries and other benefits for CM and ministers. The basic salary of the CM has gone up from Rs. 12,000 per month to Rs. 40,000. With a 40% increase in gross salary the CM will now take home Rs. 1.4 lakhs. This is in addition to the Rs. 75,000 salary which he gets as a legislator. It is not clear when there was already an increase in the salaries of legislators in 2015, what was the need to increase the salary of CM's post? In a state where the daily wages in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme are merely Rs. 161 per day, that too up to a maximum of 100 days a year, and Samajwadi pension scheme grants Rs. 500 per month to a needy family, it is splurging public money at the cost of poor.

Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, whom the government members revere like a legend, has famously said that difference between the income of

(Continued on Page 3)

Between The Lines

It's Kashmir again

Kuldip Nayar

A few years ago when I persuaded Yasin Malik, the first militant in the valley of Kashmir, to give up his fast unto death, his demand was that the International Amnesty should visit the valley to verify the violation of human rights. He broke the fast when I gave an undertaking that I would myself head a team to Srinagar to prepare a report on the violations of human rights.

Today that kind of confidence has gone. The Hurriyat has refused to meet the delegation because the Hurriyat is not sure whether the delegation can deliver. There is yet another reason. The Hurriyat wants to rehabilitate itself in the eyes of Kashmiris, who have gone beyond the stage of talks. They want a separate, sovereign country. And they feel that the Hurriyat failed them in the past because it sought solution within the Indian union.

Home Minister Rajnath Singh of the ruling Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) headed the delegation. The Home Minister was justified in saying that the Hurriyat, refusal went against the spirit of Kashmiriyat, which disseminated message of love and harmony. The Hurriyat does not seem to recognise that. It gives little importance to the fact that the ruling party came to power through free ballot box, the democratic way of measuring support in the country. The BJP has secured a majority in the 543-member Lok Sabha on its own, with no alliance before or after the polls. On the other hand, the

Hurriyat is only a combination of three factions. One is led by Yusuf Raza Gillani, who still wants accession to the Islamic state of Pakistan, the other by Yasin Malik and the third by Shabir Shah.

Gillani is their leader because he represents anti-India feelings on the one hand and the Islamic content on the other.

My feeling is that at least two of them have become irrelevant in the present situation in the valley. They still prefer a settlement through a dialogue. The youth have, however, gone back to gun because they do not find either Yasin Malik or Shabir Shah delivering what they want, that is Azadi. The gun is no solution either.

Over the years the oil producing Islamic nations' organization has lost its importance in India. Even the Muslim population, some 25 million cares little about what it says. Therefore, it was not surprising that the Indian media did not even report that the OIC had asked for referendum in Kashmir. The Muslim countries are themselves to blame for this because they blatantly support Pakistan, just because it is a Muslim country.

Unlike Pakistan, where the last word is with the army chief, India is ruled by parliament. The Hurriyat has insulted it. To insult it is to insult the Indian people. It was the suggestion by the CPI(M) that the delegation

went. Yaechuri, the party's secretary, was insistent that the talks should begin with the Gillani group. Raising the anti-India slogans when the delegation reached Gillani's residence may be helpful in placating the hardcore. But it does not address the core of the problem. Raj Nath Singh has made it clear that Kashmir was an integral part of India and will remain so. This has put an end to the dialogue on Kashmir that Pakistan has been relentlessly demanding. Where do we go from here? There is no option to talks. Even a limited war can become the nuclear one.

What New Delhi has to appreciate is that the Kashmiris' desire to distance themselves from India may not be considered in any meaningful transfer of power from New Delhi to Srinagar. Yet the impression that the Kashmiris rule themselves has to be sustained. The National Conference waged a long war to get rid of Maharaja Hari Singh and had an icon like Sheikh Abdullah to provide a secular and democratic rule to the state. But the party suffered defeat in the assembly polls because it was seen too close to New Delhi.

The People's Democratic Party (PDP) won because its founder, Mufti Mohammad Sayyed, kept distance from New Delhi, without alienating it. The Kashmiris voted for him because he gave them a feeling of defiance. Omar Farooq Abdullah had to pay the price of National Conference's image of being pro-Delhi. Kashmir's link with India is too close to challenge it beyond a point. Still the opposition, however small, gives the Kashmiris a vicarious satisfaction of defying New Delhi.

Kashmir feels strongly about New

Delhi's step-motherly treatment meted out to the language. And it is generally believed that it is languishing in neglect because Urdu is considered the language of Muslims. If New Delhi were to own and encourage Urdu, the Kashmiris would have at least one reason less to feel aggrieved.

People are generally poor like the rest of India and they want jobs which they realize will come through only development, including tourism. But they are not themselves picking up the gun or any other weapon to drive militants out. One, they are afraid of them and, two, there is a feeling that what the militants are trying to do is to give them an identity. Therefore, the criticism that there is no resistance to the militants from within the valley should be understandable because it is part of alienation.

I still believe that the 1953 agreement which gave India the control of defence, foreign affairs and communications can improve part of the situation in the state. The Kashmiri youth who are angry over the state's status as well the situation can be won over by the assurance that the entire Indian market is available to them for business or service.

But this alone may not do. New Delhi will have to withdraw all the acts relating to the fields other than defence, foreign affairs and communications. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act which was promulgated some 25 years ago to meet the extraordinary situation in the state is still in operation. Were the government to withdraw the act, it would placate the Kashmiris on the one hand and make the security forces more responsible on the other.

(Continued from Page 2)

poor and rich should not be more than ten times. Akhilesh Yadav is now earning 40 times more than a daily wage (MNREGA) worker, whose funding source has presently dried up, and 400 times more than a Samajwadi pensioner.

Mayawati was criticised for having built her own statue. Now Akhilesh Yadav has got his portrait installed in the Assembly in the series of former CMs. Is he already preparing for retirement?

Akhilesh Yadav should take lesson from his party's MLA from Balha in District Bahraich, Bansidhar Bouddh. The dalit MLA still lives very simply. He has a mud house which collapsed in recent floods. He and his wife Lajjawati farm their agricultural fields and tend their cattle themselves without any help. Bansidhar used to have only a second hand motorcycle till recently. Now he is a Minister but still there is no change in his lifestyle except that he has a government vehicle.

In a democracy Bansidhar is an ideal people's representatives and not Akhilesh Yadav, who has promoted lavish and feudal culture for ministers in addition to being a symbol of dynastic politics. Bansidhar represents politics as a service. Akhilesh Yadav represents politics as aggrandisement. People are going to prefer representatives like Bansidhar over Akhilesh Yadav. As soon as that happens politics will fulfill its real role and the idea of democracy will be realised. As public funds would be properly utilised the benefits of development will reach the poor. Right now it the politics represented by Akhilesh Yadav which sustains the disparity and inequity.

Sharad Rao (1940-2016)

Qurban Ali

Veteran trade unionist and socialist leader Sharad Rao died in Mumbai on September 1, 2016, after a two-year fight with chronic pancreatic cancer. He was 76. The aggressive union leader breathed his last at Nanavati Hospital in Vile Parle. He is survived by his wife Shanta Rao, son Shashank and daughter Shilpa. Mr. Rao credited for uniting over a dozen labour unions under his leadership controlled a large chunk of the Mumbai public transport and civic services system through the BEST Workers Union, Municipal Mazdoor Union and Mumbai Auto rickshawmen's Union and several others which were part of the Hind Mazdoor Kisan Panchayat.

Son of a bus conductor, Sharad Rao was born on February 9, 1940, in a family hailing from Talapady-Kannur in Dakshina Kannada and was relocated to Mumbai after Independence. As a youth, he worked closely with socialist leader George Fernandes, and took charge of the unions after Mr. Fernandes graduated to national politics in Delhi but the two parted ways when Fernandes joined the NDA led by Bharatiya Janata Party. He was also a close associate of many other prominent trade union leaders of left and socialist parties.

While the working Mumbaikars may only remember him for his frequent calls to strikes by the auto rickshaw drivers, Mr. Rao's contribution to improving the living

standards of the workers has been invaluable. He brought together the labour class from the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, Brihanmumbai Electricity Supply and Transport Undertaking, Chatrapati Shivaji International Airport, Thane Municipal Corporation, Maharashtra State Electricity Board, and the Hind Mazdoor Sabha, while heading the auto rickshaw, hawkers' and gumasta unions.

Over the last four decades, he fought hard for an increase in wages of the sanitation workers in the BMC, ensuring permanent jobs for thousands of contract workers at Mumbai airport. He pushed for the auto rickshaw drivers to receive constant fare hike, stepped up the pressure on the BMC to issue licenses to more hawkers, and pushed for an effective implementation of the national policy on urban street vendors.

In 2000, Rao led BMC workers in a major strike over festival bonuses, disrupting essential civic services, including hospitals and public transport. After his union members dared to shut water supply to the city for two days, the high court stepped in and threatened to have the army take over the city administration.

In September 2012, the Rao-led rickshaw union had threatened to go on strike for a fare revision. Though there was no strike,

Mumbaikars had to accept the auto fare increase. However, in 2013, he refused to join a trade union strike claiming the issues of autorickshaw, taxi drivers were being addressed by the government and that of the civic workers by the BMC administration.

While the upper-class Mumbaikars were worried for the commotion hawkers caused in posh neighbourhoods, Mr. Rao's agitation in April 2013, ensured that the BMC did not evict hawkers overnight even though the Centre had passed the Street Vendors Bill, 2013, for their protection. Under his leadership, wages of the sanitation workers reached Rs. 25,000 per month from the initial Rs. 80 over two decades ago.

"He was the last of the generation of leaders who intensely fought for the cause of the workers and the labourers. There will not be another leader like him," said Prashant Kakade, his long-time friend and president of Federation of Aviation Workers.

Union leaders said Mr. Rao's loss is irreparable. "We will never be able to find a replacement for someone who ensured workers' living conditions improved and their families remained intact. He fought hard to ensure that the auto drivers work in a third shift and run share trips in Mumbai," said Govind Kamtekar, who had been a close associate since 1987. Labour union

leaders fear Mr. Rao's loss will leave a gaping hole as Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled States push for aggressive labour reforms. The labour movement suffered a setback following the death of Sharad Rao.

“At a time when there is so much twisting and tweaking with labour rules and laws, and stress is just on bringing in business, his presence will be felt more,” said Pradeep Menon, union leader and a friend since Mr. Rao's early days as labour leader at Hindustan Unilever Limited.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis expressed grief at the demise of Rao and recalled his lifelong struggles for the rights of the common workers through his different unions. “In Mr. Rao we have lost an aggressive leader for the organised and the unorganised workers. Starting his struggles with the Bombay Labour Union, Mr. Rao had a great influence on workers. This is a big loss to the labour movement. He had a huge impact on the working class. He stood up for all when they needed him till his last breath. He will be remembered by all.” Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said. Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu also condoled the demise of Sharad Rao whom he described as a great union leader and a longtime friend.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar also condoled death of Sharad Rao in Mumbai. In his condolence message, Kumar described the deceased as veteran socialist and leader of the workers who was heading a number of effective labourers' unions. Rao gave leadership to 'Greater Mumbai

Electric Supply and Transport Union', 'Mumbai Auto Rikshaw Union' and Labourers of Mumbai Municipal Corporation. The departed leader always used to think for welfare of labourers he said.

Sharad Rao was leading Hindustan Lever Limited union from 1957 to 1967, later Trade union movement, Bombay Clerk's union in 1970 and Save Octroi movement.

He was the working committee member and City worker in BMC in 1978. He was active in several organizations including Bombay port trust. Rao who was staying in Goregaon had contested in Vidhana Sabha elections in 2005 and 2009 as Nationalist Congress party candidate from Goregaon west constituency. Sharad Rao was popular as labour leader for the last five decades.



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Nuclear weapons in South Asia: programmes, plans and dangers

What is the status of the nuclear arsenals of India and Pakistan? What dangers come from the postures and plans they have adopted? What influences do China and the United States wield in the region?

These and other topics were the subject of Dr. M. V. Ramana's talk on 'Nuclear Weapons in South Asia: Programmes, Plans and Dangers' that was organised by Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer Memorial Advisory Committee and Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace (CNDP) on 27th August 2016 at Mumbai Marathi Patrakar Sangh. The talk was dedicated to the memory of Praful Bidwai, illustrious journalist, activist and social science researcher, who, among various other issues, worked tirelessly for nuclear disarmament and peace.

Dr. Ramana began by talking about how the early history of nuclear power in India, starting with the bill enabling the creation of an organization aimed at working on atomic energy introduced in the Constituent Assembly in 1948, barely a few months after independence, shows the importance given to nuclear power by the leaders of the country right from its inception as an independent nation. Although the purpose of the development of atomic energy was said to be for '*peaceful purposes*', it was revealing that Pandit Jawarharlal Nehru, soon to be India's first Prime Minister, had to concede that he did '*not know how to distinguish the two* (peaceful

and defense purposes)'. The development of nuclear infrastructure by the Atomic Energy establishment took into account the possibility that the facilities constructed and expertise gained could be used for military purposes. In particular, the CIRUS reactor that started operating in 1960 and the Trombay reprocessing plant that was completed by 1964 allowed India to produce plutonium that could be used to make nuclear weapons.

Ramana then described the public debate about developing nuclear weapons that took place after the death of Nehru and the first Chinese nuclear weapon test in 1964. The debate revolved around questions of security, cost, morality, and prestige. Although it did not result in a decision to produce nuclear weapons, a series of developments eventually led to nuclear weapon test in 1974 in Pokharan, which was described as a peaceful nuclear explosion. The decision to conduct that test was reportedly taken soon after 1971 war with Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh. Ramana pointed out that the decision to test was not taken in a moment of insecurity but in a moment of success (in breaking up Pakistan, India's chief regional rival, into two countries). The timing of the test also undermines the argument of some who see China's nuclear test as a cause for India's weapons.

Although India did not follow the path taken by other nuclear weapon states and weaponise its nuclear design, the weapons program wasn't

inactive after the 1974 test. Instead, the nuclear establishment refined nuclear weapon designs and lobbied for more weapons tests. A missile programme was also set up that resulted in the design and production of the Prithvi and Agni missiles that could deliver nuclear weapons.

During the 1990s, increased activity by the bomb lobby, a group of people who advocated India developing nuclear weapons, succeeded in getting India to vote against the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. In parallel, the rise of Hindu nationalists and the Bharatiya Janata Party, with their militarist worldview, coming to power also created the conditions for the May 1998 nuclear tests. That involved five explosions on May 11 and 13, including that of a boosted/thermonuclear weapon (hydrogen bomb); there has been a recurring debate over whether that particular design was successfully tested.

Ramana also briefly described the trajectory of Pakistan's nuclear programme, starting with the strategic relationship the country established with the United States, shortly after independence, in the context of the Cold War. Pakistani scientists were first trained by the United States as part of its Atoms for Peace programme. After the 1965 India-Pakistan war, where the United States did not aid Pakistan (whereas China did), some Pakistanis, in particular the US-educated Foreign Minister Z.A. Bhutto, called for a bomb. This call was to intensify after 1971 war that

resulted in division of Pakistan and Bhutto launched nuclear weapon program in 1972, one month after taking office as President. After the 1974 Indian nuclear test, the US halted nuclear cooperation and A.Q. Khan, a metallurgist based in Holland, offered his services to help with the Pakistani nuclear programme, going on to set up the uranium enrichment programme. Revelation about this secret programme led the United States to impose sanctions on Pakistan, which was then reversed after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979 and the United States started using Pakistan as a staging ground to engage with the Soviets indirectly. The sanctions were re-imposed in 1989 only after the Soviets left Afghanistan. In the meanwhile, Pakistan had produced highly enriched uranium and developed bomb designs that were tested in May 1998. There were five explosions on May 28 and one on May 30, 1998. These were all of fission weapons and Pakistan did not conduct a thermonuclear weapon test.

In the aftermath of the 1998 nuclear tests, both India and Pakistan have been involved in the creation of doctrines and command structures to plan for the potential use of nuclear weapons. In India, the military has gained greater control of nuclear weapons. Peace talks between the countries have primarily been attempts at proving that India and Pakistan are responsible states and no substantial measure has been agreed upon.

As of 2014, the estimate of weapon-grade plutonium in India is around 600 kilograms. About 5 kg is sufficient for one nuclear weapon. The estimated stockpile of Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) as of the

end of 2014 in India is 3.2 ± 1.1 tons with a U-235 content of 1.0 ± 0.3 tons. This is said to be primarily for the nuclear (Arihant) submarine programme. However, because the estimated stockpile vastly exceeds what might be needed for all envisioned nuclear submarines, it is possible that the HEU might be used in nuclear weapons. About 25 kg is sufficient to produce one nuclear weapon. For Pakistan, the stockpiles are estimated to be 3.1 ± 0.4 tons of HEU and 190 kg of plutonium as of the end of 2014.

Both countries have tested numerous missiles and other delivery vehicles. India is in the process of developing two technologies that are profoundly destabilizing: Ballistic Missile Defense and Early warning systems. Ramana talked at some length about early warning, which involves setting up radars and satellites to detect the launch and flight of missiles. Although India has a '*no first use*' policy, it is not clear how this commitment of no first use translates into actual deployment and action. In principle, this policy means waiting for an incoming missile to explode before retaliating. But setting up early warning systems suggests that the leadership does not envision waiting for such an explosion and might launch missiles as soon as there is warning of an impending attack; in other words, it would no longer be a strict no first use commitment.

Early warning technology has great potential for errors and accidental launches. Ramana provided examples from the Cold War era where U.S. leaders received false warnings that indicated Soviet nuclear missiles were approaching the United States when there was actually no such attack underway.

One saving factor was that because they were so far apart, the United States and the Soviet Union had a longer time period to confirm missile launches; the travel time for a Soviet missile to reach the United States or vice versa is approximately 30 minutes due to the geographical distance between the two. But that is not the case in South Asia. India and Pakistan share boundaries and the time taken by a missile from one country to hit the capital city of the other would be only 6-13 minutes depending on where it was launched. Once you take away the time it takes to detect the launch and confirm that the missile is indeed directed towards the other country, there would be barely a couple of minutes for the Indian or Pakistani leadership to make a decision to respond. Because any technology is capable of errors and accidents, deploying an early warning system will increase the risk of inadvertent or accidental nuclear war.

Turning to a different aspect of nuclear weapons in south Asia, Ramana pointed out that the argument that nuclear weapons deter war failed within a year of the nuclear tests, when India and Pakistan had a military conflict over Kargil in Kashmir. The Kargil war was the first large scale military engagement between any two nuclear weapon states in the world. It involved a dozen or more nuclear threats by high-level officials in both countries, and there were reports that nuclear weapons were prepared for use on both sides.

The greater danger is in the longer-term, and this has to do with the lessons learnt by the Indian and Pakistani military establishments in the aftermath of Kargil. For Pakistan, the main lesson was that its nuclear

arsenal prevented India from launching a massive attack, which India's conventional military advantage could have allowed it to persecute. The strategy adopted in Kargil had earlier been presented to Benazir Bhutto in 1996, but she had rejected it then. For Indian military planners, the problem was that India would have to find ways of waging limited wars despite presence of Pakistani nuclear weapons. Similar lessons were also inferred by the two countries after the 2001-02 military crises that followed the attack on the Indian parliament.

There are news reports suggesting that in 2004, the Indian military adopted a strategy called Cold Start that would involve a "shift from defensive to offensive operations at the very outset of a conflict... not giving Pakistan any time to bring diplomatic levers into play vis-à-vis India". Pakistan's response to this development has been to lower the threshold for use of nuclear weapons, with talk about developing '*Battlefield Nuclear Weapons*' for use against incoming tanks. This game of lowering the threshold for the use of such catastrophic weapons is profoundly dangerous and destabilizing.

Lastly, Ramana mentioned the role of United States and the dangers of a four-way race that has intensified in recent years. U.S. relations with India changed radically during the Bush administration (2000-08). The Bush administration's foreign policy was guided by neo-conservatives that saw the world in highly polarized terms. China was perceived as the chief barrier to U.S. supremacy and dominance in the international world order. Members of the Bush Administration, therefore, wanted to

prop up India as a counterweight to China. As Condoleezza Rice, who went on to becoming Secretary of State, wrote in 2000: "India is an element in China's calculation, and it should be in America's, too. India is not a great power yet, but it has the potential to emerge as one."

Under the 2004 Next Steps in Strategic Partnership, the United States agreed to help India with civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programs, dual-use high-technology trade and missile defense. In other words, India's nuclear weapons ceased to be seen as something to be concerned about, and instead became seen as a necessity to keep China off balance. This policy has continued even in the Obama administration, which signed a Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region. An important clause in the vision was the joint affirmation of "the importance of safeguarding maritime security and ensuring freedom of navigation and over flight throughout the region, especially in the South China Sea". U.S. support for India's NSG (Nuclear Suppliers Group) membership should be seen in this light.

There are two questions relevant to the NSG discussion. *What does India gain by becoming a NSG member?* According to Ramana, India has nothing to gain in material terms since it already had access to nuclear reactors and uranium. The only possible benefit is purely *symbolic* – being able to sit at the high table with the big boys. But *what does India have to lose or pay to join NSG?* According to Ramana, the stakes are quite clear – it is part of the United States' ploy to get India on to their side against China in multiple spheres –

diplomacy, NSG and even possibly the Security Council. The question that Ramana says we need to ask ourselves is – *is this the role India should be playing? Is this competition with China desirable?*

Ramana concluded by pointing out that there's essentially a four-way race happening between India-Pakistan-China-United States. Pakistan seeks military and economic help from China and United States to balance India. India seeks support from United States to further its great power ambitions. China is trying to establish itself as an emerging global power able to re-order the international system. The United States is trying to limit its decline as the dominant world power by constraining and balancing the rise of Chinese power and influence. The dangers of this military and nuclear race and the build-up of nuclear weapons are extremely worrisome. Also of concern is the fact that all of this is happening out of sight and is therefore out of the minds of the general public.

The session was chaired by Anand Patwardhan and Darryl D'Monte represented the Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer Memorial Advisory Committee on the dais. The audience consisted of students from various institutes, people who are engaged in struggles in Jaitapur and nuclear issues, professors and researchers. The question and answer session that followed the talk was wide-ranging, involving discussions about topics as varied as the relationship between deterrence and terrorism, and the ethical quandaries associated with the production of radioactive waste that is hazardous for centuries.

–Pratiksha Nair

Dalit Uprising and After - II

Why Hindutva Would Not Be The Same Again

Subhash Gatade

‘Keep Cow’s Tail With You, And Give Us Our Land’

..on March 20, 1927, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar led the Mahad satyagraha – for drinking water from the Chavdar tank at Mahad. This was the “foundational struggle” of the dalit movement, a movement for water – and for caste annihilation.

In his statement at the time, Dr. Ambedkar put the movement in the broadest possible context. Why do we fight, he asked. It is not simply for drinking water; drinking the water will not give us very much. It is not even a matter of only of our human rights, though we fight to establish the right to drink water. But our goal is no less than that of the French Revolution. ..

And so dalits went to drink the water at Mahad. They were met with ferocious repression: an attack by caste Hindus followed. The dalits retreated, came back several months later on December 25 for a renewed struggle, and since the collector had given an injunction against any further attempt, Ambedkar decided to honor this and instead burned the Manusmriti. A fitting climax to the first battle of dalit liberation!

(<https://seekingbegumpura.wordpress.com/2013/03/22/the-mahad-satyagraha/>)

Dalit Uprising in Gujarat and the manner in which it has rattled the state government and has severely impacted the BJP’s well laid out plans to consolidate its support base among Dalits has been a whiff of fresh air for every peace and justice loving person in this part of Asia.

What has caught imagination of the people is the key slogan of the movement which says ‘Keep Cow’s Tail With You, And Give Us Our Land’. It is a single slogan which encapsulates question of caste discrimination as well as

communalism and puts forward a positive demand to fight material deprivation - which has been an integral part of the sanctified hierarchy of caste.

The emphasis of the movement that Dalits leave the ‘stigmatised professions’ - which has condemned them to be the lowest position on *Varna/Caste* hierarchy - and wholehearted participation of thousands and thousands of Dalits in it, the militancy it has added to the Dalit movement has broken a new ground in the dalit movement.

No doubt that there was lot of spontaneity in the movement but the way it moved ahead and has added new edge to dalit assertion could not have been imagined without the young leadership which took charge. Their inclusive approach also helped them rope in activists of other organisations or attract many such people who are opposed to or uncomfortable with Hindutva politics on a common agenda. Inclusiveness of the movement was also evident in the fact that Muslims - who have been put in very miserable condition post 2002 carnage - also joined

the *Azaadi Kooch* to Una. Many welcomed it on the way in large numbers and also travelled to Una in their hundreds for the 15th August independence day rally held there.

A less discussed aspect of this upsurge is the fact that dalits are merely seven per cent of the state's population and have not had a long history of militant movement but despite these limitations the impact of the movement has been phenomenal. Not only it compelled the BJP to change its Chief Minister for mishandling the movement but it also disturbed its dalits outreach plans elsewhere.

Remember barring the historic struggle led by Dadasaheb Gaikwad - a close comrade of Dr Ambedkar - in late 1950s in Maharashtra where issue of land was highlighted, rare have been the occasions in post-independence times that issue of material deprivation of dalits was creatively integrated with socio-cultural discrimination and political marginalisation. Una has changed the picture. It has also raised many unheard of slogans in the dalit movement. 'Dalits of the World Unite', 'Workers of the World Unite' or 'Jai Bhim', 'Lal Salam' and Jai Savitribai'. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jggA75o5PE>)

Analysts have rightly put it that dalit movement in recent times has largely remained limited/focussed on what can be called issue of 'Identity/Asmita' but Una marks a new beginning where issue of 'existence/astitva' has also come to the fore. Possibly gone are the days when 'victimhood' was highlighted or rhetoric of 'Brahminism down-down' was repeated ad nauseam and a

careful silence was maintained about economic issues. As a revolutionary activist shared in his email '[a]n important thing to note is that the Una Struggle can also be seen as part of a continuum where social movements connects itself with anti-systemic struggles.'

Definitely the Una struggle which has sent shivers down the spine of the Hindutva Supremacists cannot be seen in isolation. It is rather a continuation of growing dalit assertion against Hindutva deprivations especially after the ascendance of Modi led regime at the centre. The realisation has slowly sunk in that not only it wants to attack affirmative action programmes but its economic policies - coupled with its regressive sociocultural agenda - are bringing ruin to the dalits and other marginalised sections of society. It is becoming more and more clear to them that the people in power want a docile/pliable dalit polity which can dance to their tunes. They want Ambedkar but not the real one but his sanitised version. How much they are scared about real Ambedkar and his ideas can be learnt from a decision of the Anandi Patel led government. It literally dumped four lakh copies of Ambedkar's biography which it had printed for massive distribution as the author of the book had also included 22 vows which Ambedkar recited with his followers at the time of conversion to Buddhism.

And this realisation has given rise to a tremendous reaction. Ranging from the successful campaign against derecognition of Ambekdar Periyar Study Circle active in Chennai IIT by the management (<https://kafila.org/2015/06/05/no-to-ambekar-periyar-in-modern-day->

[agraharam/](#)), or countrywide movement - where students and youth were in the forefront - after the 'institutional murder of Rohith Vemula' (<https://kafila.org/2016/01/22/long-live-the-legacy-of-comrade-vemula-rohith-chakravarthy-statement-by-new-socialist-initiative-nsi/>), or the massive mass mobilisation against demolition of Ambedkar Bhavan in Mumbai by the BJP led government or the 'Zameen Prapti Movement' in Punjab led by revolutionary left where Dalits have come together to form collectives, etc, one can easily see that such assertion is increasing in its intensity and militancy.

..In Punjab, the share of the Dalits in the 1,58,000 acres of Panchayat land is 52,667 acres. There are also legal entitlements for them in the Nazool Lands. However, the actual possession of these lands has remained with the landlords and rich peasants. As per the agricultural census 2010-11, the SCs in Punjab, who are a third of its population, owned just 6.02% of the land holdings and 3.2% of the land area of the state. Of these operational holdings also a large proportion (nearly 85%) are said to be unviable due to the small size of less than 5 hectares.

Since 2014, the Dalit peasantry organized under the banner of ZPSC (Zameen Prapti Sangharsh Samiti) and holding its red flag with the blazing sun firmly aloft, has begun to assert their claim over what is rightfully theirs. These lands used to be auctioned to dummy candidates of landlords; a gaushala in Sangrur district has been given land for 30 years at the rate of Rs 7000 an acre by the Akali-BJP Govt. of the state whereas the price for Dalits is over Rs 20,000 an acre. This spreading

struggle in districts of South Punjab has been met with police and landlord repression, false FIRs against 'unknowns' but the struggle rages on like a spreading blaze.

(<https://nbsdelhi.wordpress.com/2016/08/24/hail-the-assertion-by-landless-dalits-of-punjab-and-gujarat-of-their-right-to-land-land-to-the-tiller-key-to-annihilating-caste/>)

If the unexpected shift of a

section of Dalit masses - for various reasons - towards BJP was an important factor in its ascent to power in the year 2014, this growing assertion of dalits is a proof that they cannot be hoodwinked anymore. With the real agenda of these Hindutva Supremacists out in the open - which is witnessed not only in its attacks on right to life and right to livelihood of every exploited and marginalised section but also in its hurry to co-opt Ambedkar but

bulldoze every element of dalit assertion - the battle lines have been finally drawn.

And the unfolding Dalit Uprising has added new lustre to it.

(**translated from original Gujarati by G K Vankar, <http://roundtableindia.co.in/lit-blogs/?tag=sahil-parmar>*)

Peoples Media Advocacy & Resource Centre

Western Railway Employees Union

Grant Road Station Building (E) , MUMBAI – 400 007.

WREU, the oldest trade unions in the country, earlier known as BB&CI Railway Employees' Union, is in the services of Railway men since 1920. WREU, a free, independent and democratic trade union, is a founder member of AIRF and HMS.

WREU fought for upliftment of railway men and their family in particular and labour class in general for the last 94 years. WREU/AIRF is instrumental in creation of PNM, grievance solving machinery in 1951, payment of PLB to Railway men since 1979, implementation of series of Cadre Restructuring in Group 'C' and 'D' categories in Indian Railways, implementation of recommendations of the 4th, 5th and 6th CPCs with modifications and RELHS Scheme for Railway men.

WREU was led by prominent trade union leaders, viz. late Miss. Maniben

Kara, Late Com. Jagdish Ajmera, Late Com. Umraomal Purohit, Late Com. Chandrashekar Menon, etc. In memory of late Maniben Kara, WREU established a charitable trust namely "Maniben Kara Foundation" with the objective of lighting against the evils of the society.

Apart from trade union activities, various non-bargaining activities such as organizing Health Check-up Camps, Blood Donation Camps, Family Planning Camps, Anti-Dowry campaigns, HIV-AIDS Awareness Campaigns, Safety Seminars, Trade Union Education Class, Adult Education, Guidance Camp, etc. are conducted for the benefits of the railway men and the general public.

Neoliberal assault on knowledge: education reduced to acquisition of 'skills'.

Madhu Prasad

The formal adoption of the neoliberal reforms programme by the Government of India (GOI) in 1991 had a far more pervasive impact on the education system and policy than is usually recognized. The commercialization and marketization of education put it outside the grasp of the majority of India's population, 78 per cent of whom were living on less than twenty rupees per day (Arjun Sengupta Committee report), and altered the concepts of knowledge, education and its curricular content.

The democratic deficit was the most obvious feature of the National Policy of Education (NPE 86-92). It introduced non-formal education

(NFE), as a low-cost alternative to be treated as 'equivalent to schooling' for the working poor, the marginalized and children in "difficult circumstances". When the Supreme Court in its 1993 judgement (*Unnikrishnan vs the State of Andhra Pradesh*) stated that the constitutional Directive Principle 45 should be read in conjunction with Article 21, it established that the right to education flowed from the fundamental right to life thereby converting "the obligation created by the article (45) into an enforceable right". This required the 86th Constitutional amendment in 2002, which was tailor-made to coincide with neoliberal dictates to reduce public spending on education. Two

1

It must be emphasized that this is no left-wing revolutionary demand. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, in industrializing nations the responsibility for providing education had been taken up by modern states that arose with the rise and consolidation of capitalism to fulfill the productive and 'democratic' needs of Capital for a better educated and 'free' labour force. Engels had upheld the rationale of the demand during a speech delivered at Elberfeld in February 1845: The "general education of all children without exception at the expense of the state – an education which is equal for all and continues until the individual is capable of emerging as an independent member of society. . . would be only an act of justice. . . for clearly, every man

has the right to the fullest development of his abilities and society wrongs individuals twice over when it makes ignorance a necessary consequence of poverty." (Marx-Engels Collected Works Vol. 4. P 253).

Emphasizing that no country had successfully ended child labour without first making education compulsory, American political theorist Myron Weiner also noted that Asian States which made education compulsory - Japan in 1872, the two Koreas, Taiwan and China after WWII - were all poor when they undertook the task. Their development was founded on successfully taking up "the legal obligation of the state to provide an adequate number of schools,

significant limitations to the "enforceable right" restricted it to children between 6 to 14 years of age and provided for education only "as the State may, by law, determine". The limitations allowed a retreat from the original constitutional responsibility and denied millions of children access to quality education. The RTE Act 2009 legalized the inequity.

A genuine right to education law would have encompassed completely free and compulsory Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and, following the adoption of the 10+2 system, extended up to Class XII thus covering all children from 0 to 18 years.

appropriately situated and to ensure that no child fails to attend school." Modern states regard education as a legal duty, not merely as a right: "parents are required to send their children to school, children are required to attend school and the state is required to enforce compulsory education." The state is bound to protect children from the compulsions on impoverished parents and from would-be exploiters. ("India's Case Against Compulsory Education", *Seminar*, 413 (January). P 83-86)

Independent India's first Education Commission (1964-66), the D.S. Kothari Commission, examined the failure to achieve the Constitutional goal of education for all up to the age of 14 years by 1960.

It recommended far-reaching structural changes for setting up a national system of free and compulsory education through schools of comparable quality. This could not be left to private institutions like the elite schools “transplanted in India by British administrators and we have clung to it so long because it happened to be in tune with the traditional hierarchical structure of our society. Whatever its place in past history may be, such a system has no valid place in the new democratic and socialistic society we desire to create.” (1.38)

The report strongly advocated the establishment of state-funded common neighbourhood schools with a socially, culturally and economically diverse student body as the authentic institution of a pedagogically sound and egalitarian national system of education which would “provide ‘good’ education to all children because sharing life with the common people is, in our opinion, an essential ingredient of good education.” (10.19). Echoing its logic, *The Report of the Committee of Members of Parliament on Education* (1967) asserted that “the unhealthy social segregation that now takes place between the schools for the rich and those for the poor should be ended; and the primary schools should be the common schools of the nation by making it obligatory on all children, irrespective of caste, creed, community, religion, economic conditions or social status, to attend the primary school in their neighbourhood. This sharing of life among the children of all social strata will strengthen the sense of being one nation which is an essential ingredient of good education.” (Government of India 1967: p 2). This principle has

recently been reiterated in a landmark judgement of the Allahabad High Court (August 18, 2015).

Achieving universal access to education was recognized as not just a question of reaching a numerical target. It could not be divorced from its democratic content and purpose. However, Indian capital had aligned with sections of the feudal landowning elite and accommodated with Brahmanical ideology which sanctioned harshly exploitative caste divisions among the toiling masses. This allowed both classes to gain economically and politically but it was at the expense of the ruin of the majority of peasants, artisans, tribals and working people. Having failed to break out of the vicious cycle of inequality the goal of universalizing school education could never be achieved. The education system inevitably sank into deep crisis which was aggravated each time a policy decision further narrowed access with multi-track discriminatory arrangements (alternate schools, multi-grade teaching, education guarantee centres, use of contractual and para-teachers, the RTE Act 2009).

The present regime’s proposed National Policy of Education 2016 (NEP 2016) promises to accelerate this process. Amendments to the already flawed RTE 2009 will allow for ‘alternate’ schools which do not ‘require’ the basic infrastructural and pedagogical norms laid down in the Act, limit the no-detention policy to lower primary (class V) and vocationalize the elementary curriculum in targeted areas. Dove-tailed into the Skill Development program and the amended child labour law which now permits under 14-year-olds to work in ‘family

enterprises’, this ‘education’ policy will reinforce caste distinctions and ensure that the majority of India’s children from oppressed and marginalized sections will be condemned to a childhood of labour.

This outcome is not accidental. It follows from the neoliberal policies of marketization of education as a ‘private good’, and of knowledge as a tradable ‘commodity’ or ‘service’, that have been pursued by successive governments for more than two decades. Since the 1970’s ‘neoliberalism’ has emerged as the ‘solution’ favoured by international finance capital to recover from the severity of its recurring economic crises. Public funds are diverted through Public Private Partnerships (PPP) to allow “opening up” of the entire range of human activities to penetration by private capital. This imposes a heavy burden on the most vulnerable sections of society and has a very negative impact on education, health, employment and job security, food security, housing and provision of public utilities. Production and consumption by the masses are kept under tight control through “austerity measures” and the modern ‘welfare’ state of the 20th Century is transformed. People’s control over their own lives shrinks as corporations take over decision-making in the name of “efficiency” and “professional management”.

However, unlike knowledge, commodities are produced primarily for exchange for profit rather than for any intrinsic value. In highly developed systems of commodity production like capitalism all market exchanges are affected by scarcities, monopolies, manipulated tastes and more or less accidental variations in supply and demand. Thus the ‘commodification of

knowledge' would appear to be a contradiction in terms unless knowledge is degraded to the 'acquisition of skills' required for 'services' that are available in the market.

The entire terminology of the NEP 2016 is devised within the

framework of skill acquisition. "Competencies" and "outcomes" are units to be monitored, measured, graded and readied for the market. The purpose of education is the grooming of 'human resource' to create a work-force that will enter the market-place as and when supply and demand movements are

2

The failure to universalize elementary and secondary education was used to propagate the idea of higher education as an 'elite' privilege and a 'non-merit good' undeserving of public subsidies. From 1998 institutions of Higher Education (IHE) were advised to "raise their own resources by raising the fee levels, encouraging private donations and by generating revenues through consultancy and other activities." The millennium year 2000 was a water-shed year for the higher education sector in India. The Ambani-Birla Report, entitled *A Policy Framework for Reforms in Education*, was authored by prominent industrialists and produced by then Prime Minister Vajpayee's Council on Trade and Industry! It explicitly stated that privatization and commercialization were the chief instruments for reform in higher education and that the 'user-pays' principle would ensure profits for investors. With its companion Model Act (2003) prepared by UGC, it demanded restructuring of higher education on the *model of market-oriented enterprises promoting corporate values*. Shelved because of strong opposition from academicians and teachers and students unions, its basic features continue to provide the framework within which higher education policies are conceived and sought to be legislated today.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) made their entry into the arena of higher education. Prof. Nigvekar, then UGC Chairperson, articulated GOI's position that education had become "a tradeable product and knowledge has become commodified". In countries like India, GATS regulations will negatively impact educational access, impose one model of private, commercial and import-oriented education, weaken national systems due to foreign competition and effect domestic regulation and authority. Yet, despite growing opposition, an offer made in 2005 to put higher education on the WTO-GATS table as a tradable service was not withdrawn at the recent Tenth Ministerial Conference held in December 2015 at Nairobi.

Commercialization of education provides autonomy to capital by opening up a market for investment as knowledge is now a key component in economic development but its impact on the academic community is decidedly anti-democratic and has grave consequences for the very conception of education as a *public good*. The privately-borne high cost of education shrinks the range and influence of subjects and courses that are not directly linked to the demands of national and international

favourable. When they are unfavourable, during periods of recession and slow growth as they are now, this work-force will become Capital's essential buffer, the "reserve army of labour" that keeps wages low, jobs contractual, and workers afraid to unionize and fight for their legitimate democratic rights.

capital markets which generate the maximum jobs and the biggest salaries. Neoliberalism has altered the focus of syllabi from values of critical-thinking to "skills" such as "teamwork," "communication" and "leadership." The language and ethic of the corporate world sends out the wrong message that education must equip individuals with marketable skills, and that the ultimate goal is "productivity". Unfortunately, influenced by policy makers and the media, even students, parents, and society at large have begun to accept education as a "private good" so that both 'providers' and 'consumers' adopt a market perspective by viewing education as a means to recoup investments made either in providing or in acquiring it.

All over the world disciplines and areas of research that are foundational to innovative systems of knowledge depend significantly on state funding and philanthropic support. Replacing this with profit-oriented enterprise means that these disciplines suffer deterioration and the critical and transformational purpose of educational institutions declines. As they become more financially autonomous but less socially accountable 'producers of graduates and research outputs', the most important objective of these 'entrepreneurial institutions' is to generate profits.

Education serves a broad public purpose as it critically conceptualizes values and goals for national development and for strengthening civil society. Both are necessary components of Indian society's unfinished agenda of democratic transformation. The impact of neoliberal policy on educational institutions in general, but particularly on IHE's, threatens their very existence as environments fostering the process of "educating oneself".

The 'excellence' of education is measured by exorbitant fees because market logic dictates that those who pay more, get more; those who pay less, should expect less and those who lack resources should simply be brushed aside.

"To limit knowledge to what will actually be put into practice. . . is the deliberate reduction of one's being to the condition of a cog in the techno-economic machine."

3

On campuses across the country, protests against privatization, curbing democratic rights of students and faculty, and in support of social justice have been called "anti-national" by the present regime. But here we are confronted with opposing concepts of nation and nationhood. The first, generated through collective struggle, finds expression in the civil liberties and equal rights protected by the Constitution. These liberties and rights are enabling conditions for an on-going politics of democratically negotiated nationalism.

'sons' have the 'duty' to defend her. Within this Hindu majoritarian conception, 'others' are second class citizens restricted by the will of a self-appointed governing class, the 'Hindus'. But 'Hindus' themselves are defined as those who exemplify the ideology of the Sangh Parivar! The 'nationalism' of the Sangh Parivar is fundamentally anti-democratic and anti-constitutional.

On July 27, 2016 HRD Minister Javadekar held a closed-door six-hour long meeting with the RSS and its affiliates including ABVP to discuss how NEP 2016 could "instill nationalism, pride and ancient Indian values in modern education." Conformism and a slavish mentality bred by indoctrination in a particular ideology is sought to be cultivated through the curriculum with no space for critical reasoning and rigorous

(Michel Henry, *Barbarism*. 2012. P121). Market orientation encourages certain qualities in individuals but may be indifferent, or even opposed to the general development and articulation of critical faculties. With today's 'common-sense' reflecting the neoliberal redefinition of the individual, no longer a productive social being or citizen but an economically autonomous fiction, the 'consumer', this obvious truth can become blurred.

examination to arrive at truths or search for alternate avenues of knowledge. This is exactly the conception of knowledge promoted by votaries of the instrumentalist view of commercialized education. The degree holder has to be packaged in a way that conforms to the requirements of the market. The training which is 'valued' makes workers fiercely competitive in relation to fellow workers, but docile in dealings with superiors.

The communalization of education, like the commercialization and commoditization of education generates an anti-democratic socio-political environment in which neoliberal capitalism flourishes. Strong fascistic tendencies surface in governments that aggressively advocate neoliberal economic policies.

Footprints of A Crusader (The Life Story of Mrunal Gore)

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Scene of linguistic chauvinism
Kuldip Nayar

**Behind the Debate
on GM Mustard**
Bharat Dogra

JNU Elections
Kuldeep Kumar

Amnesty Report on Kashmir :
Neha Dabhade

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Parivar of anti-social elements

Sandeep Pandey

When pushed to the corner after some dalits were flogged in Una, Gujarat for skinning dead cows which resulted in a political storm that cost the chief ministership of Anandi Ben Patel, a Narendra Modi nominee, the Prime Minister came up with a startling statement that 70-80 per cent cow vigilantes were anti-social elements and that they had set up shops in the name of cow protection. Modi added that cow vigilantes made him angry.

Modi made this statement after keeping mum on such incidents which have been going on almost for a year beginning with the killing of Mohammed Akhlaq in September, 2015, in which people have either been killed or beaten on the suspicion of eating beef or taking cows for slaughter houses. Sangh Parivar knows that Modi's statement is for public consumption. He is probably angry because these incidents have now become an irritant for him as they hurt his political cause.

Modi invoked Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave to say that people should not take law into their hands to disturb harmony. It is strange that Gandhi, who is otherwise not tolerated by

Sangh Parivar, has been repeatedly used by Modi to serve his political purpose.

In Varanasi the late Socialist leader Jayaprakash Narayan established a Gandhian Institute of Studies in 1962. JP ran it for 16 years from funds personally raised by him. When Janata Party came to power, the Central and the UP governments jointly took responsibility for running the institution. However, with Murali Manohar Joshi as the HRD minister, the funds were stopped and a lady Professor Kusumlata Kedia, associated with RSS, slowly encroached upon the property. The judicial process was influenced to get a governing council, consisting of members who had nothing to do with Gandhian thought, established after the registration of the society responsible for running the institute was cancelled. Gandhian Institute of Studies ceased functioning and RSS took over. Sanskrit Bharti, a Sangh Parivar organisation, started running Sanskrit classes.

Muniza Rafique Khan, Registrar of the GIS, has been involved in the long drawn struggle to save the institute. She has received a threat

Scene of linguistic chauvinism

Kuldip Nayar

on 3rd September from one Jagdish, a teacher of the Sanskrit classes held on campus, on behalf of Sanskrit Bharti on its letter head, saying that she may have to pay with interest inside her home for the media campaign she is running against Sanskrit Bharti, an international organisation, accusing it of illegally occupying the Gandhian Institute.

It appears that Sanskrit Bharti, in addition to teaching Sanskrit, is also in the business of issuing threats and taking law into their own hands. The anti-social nature of the person who wrote this threat is obvious.

This is the modus operandi of most of Sangh Parivar outfits. Probably what Narendra Modi inadvertently said about Gau Rakshaks applies to the whole of Sangh Parivar. They don't believe in democracy or dialogue. They believe in using violence to subdue their opponent. They don't care about the law and order, the judiciary or the Constitution of this country.

In another incident at Banaras Hindu University on 6th August, 2016 Professor J.P. Rai of the Law Department rained lathis over protesting students along with the security personnel indicating the reign of terror that the administration has unleashed on campus. These students were protesting the filing of fake case against nine students under section 307 of IPC without any evidence. The nine students were among those who sat on fast earlier to demand reverting to the previous arrangement of opening the cyber library 24 hours and were suspended by the university administration. The Vice Chancellor G.C. Tripathi is against the all night opening of cyber library as he believes that students

(Continued on Page 4)

Horrors of partition came to my mind when I saw television beaming pictures of rioting and killing in Bengaluru. It was the same way I felt when partition took place and we, the people living in the newly-constituted state of Pakistan, had to leave our home and hearth to migrate to India.

I never imagined that a cosmopolitan city like Bengaluru could be the scene of linguistic chauvinism, which would go to the extent of killing of Tamils by Kannadas. Leading IT firms preferred to open their offices there because they considered the city liberal and peaceful. If someone had asked me at that time that such scene could be repeated at a place like Bengaluru, I would have said: No and never.

Yet this has happened because the people known to be liberal were swept off their feet over appeals in the name of parochialism. Fortunately, Tamil Nadu chief minister J. Jayalalithaa's determination not to allow similar incidents happening in the state prevented any reprisals. She rightly deserves the kudos for handling the problem before it could assume a proportion leading to indiscriminate violence.

There is a long-standing dispute between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on sharing of the Cauvery water. This is not the first time that Karnataka has refused to abide by the Supreme Court verdict on the amount of water to be released to Tamil Nadu. Earlier, whenever such a situation had arisen, the people of

both states had been at each other's throat. So, what is happening in Bengaluru today is a mere repetition.

But what is the way out? Nobody can challenge the Supreme Court's decision, but the problem can be solved by sitting across the table and arriving at a solution, particularly when people's emotions are involved. Since the river water dispute between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu is a sensitive issue, I recall former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's idea of evolving a consensus to handle the issue.

Knowledgeable circles have been warning the nation against the dangerous consequences of letting the river water dispute linger on. Karnataka's unilateral decision to abrogate all the inter-state river water agreements has created a situation, the like of which the nation has not experienced. And to cap it all, all chief ministers of the states have been indulging in a slanging match, which does not go well with the idea of a federal structure which the Indian constitution demands.

Needless to say, it is difficult to find a consensus on the sharing of river waters than on any other subject. The protracted war of nerves between the two states on the sharing of Cauveri waters is a case in point. Consensus can be evolved only when political parties rise above their parochial interests to use their vision to make water into a factor that unites our country. They need to have the necessary will to achieve this noble goal. It is not

impossible to find a formula protecting the interests of both Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

I had always thought our real problem was population. I did mention this to an American Nobel Prize winner who contradicted me and said: “Your problem is going to be water.” We were discussing the ordeals that India would face in the years to come. Our views did not tally even after a long discussion. What happened at Latur in Maharashtra some time ago has renewed the American’s warning to me. He had also given me an optimistic side: There is an ocean of water under Yamuna-Gangetic plain waiting to be tapped. I wonder if this is true. Had it been so, the government would have done a scientific study by this time to estimate the collected water. I have not heard of any such plan so far.

India has seven major rivers—the Ganges, Brahmaputra, Indus, Narmada, Krishna, Godavari and Cauveri—and numerous tributaries. New Delhi has set up the Central Water and Power Commission to have a systematic plan to harness not only water but also generate power. This has worked to a large extent but in certain parts of India the fallout has been a series of disputes which even after decades remain unsolved. Nearer home, Haryana, then part of Punjab, has refused to release water to Rajasthan and Delhi. This goes contrary to the stand New Delhi had taken when the Indus Water Treaty was signed. At that time we argued that we wanted more water because we had to irrigate Rajasthan, which has a large part of desert.

(Continued on Page 5)

Behind the Debate on GM Mustard

Bharat Dogra

There has been a fiercely contested debate on the possibility relating to the introduction of a genetically modified (GM) variety of mustard which is called the transgenic mustard hybrid DMH-11. Very powerful interests are at work just now to ensure that this variety gets approval in the near future to become the first GM food crop variety of India.

Although this particular variety is supposed to have been developed by university scientists, lobbyists of world’s biggest multinational companies who had earlier tried their best to get approval for Bt brinjal are now no less active to somehow ensure that GM mustard is approved. The reason is well-known and the game is well understood by these powerful and well-connected lobbyists who have penetrated deep into decision making and influencing circles.

It is well understood by all of them that it is only a matter of first getting the door opened somehow for GM food crops and then it is only the multinational companies who will get the main benefits as the entire GM technology is heavily concentrated in the hands of a few multinational companies at the world level.

Eminent scientists who have examined the technology of genetically engineered (GE) or genetically modified (GM) crops have come to a clear conclusion that it is a highly hazardous and risky technology. For example eminent scientists from several countries who comprise the Independent Science

Panel (ISP) have drawn this conclusion after studying various aspects of GM crops, “GM crops have failed to deliver the promised benefits and are posing escalating problems on the farm. ...GM crops should be firmly rejected now.”

In his widely acclaimed book ‘Genetic Roulette’ Jeffrey M. Smith has summarised the results of a lot of research on the health hazards of GM crops/food, “Lab animals tested with GM foods had stunted growth, impaired immune systems, bleeding stomachs, abnormal and potentially precancerous cell growth in the intestines, impaired blood cell development, misshapen cell structures in the liver, pancreas, and testicles, altered gene expression and cell metabolism, liver and kidney lesions, partially atrophied livers, inflamed kidneys, less developed brains and testicles, enlarged livers, pancreases, and intestines, reduced digestive enzymes, higher blood sugar, inflamed lung tissue, increased death rates, and higher offspring mortality.”

In a review of recent trends titled ‘Food Without Choice’ Prof. Pushpa M. Bhargava (who was nominated by the Supreme Court of India in the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee to protect safety concerns), internationally acclaimed authority on this subject, drew pointed attention to the “attempt by a small but powerful minority to propagate genetically modified (GM) crops to serve their interests and those of multinational corporations (MNCs) (read the US), the bureaucracy, the political setup and

a few unprincipled and unethical scientists and technologists who can be used as tools.” Further he has warned, “The ultimate goal of this attempt in India of which the leader is Monsanto, is to obtain control over Indian agriculture and thus food production. With 60 per cent of our population engaged in agriculture and living in villages, this would essentially mean not only a control over our food security but also over our farmer security, agricultural security and security of the rural sector.”

These wider aspects of the debate on GM crops should also be kept in mind to understand the wider implications of the possible approval of GM Mustard for which such high pressure lobbying is being done at present.

It is heartening to know that several scientists as well as organizations of farmers, environmentalists as well as social activists have come forward to warn about the dangers of GM mustard. They have pointed out

alarming facts relating to the problems in the testing process and the serious lapses in the regulatory process and organisation where specific examples of conflict of interest have been pointed out. It appears that those who are a part of the GM lobby have themselves been given a decision making role! In such conditions the role of independent and aware citizens’ groups becomes even more important in protecting public interests relating to health, environment and livelihoods.

(Continued from Page 2)

watch pornography in late night and early morning hours. It just goes to show how far removed the VC may have been from any kind of academic activity during his career. Such moral policing in an institution of higher learning is ridiculous. The university authorities have dragged the names of protesting students, in an incident of brawl among another set of students and medical doctors on campus, to intimidate them. One of them Vishnu Yadav was participating in a NCC tournament at Amroha on the date of incident. Similarly, the other eight were also not present on the site of brawl. Clearly, the university is being vindictive towards dissenting students.

A university professor taking to lathi over students protesting for their democratic rights is an unusual thing. Not if you’re at BHU. The Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh associated VC has given preference to RSS affiliated persons in hiring and other things. Sanskrit Bharti is running Sanskrit classes on campus and RSS shakhas are common. Since lathi wielding is part of RSS tradition, it should not come as a surprise that a professor displayed his latent talent in this field publicly.

The day may not be far when attending RSS shakhas may be made compulsory for students and lathi wielding skill may be considered a pre-requisite for faculty recruitment. With a RSS VC at the helm of affairs such things are not completely inconceivable.

The RSS has either completely shut down progressive institutions like the Gandhian Institute of Studies or is interfering in subtle ways like at BHU. Overall, it has destroyed the academic culture of our institutions and is imposing its ideology through people, legally or illegally, thrust upon these institutions. The atmosphere of serious teaching and research is getting affected as the academic community is expected to toe the RSS agenda. The RSS doesn’t want thinking individuals, it wants obedient citizens.

Some daily wagers are sitting on the BHU main gate in support of their demand to make them regular according to a resolution adopted in an Executive Council meeting of the university in 1997. It has been over 70 days and a few workers have also started an indefinite fast. But

the university authorities are oblivious to the ongoing struggle. RSS is also known to be insensitive to human suffering unless it can get them political advantage.

The anti-social nature of the Professor G.C. Tripathi, BHU VC, is also obvious.

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Withdraw the Yash Bharti Award to Dr. Gandhi

Praveen Srivastava

Yash Bharti is the highest state-level award conferred by the Government of Uttar Pradesh for excellence in literature, fine arts, classical music, folk music and sports. In addition to Prize Money of 11 lakhs, the Government of Uttar Pradesh provides Rs 50,000 monthly pension to the recipients of Yash Bharti.

In March 2014, the Government of Uttar Pradesh announced the name of Dr. Jagdish Gandhi, Founder-Manager of City Montessori School, as a recipient of the Yash Bharti Award stating that he has contributed remarkably to the field of education.

However, Dr. Jagdish Gandhi is not an educationist in the real sense. In 2015, Dr. Jagdish Gandhi's City Montessori School (CMS, Lucknow) had refused to admit 31 students belonging to socially and economically deprived sections of

society in Class 1 and Nursery as per the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009.

CMS authorities misbehaved with 31 parents when they approached the school on April 16, 2015 after the deadline for admission completion passed. Aggrieved and devastated, parents staged a peaceful protest outside the school, led by Magsaysay Awardee, Dr. Sandeep Pandey.

When ordered by Basic Shiksha Adhikari of Lucknow to admit these students, the school through its Founder Manager challenged the same before the Lucknow Bench of Allahabad High Court.

Vide order dated 6.8.2015, the Court ordered CMS to admit 13 students in the respective classes for the academic session 2015-16 adhering to the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009 and the UP RTE Rules

2011. Despite the order of the Court, CMS did not admit these students immediately. In July, 2016, the Supreme Court of India rebuked CMS when it had filed a petition before the Court to transfer these 13 students to some other school.

This year also, CMS has refused to admit 58 students belonging to socially and economically disadvantaged groups under S. 12 of RTE Act, 2009.

The real face of Dr. Jagdish Gandhi has got exposed as he is violating the fundamental right of education as enshrined under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution.

Therefore, in light of these facts, it is necessary that the Government of Uttar Pradesh should withdraw the Yash Bharti Award given to Dr. Jagdish Gandhi. Continuance of the Award to Dr. Jagdish Gandhi is an insult to the country and its people.

(Continued from Page 3)

Unfortunately, several incongruities are responsible for interstate water disputes. Even after 70 years of independence, the disputes are far from settled. When the Congress ruled both at the Centre and in the states, the problems never assumed an ugly shape. The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), which then only commanded a few Lok Sabha members, did not count much. It is a different scenario today. Now that it has a majority in parliament, the party sees to it that the states run by it get the maximum benefit, rules or no rules.

However, the situation is different in the south. Both Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are ruled by parties other than the BJP. New Delhi should have stepped in long ago. Prime Minister Narendra Modi who claims to have united different parts of the country into one unit looks distant from the problem that Karnataka and Tamil Nadu face. His statements have been general. What is needed is tackling of the country's problem arising out of language, border or water.

Hindus and Muslims who were

living together for hundreds of years became strangers soon after partition and had no compunction even in raping women. They were facing on a large scale the situation which Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are encountering on a small scale today. Sometimes I shudder that the disputes among the states may take the shape of some kind of partition. When friends and neighbours could suddenly become strangers because they pursued a different religion, what the Kannadas did on the streets of Bengaluru could well be a page from the history of partition.

Why the left shouldn't get too comfortable after its JNU victory

Kuldeep Kumar

The central message of the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) elections is that the 'Stand With JNU' campaign has decisively defeated the 'Shut Down JNU' campaign. The latter, which was launched by saffron pseudo-nationalists and their fellow travellers, wanted to destroy one of the finest universities in the country merely because it offended their sensibilities – JNU's emphasis on the freedom of thought, the academic excellence that results from such freedom, the institution's democratic culture of discussion and debate and the ideological hegemony of the Left were all too much for the 'Shut Down JNU' wallahs.

The RSS, through its publications, has been attacking JNU and its liberal intellectual culture for a long time, making the same allegations that were levelled against the university after the events of February 9, when some people allegedly shouted anti-India slogans at a public event. On November 3, 2015 *Firstpost* quoted an article published in the latest issue of RSS' Hindi weekly publication *Panchajanya*, that described JNU as an institute "where nationalism is considered an offence", Indian culture was presented in a "distorted way" and "removal of Army from Kashmir is supported" besides various other "anti-national activities" taking place there.

As I have previously written, Jawaharlal Nehru has always been a hate figure for the RSS. Little wonder then that *Panchajanya*

wrote, "Jawahar Lal Nehru promoted higher educational and research institutions as factories of socialist ideology which could provide the intellectual input for his and later Indira Gandhi's social and economic agenda."

The article was written by somebody who claimed that he had studied at JNU and had "often heard JNU professors discuss means and measures to undermine national unity and culture at events organised by anti-national organisations". His experiences made him realise that "JNU is home to a large chunk of anti-national groupings which have the singular aim of disintegrating India."

The arrests and sedition charges failed to dampen the fighting spirit of JNU's students and teachers and they began staging protests, aligning with Dalit students from Hyderabad University after Rohit Vemula's suicide came to light. Very soon JNU's critics launched a 'Shut Down JNU' campaign through social and mainstream media. Surprisingly, the movement even received support from some BJP members who should have known better given their educational backgrounds. For instance, BJP Rajya Sabha member Chandan Mitra, owner and chief editor of *The Pioneer* group of publications, started his career teaching history at Delhi University (DU) and has a Ph.D from Oxford University, but still lent his support to this campaign. Attacking JNU, he opined that "the self-destructive agitation at JNU has

given the government the best opportunity to shut it down for ever, cut its financial losses, and get rid of a factory that produces only spongers and malcontents." He mocked the agitating students by describing them as "subsidy-deprived."

It was very clear that JNU was facing a very well-strategised attack from all sides – JNUSU officer bearers were arrested along with some other students, BJP lawyers physically attacked JNU students, teachers and media persons inside Patiala House, home minister Rajnath Singh commented on the need for tough action against 'anti-national' elements, and Smriti Irani, who was human resources development minister at the time, and vice-chancellor Jagadesh Kumar's attitude towards these events had the university surrounded by criticism.

The JNUSU elections took place against this background. For many on campus, it was clear that ABVP and its Hindutva-based brand of nationalism posed the greatest danger to the university's culture of free debates, discussions, disagreements and intellectual independence. The way the media created a nationalist frenzy and portrayed JNU as a centre of sedition made it even more imperative to safeguard JNU's distinctive character by forging unity among its democratic and secular forces. However, Left as well as non-Left organisations were not able to look beyond their organisational interests and focus on the single issue of

saving JNU as an institution. This resulted in AISA – the student wing of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) – and SFI, which is linked to the CPI(M), entering into an alliance without AISF, Kanhaiya Kumar's parent organisation, which is the student wing of the Communist Party of India. Thus it was obvious that all was not well in the Left camp. Similarly, Democratic Students' Federation (DSF), a splinter group of the SFI, too abstained from joining the alliance. This made it clear that the Left vote would split.

The unity that was forged between the Left and the Ambedkarites during the many months of struggle also amounted to little as the Birsam Ambedkar Phule Students' Association (BAPSA) decided to confront the '*savarnvad*' (upper casteism) of the Left by contesting on its own. BAPSA obviously wanted to take advantage of the disarray in the Left camp. If the ABVP played up the identity politics of Hindutva, BAPSA tried to articulate its Dalit identity, asserting that only Dalits could understand their own problems and get them resolved. Convinced that it was going to win the elections, the two-year-old organisation went to the extent of equating red with saffron and bracketing the Left organisations with ABVP for representing people from the upper castes.

Despite the grave challenges faced by JNU, Anand Kumar and Yogendra Yadav too put up candidates from their Swaraj Abhiyan. In 1973, it was Kumar who brought all the anti-Left elements together under one umbrella organisation called Free Thinkers. This time too, he failed to appreciate that JNU was fighting for its survival and all freedom-loving students

should be united in this fight against fascist tendencies.

If one looks at the JNUSU election results, it seems that the ABVP has suffered a definitive defeat. In their youthful enthusiasm, students even took out a funeral procession for an ABVP effigy. However, a closer look reveals that the situation is not all that simple. The ABVP candidates for the office bearers' posts have polled more than 1,000 votes, that is between 20 to 25% of the total votes polled. Had AISA and SFI not come together, ABVP could have easily won the election. It is obvious that their support base remains intact – even if it has not expanded after the nationwide frenzy that was created by RSS and its affiliates and was enthusiastically supported by dominant sections of the media.

An unusually high number of students have exercised their right to not vote for any candidate and tick NOTA on the ballot paper. In the case of the vice-presidential position, the number went up to 415. It shows that either these students are apolitical or are so disappointed with the existing political formations on campus that they do not wish to choose any of them. In a university where the average political consciousness of students is supposedly much higher than other places, such indifference is highly surprising. This should force student activists of all hues to think about its causes. Left organisation should be more worried than others about this phenomenon.

The recently concluded JNUSU elections do not give any reason to the victorious Left organisations to gloat over their success. In fact these results should serve as a wake-up

call to them. The message is very clear to the victors as well as to other organisations like the DSF, AISF, BAPSA and SFS (Students for Swaraj). If they continue to fight among themselves and fail to forge the broadest possible group against the ABVP, they will not be able to repeat this feat in the future. There is a message for the ABVP too. In keeping with its ideology, it should feel free to attack the Left and other political adversaries, but refrain from attacking the very institution where its members are studying. It brings to mind the famous episode from Kalidasa's life where he was cutting the branch of the very tree he was perched on. Is it a coincidence that the ABVP won the sole councillor's seat from the Centre for Sanskrit Studies?

–The Wire

Books by Surendra Mohan

1. **Vikas Ka Rasta: Nai Arthik Neetiyon ka vishleshan..** Price 600 rupees.
2. **Samajwad, Dharma Nirapekshata aur Samajik Nyaya** Reissued as second edition; Price 500 rupees
3. **Vartaman Rajneeti ki Jwalant Chunautiyan.** Price 400 rupees.
4. **Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia ki Neetiyan:** (This booklet was published late last year.) Price 25 rupees.

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Amnesty Report on Kashmir : an attempt to uncover a narrative of denied justice

Neha Dabhade

An FIR was recently registered against Amnesty International India (AII) on charges of sedition and other IPC sections. Amnesty International India had organized a panel discussion which included Kashmiri Pandits and others. This discussion was a part of the campaign supported by AII to promote justice for victims of human rights violation in Jammu and Kashmir. The Kashmiri Pandits present at the discussion chanted slogans hailing the Indian Army, which was met with pro-freedom sloganeering by some of the youth in the audience. Though AII clarified that it doesn't take any positions on self determination with regards to Kashmir, the government insisted that the event is 'anti-national', like the ABVP (Indian Express, 2016). In the midst of the chaos and din raised by the ABVP, the Report that Amnesty has published to uncover the plight of Kashmiris in Jammu and Kashmir got sidelined if not completely invisibilised. Kashmir today is like a war zone where on one hand there is violence perpetrated by the militants and on the other hand, a strong presence of the Indian Army and internal security forces fighting against these militants. There have been rising concerns on the excesses committed by the Army and internal security forces against the citizens leading to worst forms of human rights violations. The Report, published in 2015, is called "Denied" Failures in Accountability in Jammu and Kashmir. It outlines the obstacles faced by the victims and their

relatives in Kashmir when there are human rights violations and the role played by the security forces in this. The salient points of the Report are mentioned below.

The Amnesty Report begins with defining the scale of human rights violations in Kashmir that have been perpetrated by security forces personnel with glaring impunity. The Report states that from 1990 to 2011, the Jammu and Kashmir state government reportedly recorded a total of over 43,000 people killed. Of those killed, 21,323 were said to be 'militants' 10 13,226 'civilians' (those not directly involved in the hostilities) killed by armed groups, 5,369 security force personnel killed by armed groups, and 3,642 "civilians" killed by security forces.

This impunity is greatly accorded to the security forces by laws like Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1990 (AFSPA) which gives them sweeping powers that lead to extrajudicial executions and other human rights violations. Section 7 of the AFSPA makes it mandatory to seek the prior sanction of Central and State authorities in order to prosecute any security force personnel in civilian courts. Under the pretext of protecting national security, the excesses of the security forces go unchallenged. 96% of all complaints brought against the army in Jammu & Kashmir have been dismissed as "false and baseless" or "with other ulterior motives of maligning the image of Armed Forces".

To elaborate the consequences of such a system, the Report narrates the story of 17 year old Javaid Ahmad Magray who disappeared on 30th April, 2003. His parents searched high and low for him after seeing bloodstains on the pavement and security personnel outside the gate. The authorities at the army camp gave evasive answers as to the whereabouts of Javaid stating that he was taken by them for questioning until finally admitting that he was declared dead at the Soura Medical Institute. The parents found out that Javaid was wounded in an encounter with the army who claimed that Javaid was a militant. When an inquiry was carried out by the District Magistrate, it was concluded that Javaid was not a militant and the army's version of the killing was false. His parents wrote to the Ministry of Defence for sanction to prosecute the guilty officers under Section 7 of the Jammu and Kashmir Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1990. After a long and painful wait, in 2012 they got a reply from the Ministry denying permission to prosecute stating, "...the individual killed was a militant from whom arms and ammunition were recovered. No reliable and tangible evidence has been referred to in the investigation report."

Unfortunately this is not a stand-alone case where sanction to prosecute was denied. The practice of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Home Affairs, which sanctions prosecutions of the army and internal forces personnel

respectively, has been to either deny sanction or remain silent on such applications without citing any reason. The family members are not required to be informed about the status of the sanction, whether it is granted or denied. They often assume that the sanction is denied. This frustrating wait compels the relatives to give up the pursuit of justice which closes all avenues of appeal. Most of the times, the families are not even aware of the procedures to apply for permission to prosecute.

AFSPA by nature seems colonial, where similar laws were used by the British to preempt any legal challenge to their violence in India. AFSPA is considered draconian in the light of opinions and recommendations against it as expressed by committees constituted by the State and also by UN rapporteurs on violence against women; and on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. They have repeatedly pointed out that AFSPA had bred a culture of violence, especially against women, and eroded the principle of transparency and accountability of the state. The recommendations range from review of the law to its repealment.

Another important issue highlighted by the Amnesty Report is that since all cases are tried in military courts, civilians have limited options to appeal against judgments of these courts. The Supreme Court's extraordinary appellate jurisdiction, the Special Leave Petition, is barred from reviewing decisions made by military courts under the Constitution of India. This problematizes the jurisdiction to try cases of human rights violations that is vested with the military courts.

Principle 29 of the Updated Set of principles for the protection and promotion of human rights through action to combat impunity also states: "The jurisdiction of military tribunals must be restricted solely to specifically military offences committed by military personnel, to the exclusion of human rights violations, which shall come under the jurisdiction of the ordinary domestic courts..."

Similarly, with respect to investigations, an inquiry that is conducted by the same authority accused of the crime raises serious questions about the independence and impartiality of those proceedings. International law requires that crimes under international law be investigated by an independent authority, namely, an authority not involved in the alleged violations. The Indian Army's Human Rights Cell reported that as of 2011, it has dismissed over 96 percent of the allegations of human rights violations brought against its personnel since 1993. The army had received 1,532 allegations of human rights violations (995 from Jammu and Kashmir, 485 from North-Eastern states, and 52 complaints from other states) out of which 1,508 were investigated, and 24 investigations remained pending as of 2011. Out of a total of 995 complaints of human rights violations against the army in Jammu and Kashmir, 986 have been investigated by the army to date, while 9 investigations currently remain pending. The army says it found that 961 of these allegations were "false, baseless" through internal enquiries. In the 25 cases found to be "true," it says 129 army personnel were punished.

The Report points out inherent defects within the military justice

system in which there are four types of court martials: general court-martial (GCM); district court-martial (DCM); summary general court-martial (SGCM); and summary court martial (SCM). In each type, members of the court martial are a part of the executive chain of command, meaning that there is a notable lack of independence. Court-martial proceedings are subject to judicial review under Article 32 of the Constitution of India (before the Supreme Court) and Article 226 (before the High Court). Thus, it is theoretically possible to challenge the verdict of a court-martial by filing a writ petition under either Article 32 or 226. However, there are no known instances of persons not subject to military law in Jammu and Kashmir challenging court-martial decisions through writ petitions.

Furthermore, the members have no qualifications or legal training of courts, thereby jeopardizing the prospects of justice.

In order to understand the implications of lack of independence of military courts, the Report narrates the story of Mushtaq. Mushtaq Ahmad Hajam was returning home after his prayers at a local mosque in Nowhatta, Srinagar on the 17th of August 1990, where he was shot at by a CRPF constable, leaving him fatally wounded. An FIR was filed by the family members of Mushtaq. The CRPF report, however, stated that the constable fired in "self-defence", though the police investigation wanted to convict the constable under Section 7 of the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act in 1996. The CRPF court of inquiry and the Central government have however been

reiterating time and again that no criminal cases can be pressed on the accused, and also that the case cannot be tried in civilian courts. Mushtaq's family still awaits justice.

According to the Report, the first obstacle is the reluctance of the police itself in filing of the complaints. Furthermore, the police does not take action until compelled to by the court and subsequently there are long drawn out cases. Sheila's story elaborates this aspect. Sheila was allegedly subjected to torture and sexual violence at the hands of the Deputy Superintendent of Police who was investigating the death of her neighbor. However, she experienced a lot of resistance from the police when she went to register her complaint. Subsequently, the Inspector General of police visited her family and offered an amount of 200,000 rupees, and jobs for both of her brothers. She refused to accept these, fearing future harassment. The State Human Rights Commission whom she approached in 2004 passed a judgement in 2008 stating that compensation be provided to Sheila's family and a police complaint be registered. Neither of these recommendations were implemented, however.

The next obstacle comes in the form of lack of cooperation of the army and security forces with investigations by the police. This ranges from not being present for questioning, to not responding to requests for the rosters of personnel involved in operations, records of weapons and ammunition used, etc. This has led to justice being denied to many. When Irfan Ganai and his cousin Reyaz stepped out of house to investigate a gunshot, fearing stolen cattle, a subsequently fired gunshot hit killed him. His family

members guarded the body for more than 15 hours to ensure that the army doesn't take his picture and label him a militant in front of the authorities. What followed was a gruesome denial of justice, as the army refused to cooperate with the Sub-Divisional Police Officer who had sent letters to the Commanding Officer of the 13 Rashtriya Rifles regarding the details of the army personnel involved in the operation on the 30th of June, 2013, repeatedly. This uncooperative demeanour extended in case of the army officers and personnel too, who, despite being summoned for testifying, remained absent from all scenarios of investigation, eventually leading to the police abandoning the investigation unfruitfully.

What is perhaps the most heart rending experience of the Kashmir conflict is the plight of the relatives and the families of those who disappear or become victims of extrajudicial executions. Their quest for justice becomes painful when no information is given to relatives about the investigations. The police station refuses to divulge information to relatives and most of the times officers don't even meet them. Ghulam Mohammad's son Abdul Hamid Dar was arrested on the 29th of December, 1995 by the army, and they later confirmed he was being held at the Sheeri camp in Baramulla. When he was allowed to meet Abdul at Boniyar camp on the 8th of January, they were allowed to see him from a distance, and his body seemed to be propped up on a bench, unmoving. Ghulam believes that his son was killed by the army and it disposed off his son's body when the police station refused to accept it. Ghulam tried filing an FIR at Sheeri police station, but it was not filed until six months later.

Subsequently, Ghulam filed a habeas corpus writ in the High Court, and the court ordered a judicial enquiry. Ghulam and his family never got to know the contents of the report. Neither were they informed about the outcome of the judicial proceedings. They were offered compensation to settle, but they did not. The investigation was then taken up by the State Home Department, which sought the Centre's permission to execute two army personnel, which was denied in December 2011. All through this, Ghulam's family was kept out of the loop, and they eventually decided to give up on the case.

After facing harassment and trauma during the investigations as seen above, the lack of adequate financial compensation to families adds insult to their injuries. Most of the times, the victims are the sole breadwinners in the families. In spite of this fact, procedures for access to compensation remain weak. For instance, families are often intimidated by the concerned authority to withdraw cases by offering them compensation. Many don't take compensation viewing it as a tacit bargain to withdraw their cases. In addition, conditions are placed on eligibility for financial relief like, not being involved in militancy which in the first place is the allegation to be proved. Another condition is that the death certificate of the victim has to be furnished. This is impossible in cases of enforced disappearances since the victims are declared dead only after 7 years of the disappearance.

Recommendations:

- The provisions of prior sanction for prosecution from the State

(Continued on Page 15)

Bhumi Adhikar Andolan

The *Bhumi Adhikar Andolan* Convention extends its solidarity to the ongoing struggles within the Gujarat and resolved to work with them and work towards building a more equitable and just society and people centre development.

Three day long national convention of the Bhumi Adhikar Andolan was held at Ahmedabad in the wake of the increased attack of the global capital unleashed by brazen corporatisation and unbridled FDI in key sectors resulting into high price rise, inflation, and naked loot of the natural resources by corporates, all facilitated by the policies of the Union government and certain state governments. The convention was attended by more than 500 activists of 15 states who dwelled on the on-going struggles in their regions; ground situation of the alliance building processes; centre and state governments attempt at subverting democratic processes by changing laws and issuing notifications and obsession of the political elite with the current GDP based growth model. It discussed the unfolding situation at various levels where the precariousness of the nature resource based communities was increasing and life of toiling workers and masses was becoming harder everyday, as the impact of 25 years of the reforms becomes visible everywhere and inequality in the society reaches its zenith.

The Convention also took note of the massive unrest in the society caused by the economic hardships faced by the society and in particular dalits, adivasis and marginal communities. It also discussed the

growing attack on the minorities and sense of insecurity; massive political unrest in certain parts of the country demanding reservation for certain caste groups; and rights violations of the people in conflict areas due to heavy militarisation and failure of the State to find political solution, promote democratic processes and undertake peace initiatives in wake of provocations by the non-state actors.

The convention agreed that it was after a long drawn struggle and sacrifice that the Land Acquisition Act 1894 was repealed and new Land Acquisition Act was legislated in 2013 by the Parliament. Although there were inadequacies it had some progressive elements like the principle of prior informed consent, Social Impact Assessment, safeguards for food security, enhanced compensation etc that gave some protection to land losers and dependents on land. However, after the Narendra Modi led BJP government came to power it brought a draconian Land Acquisition Amendment Ordinance that tried to do away with the need to seek consent, have SIA or safeguard food security and allowed for unbridled forcible land acquisition.

The united issue-based opposition built against the BJP Government's move to impose the draconian Ordinance (promulgated thrice) had forced the Government to withdraw the move at least temporarily. Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan played a significant role in building up a momentum and public opinion against the Ordinances. The Government had to concede its first defeat by not issuing the Ordinance

for the fourth time. The withdrawal of the Bill from the Parliament is still pending and we must remain vigilant about it.

Building on this political victory, the convention deliberated upon plethora of issues facing the country and made these observations, assertions, and put forth demands upon the government and also for its own constituency.

1. No forced acquisition and displacement : Keeping in view the nation-wide build-up against its attempts to dilute the 2013 Act and withdraw whatever little progressive content and safeguards the Act offered, the BJP Government has changed its strategy. It has come up with a move to try and sidestep such united opposition by calling upon States to come up with land acquisition legislations facilitating easy land grab. Already Gujarat have legislated laws like SIR Act and other to dilute the Land Reforms legislations and facilitate land grab. In Odisha, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Karnataka and other States also such moves are afoot. Odisha also is now planning to allow purchase of tribal land. On the other hand it is declaring traditional forest cultivators and tribals as land grabbers.

The interim period from December 2014 to August 2015 when the Land Acquisition Ordinance was in place Andhra Pradesh government managed to acquire thousands of acres of land in the name of the State capital and several other projects through land pooling. Rights of peasantry and dependents on land have been disregarded across the

country. In all these legislations the rights of Dalits and Adivasis are being undermined. The rights of the Narmada Dam oustees as well as hundreds of other projects are being denied and there have not been any effective rehabilitation and resettlement.

Large tracts of land are being forcibly acquired in the name of industrial corridors, economic corridors, smart cities, National Investment and Manufacturing Zones, (NIMZ), SEZs, industries and infrastructure development. Lakhs of acres are under the potential threat of acquisition under the DMIC, BMIC Economic Corridor, Bangalore-Chennai Economic Corridor, Vishakapatam – Chennai Coastal Corridor and such Projects. Loot of land, mineral and forest resources as well as common property resources have been rampant as the corporates and land mafia have been given a free hand.

We envisage protecting land from acquisition without people's prior informed consent and democratic Social Impact Assessment. Plunder of forest and mineral resources will be resisted. We also envisage occupation of lands remaining unutilised and demand re-distribution to landless with the slogan of 'Zameen Wapsi'.

2. Empower local self government institutions and their role in Development Planning, implement Forest Rights Act, PESA and ensure protection of constitutional rights as per the Fifth and Sixth Schedules: We believe effective implementation of the provisions for the FRA and PESA would empower the Gram Sabhas and Panchayats to play their constitutionally mandated role, as per

73rd and 74th amendment, in the development planning and communities would get control over natural resources and secure their livelihoods. Any attempt at the subversion of these acts will only undermine the democratic processes and people's movements will resist them by all means. 15th December, 2016 will mark tenth anniversary of the FRA and Bhumi Adhikar Andolan will organise massive rally at Jantar Mantar with clear demand of effective implementation of the Act and challenge any attempts at amending the Act.

3. Bring a national Land Use policy to protect farm land from large scale diversion to non-agricultural purpose like industry and infrastructure, prioritise housing rights for poor in the Urban land-use and not promote evictions and displacement in name of Smart Cities: A comprehensive Land Use policy should be made which protects farm land from large scale conversion for non-agricultural purpose, with clear regulation and public participation. Priority should be given to food security and livelihood security, focusing not only on irrigated multiple-crop land but also single-crop land in rainfed areas which form 60% of cultivated area. Gram Sabha and Panchayat should have control over the utilization of public lands which serve common purpose such as grazing, with clear provisions to ensure access and use by the most needy communities such as Dalits and tribals. In some cities, agricultural and livestock rearing has been banned, facilitating easy conversion of land use, this needs to be changed.

No common land including wasteland be diverted for industrial purposes without the consent of the

Gram and Basti Sabha. Most often these are being encroached upon by the powerful caste and capital interests and State has turned blind eye to them, often acting only against the poor, dalits and adivasis.

Clear provisions should be made for reclamation of wasteland into agricultural land, protection of green cover to prevent soil erosion, degradation and groundwater depletion, and improving agricultural land to make it more suitable for effective production. Coastal land and fragile areas such as Western Ghats should be protected applying the environmental laws and regulations.

Urban land-use should be planned with priority to housing amenities and livelihood for the poor with in-situ housing projects for poor localities. There should be no cut-off date for Right to Shelter, whereas appropriate cut-off dates can be designated for government allotted subsidized housing including middle class. Urban Land Ceiling Acts should be revived. Land-use planning should be participatory with public hearings in communities above 3000 families.

In the name of Smart Cities, poor and working class is being evicted from the cities and that needs to be stopped. The whole concept of smart cities like its predecessor JNURM is anti poor and pro-corporate. Any planning has to be done keeping in mind the needs of the most marginalised and working classes in the cities.

4. Changes to Environment Laws not acceptable : Based on the recommendations of the T S R Subramanian Committee, environment laws are also being changed to suit the demands of

corporate sector and take away the rights of the people and local self government institutions. Slums are being forcibly cleared and even coastal land is being encroached upon for ports, big infra projects, PCPIR and so on trampling upon the rights of the traditional fishworkers. All this would lead to massive displacement and permanent denial of land rights of the landless. Lakhs of acres of land acquired in the name of industrialisation, SEZs etc is remaining unutilised.

5. Ban illegal mining, ensure inter generational parity in resource utilisation, and implement SC guidelines in Goa Foundation case: The scourge of illegal mining is haunting the hinterland as well as the river beds and sea coasts, polluting water sources, running streams, and causing massive damage to ecology and economy both. The rampant mining and extractives based economic growth model is leading to destruction of the nature and mother earth and contributing to the large scale climate change. Hence, the need for no mining in 'No-Go' areas (and build upon this criteria), dense forests and climate sensitive forests areas.

6. Address agrarian crisis, implement SC judgement on tackling draught, ensure income security for every agricultural household, and establish a permanent Farmers' Income Commission: Over 3.2 lakh farmers have committed suicide since 1995 at the rate of one farmer committing suicide every half an hour according to conservative estimates put forward by the National Crime Records Bureau. In reality the human tragedy is of a magnitude unheard of in the entire history of humanity. The Government is cutting down public

investment for agriculture and rural development, rural credit is increasingly inaccessible to poor and marginal farmers, indebtedness and landlessness is rising, allocation for MGNREGA is being drastically cut, farmers are not getting remunerative prices for their products despite ever increasing costs of production. Sugarcane farmers are to get thousands of crores of arrears from the corporate Sugar lobby. Trade liberalisation and indiscriminate entry into Free Trade Agreements is leading to dumping of cheap agricultural products including dairy products thereby pushing our farmers into distress. Procurement facilities are being curtailed, Extension services systematically dismantled and farmers are getting prices far below the actual cost of production.

7. MSPs should be declared at 50% above cost of cultivation. Ensure that farmers get MSP in all 25 crops through procurement, market intervention and price guarantee: The BJP Government has gone back on its election promise of providing Minimum Support prices according to Swaminathan Commission Recommendation of C2+50% i.e at least 50 percent above Cost of Production and had filed an affidavit to that effect in Supreme Court. It has also banned procurement from States which provide bonus over and above the MSP. The Government is kowtowing to diktats of the USA, EU and other countries in the WTO and cutting down food and agricultural subsidies. The entire agricultural policy is to aid profiteering by seed monopolies and agribusinesses at the expense of the people. The Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan stands opposed to all such policies and will strive for alternative policies that will ensure food and livelihood security to all as well as

decent standard of living including housing, health and education. Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan stands resolutely against unequal Free Trade Agreements, WTO diktats, trade liberalisation and against any such monopolistic deals with other countries.

8. Implement Land Reforms – Give land to landless agricultural workers not corporates: There should be renewed focus on land reforms to give ownership of land to deprived sections, especially Dalits, adivasis, women, project-displaced families, and so on. Ceiling limits should be properly enforced stopping the exemptions and loopholes allowing thousands of acres to be taken over by a few individuals and corporates, and making surplus land available for distribution.

Ensure Food Sovereignty and food security and sort out the massive corruption within the food distribution system: Food security doesn't mean giving subsidised food alone but empowering communities to produce their own food and securing land rights which will make them self reliant. In that regard it is also important that farmers have complete control over the seeds and the systems of production and not be made slaves to the big multinationals claiming their IPRs. No company should be allowed exclusive intellectual property rights over seed in any crop.

However, there is also the need for effective implementation of the National Food Security Act, given many state governments have failed to do so. In the name of rooting out corruption linking of ration delivery with the Aadhar and other electronic identification programmes is resulting

in leaving out a big chunk of population, which is often due to systems inefficiency and denies a large number of poor and vulnerable population access to their entitlements.

9. Rights of tenant farmers, sharecroppers and women farmers should be upheld. The real cultivators should get full recognition and benefit of all support systems: Tenant farmers, sharecroppers and women farmers are the worst-affected in the agrarian distress in many parts of the country, because they get left out of all government support systems including low-interest bank loans, disaster compensation, crop insurance, subsidies, etc. They are the real cultivators not only working hard but also taking the risks of production – tenant farmers and sharecroppers cultivate more than 30% of the area, and women perform 70% of tasks in agriculture. Their rights should be upheld. There should be a comprehensive system of recording and recognizing the real cultivators including tenant farmers, sharecroppers and women farmers, so that they get the benefit of all government support systems and eligibility for all provisions in case of land acquisition. The Model Tenancy Act by Niti Ayog must be withdrawn.

10. Rights of the agrarian workers, unorganised sector workers to be protected and minimum wages and social security measures implemented: Today 93% of the labour force is in the unorganised sector and a majority of them is dependent on agriculture and other related activities. This section is under tremendous attack due to farm crisis and decreasing support from the government. We demand that the allocation to the MGNREGA be increased to ensure 300 days

work and 300 Rs wages daily. In addition, to deal with the farm labour crisis due to high migration recognise agriculture, as a work should be brought within the MGNREGA, that way the workers and farmers both would benefit. In addition, a number of suggestions and guidelines have been issued by the Supreme Court of India to effectively deal with the draught situation in the country. Unfortunately, the implementation by this by the Union and State governments has been extremely poor and tardy.

With the growing precariousness and distress time has come that the Minimum Wages Act be mandatorily applicable to the agricultural labourers as well. In addition, on lines of the Social Security Act for the construction workers should also be implemented for the agrarian workers.

11. Comprehensive support for shift from high-input chemical agriculture to low-external-input ecologically sustainable agriculture: One of the biggest causes of the crisis is the model of high-input chemical agriculture promoted in the past few decades – leading to indebtedness, damage to soil fertility, declining productivity, depletion of water, and poisoning of food and water system. While accepting the importance of increasing production and productivity, the emphasis should be on *sustainable* productivity. The policies and support systems should be fully reoriented to ensure a time-bound shift to low-input ecologically sustainable agriculture, using many viable models demonstrated and established across India in the past two decades.

12. Reverse the injustice done to rainfed agriculture :

Though 60% of Indian agriculture is rainfed, it is highly neglected compared to irrigated agriculture; consequently much of the distress and farmer suicides is in rainfed areas. We demand a comprehensive mission to revive rainfed agriculture by promoting dryland crops, animal husbandry and fodder, revival of minor irrigation, and targeted support. Providing protective irrigation to the first crop in rainfed areas should be the first priority rather than irrigation for second and third crops.

13. No privatization of water resources and services; priority to drinking, domestic use and agriculture: Water should be respected as a natural resource essential to human life and food production, and attempts to privatize water bodies and services, and give control to corporates should be completely stopped. Water for drinking, domestic use and agriculture should receive priority over other uses, with further prioritization for food crops and one-crop protection in dry regions. Landless families should also be given rights over water to ensure more equitable use and to redress the inequity in land ownership.

14. Resist attempts to dilute labour laws and express solidarity and active support to workers' strike of 2nd September 2016: Workers rights are being curtailed and the Narendra Modi led BJP Government has been tampering with labour laws in the name of “ease of Doing Business”. Against such attacks an unprecedented Strike was witnessed on 2nd September, 2015 in which the Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan extended solidarity. The Central Trade Unions also took up some of our demands and spoke

against the Land Acquisition Ordinance. We extended solidarity to the united working class Strike called on 2nd September, 2016 and will work actively to make it a success.

15. Resistance to divisive and fascist politics: Faced with growing protests and unprecedented unity of people against the policies of the BJP Government at the Centre and States the BJP-RSS and their affiliates are resorting to divisive politics and deliberate communalisation. Rationalists and cultural personalities are being physically attacked and killed, dissent is brutally being suppressed. In the name of protection of the cow, systematic attacks are being launched on Minorities and Dalits. Deliberate communal and casteist violence is being resorted to in different parts of the country. A spontaneous response against such efforts is developing. Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan will resist such divisive efforts and work for building communal harmony and strengthen the unity of toiling masses.

16. Curb attack on the autonomous functioning of the universities, corporatisation of education, and suppressing of dissent within the universities and enact Rohith Act: University campuses across the country are in turmoil and there has been a growing attack on the students and attempts are being made to suppress any dissent, free thinking and free flow of exchange of ideas. The corporate agenda of the education and their pandering to the market needs is solely driving the education policy today leading to complete erosion of the values and democratic principles necessary for functioning of a vibrant democracy.

Access to education by all remains a cause of concern. The demand for a common school system has been there for long and is responsible for the continued inequality and the perpetuation of the discrimination within the universities. SC/ST communities face discrimination at every level in the education system from admission, recruitments, promotions or opportunities for growth. The fact

that a brilliant student like Rohith Vemula had to commit suicide due to continued harassment and caste based discrimination indicates towards systemic crisis within the education system today. The demand for Rohith Act by the student community needs support from all the organisations and Bhumi Adhikar Andolan express its solidarity with the movement and demand.

(To be concluded)

(Continued from Page 10)

- and Central authorities must be removed from AFSPA and criminal procedure code to ensure that trials are independent and fair in civilian courts. In the meanwhile, the families and applicants seeking sanction to prosecute must be informed about the status of their application.
- Make information regarding the proceedings and verdicts conducted in court martial public by making it more accessible through RTI/online.
- Repeal AFSPA in order to ensure compliance with UN Principles for the Prevention of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions and other instruments India is signatory to.
- Definitions of torture and disappearance in Indian law should be consistent with the ones mentioned in UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
- Become party to international instruments/ conventions against torture and enforced disappearances. More importantly, national laws should be framed accordingly and implemented effectively.
- Right to truth will be upheld by keeping families informed about the procedures and status of applications even when the inquiry is led by the National Human Rights Commission.
- Review the provisions of compensation *ex gratia* to the families of victims where there is no impossible conditionality and threats or intimidation from the authorities. Compensation should be adequate and ensured especially to survivors of sexual violence.

On a concluding note, one can only hope that the State will take notice of this Report and implement its recommendations in the light of the recent unrest and protest happening in Kashmir which reflects the disaffection of the people stemming from years of violations of their human rights.

–Secular Perspective



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Kuldip Nayar

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Jammu and Kashmir**
Pushkar Raj

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the Contractor Raj**
K. S. Chalam

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**A Living Experiment
in Communal Harmony**

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A Pre-Requisite for any Dialogue in Kashmir

Sandeep Pandey

While the Indian security forces were busy tackling the internal protests in Jammu & Kashmir in which over 80 civilians have been killed since 9 July, 2016, the most recent victim being a 11 years old Nasir Shafiq Qazi who died of pellet injuries, a surprise militant attack has taken place from across the border killing 17 Indian soldiers in the biggest such incident so far in the history. Clearly, things are going out of the hands of government at the centre whose problem is that after the making of nuclear weapons by both India and Pakistan, it cannot engage in a full-fledged war with Pakistan, howsoever provocative the Pakistani infringement might be.

India is also losing international support by recently denying access to United Nations Human Rights Council in J&K. The question that will be asked is if the Indian claim about Pakistan instigating violence in Kashmir is true then why doesn't Indian government let the UNHRC unravel this truth by conducting an enquiry there? The world will not miss the contradiction that a democratic India is preventing UNHRC from visiting J&K

whereas a not-so-democratic Pakistan is letting it have access to Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. What is India afraid of? Is the difference between Indian and Pakistani Kashmirs the use of pellet guns by Indian forces against the recent round of protests by people? India will probably face more flak for preventing the visit of UN team rather than the human rights violations that its security forces are responsible for.

India's problem is compounded because of its inability to conclusively prove that the terrorist attacks from the across the border, whether it was Mumbai in 2008, Pathankot in 2016 and now Uri are actually sponsored by Pakistan because Pakistan denies its role in any of these. On the contrary it challenges India to provide evidence of its involvement. On the other hand the human rights violations in Kashmir, especially because of the unrestrained powers the army enjoys under Armed Forces Special Powers Act, are something that cannot be hidden.

India has recently queered the pitch in its relationship with Pakistan

when Narendra Modi talked about insurgency in Balochistan, Gilgit, Baltistan and PoK during his Independence Day speech. Even though Pakistan blames it for doing this in order to divert attention from human rights violations in Indian Kashmir, the reality is that suffering of people in J&K doesn't reduce by India raising the stakes in such a manner. During the regime of previous central governments at least a semblance of democracy was observed in J&K but the present regime in its over-enthusiasm of dealing with the problem in Kashmir with a tough hand, has completely overrun the state government. It wants to directly control things in Kashmir. It might as well impose Governor's rule there. But its approach is clearly failing. It is inviting more violence from inside the Kashmiri society as well as from across the border. Democracy is a direct victim of violence. People of Kashmir are the ultimate sufferers in this.

In response to the Pakistani Prime Minister having decided to send 22 parliamentarians as representatives to as many capitals of the world to intimate the world leaders about situation of Kashmir and seek their support in the United Nations, the Indian government has decided to send Rajnath Singh to US and Russia in a counter move.

The India-Pakistan relations have been marked by tit-for-tat policy. Hence it doesn't come as a surprise that India is following the Pakistani approach to mobilize world opinion.

But if India is genuinely concerned about Kashmir and the Kashmiris then it would have been better for it to first win over the

Kashmiri people before trying to seek support from outside. If India were confident that the Kashmiri people were with it then it would not have to go around the world to seek support.

The fact is that in spite of offering all kinds of package to J&K and even to potential immigrants from Pakistan occupied Kashmir and the Home Minister going to Srinagar for dialogue the people of Kashmir are not happy with the Indian government. They don't feel that the Indian government is showing sensitivity towards them. For example, while continuing to urge people to give up violence, there was no let down in violence, what to talk of withdrawing of the by now infamous pellet guns, by the security forces before the Home Minister went for dialogue. Does the government actually think that it can continue to use pellet guns on one hand and expect people to show up for dialogue on the other? Any dialogue is a war like situation is preceded by cease fire.

A lot of right wing people are alarmed at the possibility of Kashmir becoming independent of India. For them it is a prestige issue. They ask, 'Can we just let Kashmir go like that?' It is a matter which can be decided by Kashmiris alone. People from outside Kashmir, whether in India or Pakistan have no territorial rights over Kashmir. This is a feudal mentality often masqueraded as nationalism.

We must introspect. If the government of India has to keep Kashmir under military rule for so long, it is not a normal situation. Same is true about some areas of Northeast where Iron Sharmila has just ended her decade and a half

long fast to demand repeal of AFSPA. The government must withdraw AFSPA first and later the Army itself if it is serious about normalcy returning to Kashmir. Army's role must be limited to border areas. It is only then that we can think of any dialogue.

Only high flown statements like 'fully engaged in normalizing the situation as soon as possible' or that 'Indian democracy has all that it requires to address legitimate grievances,' will not suffice. This withdrawal of AFSPA and army must be discussed with people of Kashmir as a confidence building measure. It would be better if the government were to invest time and energy in this direction. No solution to the problem of Kashmir is conceivable without first restoring conditions of democracy and respect for human rights.

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Between the Lines**Uri is Only a Symptom****Kuldip Nayar**

Baluchistan in Pakistan is like our Kashmir, an integral part but still rebellious after almost 70 years of Maharaja Hari Singh's accession to India. However, in India's case first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru gave an undertaking to hold a plebiscite as soon as things had settled in the valley. He could not fulfill the promise.

Nehru found out that things will be reduced to a slogan, Gita versus Koran, and people would be so driven by religious sentiments that they would not be exercising their franchise. When the acclaimed leader Sheikh Abdullah joined the Union, he conceded the point that a popular verdict had been obtained and it amounted to a plebiscite and, with it, the accession was complete.

What happened in Uri is a symptom, not the disease. The disease is that the youth which is now leading a movement want a country of their own. In the same way, Baluchistan wants to secede from Pakistan and have an independent country. That, if granted, would be another Islamic country on our border.

I told the Kashmiri students during my recent visit to Srinagar at their invitation that the Lok Sabha would be in no mood to endorse anything like what they wished. They said it was "your problem how you bring about the change." The demand by the youth for an independent sovereign country is in contrast to what leaders like Yasin Malik and

Shabbir Shah had wanted some years ago. It is another matter that Yasin has now joined the chorus.

Pakistan has now become relevant for the people in the valley because they, too, have changed their demand from autonomy to an Islamic independent country. The attack on the Indian soldiers on the border is the culmination of their anger. Pakistan, too, has found the climate somewhat suited to it and has increased the number of infiltrators into the valley.

But this is not the first time that Pakistan has sent infiltrators into India. Nor will it be the last occasion. There have been several such instances, including the attacks on Indian Parliament, Mumbai and Pathankot. After every such incident, a war-like cry was heard in the rest of the country to retaliate. So immense was the pressure this time on the government that it had to assure the public that "retaliation would take place at a place and time of our liking."

But people want action on the ground even at the expense of a war. I recall what happened soon after the attacks on Parliament, Mumbai or Pathankot. Our reaction then was in the shape of stationing troops on the borders for almost one year or beyond. This time, the anger is deeper and wider. Yet the government is showing restraint, though Prime Minister Narendra Modi has assured that the perpetrators would not go unpunished.

However, we also know the limit to which the elected rulers can go in the two countries since both possess nuclear weapons. But what I fail to understand is why Islamabad had been reluctant to take action against terrorists who have been identified living in Pakistan. Whatever it has done so far against the terrorists, it is not on India's request but on Washington's word.

In India, except for a few warmongers, there is a realization that there is no option to peace. It is also time for the politicians of the two countries to introspect their conduct. Even if they do not talk about war, their speeches and the body language is far from friendly. They appear to run with the hare and hunt with the hound. Why are they stoking the fires of hatred when people on both sides are surcharged?

France and Germany had fought for more than hundred years. Today they are the best of friends. Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah gave me this example when I asked him before partition that Hindus and Muslims would jump at each other's throat once the British had left. He said we would be the best of friends. I have no doubt that one day this would come about. Former Prime Ministers Atal Behari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh have said many a time that the destiny has thrown India and Pakistan together and they cannot but be good neighbours.

(Continued on Page 10)

A Reality Check on Jammu and Kashmir

Pushkar Raj

Jammu and Kashmir is again in news for violence and counter violence. Again, several solutions are proposed. Any such exercise, however, need to be informed of a reality check if peace is to return in the state in a foreseeable future.

The present unrest began after killing of Burhan Wani, a local commander of Hizbul Mujahidin, an organization that vows to liberate Kashmir by unleashing suicide bombers in Kashmir (*Times of India*, 4 September 2016). The unrest is restricted to the Kashmir valley comprising 7.1 percent of land and 54.9 percent of population of the state numbering 6.8 million (Census of India, 2011). In a fresh round of bloodshed over seventy people have died and thousands are injured.

To defuse the situation, one of the solutions being offered is merger with Pakistan and other 'freedom' from India. The third solution - the status quo, is supported by the major political parties, though with differing caveats.

Merger with Pakistan

The merger with Pakistan is incongruous for a simple reason that Kashmiris will be an additional minority group in Pakistan that has a disturbing record towards its ethnic and sectarian minorities including Mohajir, Baloch, Pashtun, Ahmadis and Hazaras. Many of these people are forced to seek refuge in other countries. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees' latest figures, Pakistanis are the sixth largest group seeking

asylum in Europe following Syrians, Afghans and Iraqis. Australian immigration report 2013-2014 also reveals that largest number of people who sought humanitarian visa on arrival came from Pakistan (Elibritt Karlsen: 2014, Parliament of Australia).

Pakistan's human rights record on Baluchistan has also been disconcerting. Since the last decade about 18,000 people have allegedly involuntarily disappeared in the province. According to the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons, 157 mutilated bodies were found and 463 people disappeared in the state in 2015. (*Balochwana News*, 3 January 2016). The prime suspects in these incidents are the security forces.

Pakistan-administered Kashmir is no better. Of \$38 bn proposed investment in energy sector under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Gilgit-Baltistan has not received any allocation as against other provinces (*The Dawn*, 12 May 2016). On the contrary, planning minister of Pakistan warned the protesting farmers of the region that the terrorism act would be invoked against them if they obstructed the project (*Times of India*, 18 August 16).

Freedom

The option of freedom for J&K is equally fraught with problems. If freedom is a demand for all the five regions of the state, then it seems a non-starter given the Indian and Pakistan position on it; and if it relates

only to the Indian part then without taking into consideration the views of the people of Jammu and Ladakh region it is unlikely to move any farther.

The demand of freedom for only the valley of Kashmir is fraught with a moral dilemma in the light of about a half a million Kashmiri pundits' virtual exile from the region. Besides, freedom for Kashmir will have a ripple effect in Muslim majority districts of Poonch and Rajouri and Kishtwar and Doda, separated by Hindu majority districts of Jammu and Udhampur, which will further add to the instability in the region.

Another difficulty to the freedom for Kashmir is use of violence and terrorism as a method to achieve it. Contemporary history shows that a violent movement does not produce a sustainable democratic state as is seen in many African countries which were inspired by various violence based ideologies.

And finally, there are reports that mosques are used for mobilization of people and ISIS flags are waved in rallies in Kashmir. (*Indian Express*, August 21, 2015). Successful culmination of such a movement can only lead to a theocratic state that would be against the spirit of 'kashmiriyat', which has already suffered considerable erosion in the valley.

Way Forward

The central government owes it

(Continued on Page 6)

Religious Bigotry and Corruption in the Contractor Raj

K. S. Chalam

For about three decades, we have been reading and listening to catchwords like License-Permit raj, rent seeking public servants, inefficient public sector units and unworkable socialist policies were operating in India. Strangely, there are no such debates or discourses now in the public realm, though the country is slipped into the same drift under a corporate-contractor-bureaucrat raj. Is the situation different from what some experts envisioned?

The socialist thinkers, both Marxist and no-Marxist groups, considered religion, faith, beliefs and the institutions built on them in traditional societies, are largely grounded on economic base. The metaphor base and super structure was eminently fit in to the first generation of upper caste English educated leftists to feel a sigh of relief not to be apologetic for ignoring the Indian realities converging only with the western thought. (M N Roy and Lohia were exceptions, but they succumbed to mainstream thinking and Ambedkar was an untouchable). Some of them have even ignored the traditional Indian materialistic traditions of Lokayata and Buddhism in their anxiety or scheme of finding solutions to inequalities. The above theory or analytic is broadly based on the experiences of the West, though Joti Rao Phuley a contemporary of Marx was deeply involved in exposing the bigotry of Hinduism or Brahminical conspiracy against the illiterate farmers in India during the same period. The parallel between Marx and Phuley clearly

indicate that there are fundamental differences between the experiences of European nations which are by and large nation states and India which is a multicultural, multiethnic (settlers) complex society regulated by a wily fulltime occupational group for ages. It seems that there is no other country or faith in the World where God's marriage and nuptials are ceremoniously celebrated and the devotees are made to listen to with apt attention (without knowing the meaning) the vulgar act narrated in the devotional songs as if the devotees get instant *mukti*. We are not sarcastic here as we respect the sentiments of believers if they are told or know the meaning of the recitations and crave for *mukti* in the real sense of the term. (As I explained in one of my articles earlier, other faiths in India are not immune to this bigotry. All of them have accumulated huge properties.) The devotees are not ordinary people, most of them are scientists, judges, Harvard returned scholars claiming to be capable to run the economy as a solon. If we go through the writings of Phuley, Periyar, Ambedkar and others, we realise how they perceived the drift. But, Marxists like Kosambi (taken just for example) down to some of the present day radicals never considered Hinduism and the Bhats, to be precarious and cunning to survive attempts to reduce their importance, and could compromise with forces that are publicly declared as adversaries, like the beef eating Americans. This is really baffling for those of us who are followers of materialistic interpretation of history

and the mode of production approach in arriving at successive stages of socioeconomic formations in India. How it is that capitalism and religious fundamentalism are hands in glove? We may get some answers if we sincerely reflect on the writings of Phuley, Sankalia, Bhandarkar and other Pune based intellectuals and not necessarily Kosambi who ignored them (and others who sincerely followed him or made to follow).

Ever since the NDA government or the so-called parivar or the extended family rule came to power with absolute numbers in 2014, tricks are played to show that they are above corruption. The media houses mostly of the corporate bodies or the ones that depend upon their ads keep on telling us that there is no corruption in the Modi government and everything is transparent. Yes, it is transparent for the select few business houses and their nominees in the bureaucracy who prepare documents of policy for the government on the basis of the dictates of the corporates to whom they owe their allegiance. We have been listening to the kind of skirmishes between chief minister of Delhi Mr Kejriwal and the alleged Ambani nominee as Lt Governor of Delhi Mr Jung. Interestingly there is absolute agreement between the previous government and the NDA in matters of economic policy and the issues that follow. In fact the NDA is sincerely implementing what the UPA had been doing for decades with every important Congress man got involved in some scam. The

difference is: Modi and his masters have selected some contractors and corporates only as their nominees to carry the business, while the Congress used to talk about secularism and go to Ayodhya up to Hanuman feet. Happily the BJP / RSS direct its groups to indulge in all kinds of petty mafia activities of lynching dalits, Muslims and others to divert the attention of the common man about the economic plunder. The voices of Swadeshi Jagaran Manch are very feeble. One can notice that there will be an orchestrated social tension created by the cohorts of parivar whenever a serious contract of transferring huge public resources is involved. The nexus is never analysed and understood by our public intellectuals.

People in the South allege that whenever Modi or Naidu of Andhra Pradesh go out on foreign tour, they take an entourage of corporates and the bureaucratic clique along with them to get agreements signed not for the country or people but for the chosen corporates. Once the papers are ready, a signal goes to the headquarters to create issues of diversion in the form of social tension or display huge festival or a yagna to divert the attention of the gullible people and in the melee displayed by the media, the agreements would be signed. Now, the budget is going to be introduced along with the Railways in February hinting that the government departments are ready for transfer to private companies. They brought in, it seems, some Business economists who were advisers to corporate entities to do the exercise of privatisation and kept them in the Yojana Bhavan and called it NITI Ayog. Their job, it is reported by the workers' unions, is to identify the units, resources that can be given

to the corporates. It is alleged by the unions that around 20 public sector units are going to be handed over to private corporates. The NITI experts do the exercise with the help of their paid experts or intellectuals. One important example is that of one of their members has produced a study report as to how to privatise Railways and submitted it to PMO and now the time has come to operationalize it through the budget?

It is under this background, several incidents are happening in the name of agreements and policy changes involving not billions but trillions of rupees worth of public sector resources. Now Adani is considered to be the most efficient person than hundreds of trained executives in making Coal and Oil sectors productive. Therefore, it is reported (*Times of India*, 21 September) that Indian Oil Corporation and GAIL is going to invest in Adani's Dhrma project in Orissa worth Rs 5000 crores. If Adani had any problem with capital adequacy or incurring losses in his ventures, public sector units are there to come to his rescue and by intelligently showing his prowess both in financial and government loyalty to him, he would expand his empire. In all the tours of Modi, it is alleged, the Gujarati Banias are following (whispers of opponents in the corridors of power). Another important business deal initiated by the Steel ministry is that of Laxmi Mittal of UK who is in trouble will be given the responsibility of promoting SAIL through merger or joint ventures.

It is strange that no one is raising the issue of corruption that involved direct cabinet Ministers in the case of Orissa, Mr Pradhan of Petroleum Ministry and Mr Singh, Minister of

Steel in the above two issues. It is without shame that the parivar functionaries talk about corruption of others while their own members are deeply involved in the above economic operations that involve trillions of rupees. It would be known later that these mergers or investments had been under the direct control of the corporates transferring public properties and resources like BALCO, VSNL, 2G, and CIL under UPA. How is it that it is not named as corruption even if the news is moderated by the media?

The kind of transfers and handovers of government companies and peoples resources to individuals is much deeper now than before. The corrupt labelled Congress is silent on the issues as it was they who brought all this muck and may be some of their business cohorts or contractors are behind some of these operations with tacit understanding with NDA, if not shifted to the party yet. One needs to expose this cheating in day light by the NDA government. How is it that one individual like Adani or Ambani is more intelligent than the whole system of government? It is simple sham? Let the intellectuals expose the nexus for a debate!

(Continued from Page 4)

to the constitution of India to restore civil liberties by withdrawing the laws like AFSPA from civilian areas, ensure accountability for human rights violations, secure transparent governance, launch de-radicalisation programs and identify a genuine leadership in the valley for a dialogue. Nationally, toning down the saffron nationalism might greatly assist. It is the only way forward for a humane and democratic Kashmir.

raajpushkar@gmail.com
 –Kashmir Times

March of the Marathas

Bhalchandra Mungekar

The Devendra Fadnavis government in Maharashtra has been taken aback by lakhs of people belonging to the Maratha community taking to the streets, unprecedented in the socio-political history of the state since it was formed in 1960. This has happened after the murder of a Maratha girl in Kopardi village of Ahmadnagar district on July 13. More than 150 incidents of atrocities were committed against Dalits, some brutal murders, in Ahmadnagar district in the last four-five years. Yet, not a word of protest was uttered by any section of society in the state, let alone the Maratha community, other than the Dalits. This once again underlines that community sensitivity or conscience even in the crime of rape is determined by one's caste. This time, four Dalit youths have been accused of the crime.

I visited the village on July 26 and met the girl's parents, both poor brick-workers. With no words of consolation, I met some villagers. It was gratifying that despite being about 2,000 in number, the Maratha community collectively decided on a policy of restraint towards the Dalits, numbering about 150 to 200, as they were not collectively responsible for the crime. This is contrary to what normally happens in the northern parts of the country. It was equally gratifying that the entire Dalit community demanded, I was told by the chief of the Dispute-Free Village Community, that the guilty must be hanged.

Now, nearly a month after the gruesome incident, the Maratha community has started the protest marches, mobilising lakhs of people, including doctors, engineers, lawyers,

professors, teachers, university and college students and even housewives, the last being unconventional so far as the community is concerned. Second, the participants in the protest marches belong to all political parties — Congress, NCP, BJP and Shiv Sena — and include their MLAs, MLCs and MPs, to show solidarity with the community and ensure that its political fortunes are not harmed. Third, the OBCs in the state are not allowed to join these protests, the reason being that they are the beneficiaries of reservations.

Fourth, these protest marches were so far organised mainly in Marathwada and Western Maharashtra, but are now spreading to the Vidarbha and Konkan regions. It is understood that about 25 lakh of these protesters from across the state will be marching to Mumbai in October.

The community has three main demands: Punishing the guilty of Kopardi, scrapping the SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 (POA), and getting reservations to the community in education and public employment. Let me deal with each of these demands.

First, it is not only the demand of the Maratha community, but of all sections in Maharashtra, including the Dalits, that the guilty be punished. The state government must hasten the process. Second, as regards reservations, Article 340 of the Constitution empowers the president to constitute a commission to look into the difficulties of the "socially and educationally backward classes" (SEBCs) in the country, and on the

basis of the commission's recommendations, the government may suggest suitable measures for their advancement. This was the case of the Mandal Commission that has provided 11 criteria, that is, four each that are social and economic in nature and three educational. If the Maratha community wants reservations as the SEBs, commonly known as the OBCs, they should be ready to be seen to be socially on par with the OBCs, who are lower in the social hierarchy. Further, they need to qualify the majority of the criteria, as prescribed by the Mandal Commission. If not, the government needs to find some appropriate alternative method within the framework of the constitution, because this demand of the Maratha community has been pending for the last 20 years or so. Again, the present system vis à vis the SCs, STs and OBCs must remain unaffected. The Fadnavis government should take the call at the earliest.

Third, the demand for scrapping the POA is totally unjustifiable. The POA was passed by the Parliament in 1989 and extends to the whole country, except Jammu & Kashmir. It is the prerogative of the Parliament alone to amend it, if necessary. Thus, it was amended in 2015 to make it more effective. But no state has been implementing it with a sense of commitment and honesty, mainly for political considerations. Maharashtra is no exception — out of a total 7,345 cases of atrocities brought for trial in the state in 2014, only 59 persons were convicted, making the conviction rate 0.8 per cent of the cases. Of 36 districts in the state, only three have special courts, the least in the country. The bogey of misuse of the POA is

unfounded. Yet, in cases where this happens, it is the state government's responsibility to punish the offenders instead of making it an argument against the law itself.

The true remedy is the creation of an atrocity-free society where the POA is rendered irrelevant. But all said and done, I would suggest, the Dalits in Maharashtra must resist being provoked for many reasons. In the end, I must come to the real genesis of the story that is forging unity among the Maratha community in the state.

The Kopardi incident is just the immediate cause. Though the Maratha community has been ruling the state since its inception in 1960, irrespective of the ruling party or parties and irrespective of who was the state's chief minister, the ordinary, poor and resourceless of the same community could not avail themselves of any special benefits over these years. Their hardships were the same as those of the other poor except their so-called higher social status (next only to Brahmins). They remained away from the real power centres comprising the cooperative sugar factories, thread mills, banks, trade and commerce, construction industry and private educational institutions controlled by their elite fraternity. They, and particularly the educated among them, are also victims of the growing unemployment, and have been suffering from the unaffordable fees charged for professional courses, thanks to the uncontrolled privatisation, nay, commercialisation of education. Hence the demand for reservation.

The demand has been pending for nearly 25 years. The state government must act sooner rather than later in the interest of the socio-political stability in the state.

—*The Indian Express*

A Living Experiment in Communal Harmony

Tahmina Lashkar
Sandeep Pandey

Living amidst hundred percent Muslim population is Dr. Kush Kumar Singh. Dr. Singh is a vegetarian and a very religious person. Is it not an interesting combine? In an age when people refuse to rent out houses to someone from a different religious belief than their own this creates curiosity. In our society many baseless rumors do rounds among Hindus and Muslims which affect the relations among a larger part of the population. In such circumstances Dr. Singh's decision to reside amidst Muslims gives rise to many questions and answers them as well. Dr. Singh stays in Gaffar Manzil with Faisal Khan in Delhi's Jamia Nagar area. Dr. Singh met Faisal Khan in Apollo Hospital. He was on his duty and Faisal Khan was on his social duty. Faisal has redefined social work. It was not a surprising thing that a non-Muslim has a negative image of Muslims in general. Dr. Singh also had such a mentality. Then he chatted with Faisal Khan and got to know about his organization, Khudai Khidmatgar. These conversations continued for a long time. Dr. Singh spoke on many failings of the Muslim community openly with Faisal Khan. Dr. Singh used to think that Muslims are fundamentalists in matters of religion and they do not listen to any other point of view. He thought the community never opens up to other communities. But as he spent more time conversing with Faisal Khan his original thoughts started to get altered. But this change of attitude was only limited to Faisal Khan, he was yet to have a favourable view

of the community. Faisal Khan too was more interested to speak about social issues than religious ones. Dr. Singh then thought that if he were to probe his thoughts and notions he needed to live amongst the community. Dr. Singh decided to live with Faisal Khan in the Khudai Khidmatgar office itself which doubles up as Faisal's home. Given the present conditions, to decide to live in a locality having dense Muslim population was nothing short of a revolution. He took that chance however. He then started living with Faisal Khan. This was quite challenging for him but still he considered it like a spiritual mission and went to Jamia Nagar for this social experiment. May be many had then questioned Dr. Singh on his decision, yet it did not deter him from making an effort in understanding religion, dedication, love and sacrifice. As on today he already has lived for about three years here. All kinds of preconceived notions that he had have cleared in this period. His peaceful and dedicated presence also helped Muslims to dispense some of their doubts. A lot of Muslim friends who came to Faisal Khan would see and meet Dr. Singh, this helped in the community realizing its own shortfalls and removing their doubts about non-Muslims. Dr. Singh is an educated man who lived his life in such an exemplary way that he became an ideal for many. We are speaking of this precious friendship between a Hindu and a Muslim because it would freshen up the stale air of communalism that is

(Continued on Page 9)

Reminiscences of Frontier Gandhi and his Khudai Khidmatgars

Chandra Bhal Tripathi

The inspiring narrative by Dr. Sandeep Pandey and Tahmina Lashkar on a unique legacy of Khudai Khidmatgars observed in Jamia Nagar, New Delhi, has prompted me to record my reminiscences of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan aka Frontier Gandhi and Badshah Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars. Like millions of Indians I am an admirer of Frontier Gandhi who was a unique figure during the entire freedom struggle. I had the privilege of having his darshan at Allahabad Jn. station in 1946 when he was accompanying Bapu either to Bihar or Noakhali. Major Gen. Shah Nawaz of INA fame was also accompanying the two Gandhis. The second time I saw him was at the Meerut Congress on 23 November 1946. The other members of the Congress Working Committee were staying in well furnished tents near the venue of the session in Pyare Lal Sharma Nagar, but Badshah Khan stayed in a tent with his Khudai Khidmatgars three miles away where four groups of volunteers were lodged: Congress Sewa Dal, INA, All India Students' Congress leaders and workers and Khudai Khidmatgars. Badshah Khan used to dine with his Khudai Khidmatgars - big sized rotis, dal and vegetables. Frontier Gandhi was an epitome of simple living and high thinking. He normally had only two pairs of Khadi long kurtas and salwars of 'militia' cloth. He used to wash his clothes daily and wear them without ironing. His grandson (regretfully I forget his name), who was the President of the NWFP Students' Congress, was also putting up there and we became friends. The President of the AISC, Ram Sumer Shukla, was staying elsewhere with Poornima Banerji (younger sister of Aruna Asaf Ali) but the members of the Working Committee of the AISC like Raj Narayan Singh, Prabhu Narayan Singh, Dr. Ram Chandra Shukla and other important student leaders like Jang Bahadur Singh (am not sure if Anandeshwar Prasad Singh was there or not) and less important workers like me were staying in those camps. I remember Major Gen. Shah Nawaz and Dr. Ram Chandra Shukla, C-in-C of the AISC Volunteer Corps in their glittering uniforms taking salute at the national flag hoisting ceremony there. I was totally impressed by the personality of Frontier Gandhi who performed the miracle of turning Pathans from dreaded armed men into true believers in non-violence preached by Mahatma Gandhi. This is an incredible event in world history ignored by Western historians. Frontier Gandhi was among the three leaders who had opposed the partition plan at the AICC meeting in Bombay in 1946. He told his colleagues that they were throwing the people of the NWFP into the mouths of wolves. When he visited many important places in India on the occasion of the celebration of Gandhiji's birth anniversary in 1969 he expressed his anguish at the role of many top leaders of the Congress at the time of the Partition. My former colleague, Sri V. Kalyanam, who was steno or secretary to Gandhiji in Noakhali and worked later as Asstt. Commissioner for SC & ST in early 1950s at Madras, met Frontier Gandhi at Madras, he often talked of his memories of Gandhiji and Frontier Gandhi and showed me hundreds of letters/ notes written by Gandhiji on scraps of paper including the reverse of used envelopes. I don't know what happened to that priceless treasure. In December 1946 I also had the privilege of meeting the Presidents and General Secretaries of all the PCCs called by the Congress President Acharya JB Kripalani at a special camp of the top national leaders at Allahabad. They included, among others, Dr. Khan Sahib, Premier of the NWFP and brother of Frontier Gandhi, Abdus Samad Khan, the Balochi Gandhi, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, President of Punjab PCC (who had presided over the historic Jallianwala Bagh meeting in Amritsar), Jairamdas Daulatram and Choithram Gidwani from Sindh, Seth Damodar Swaroop from UP, Saadullah from Assam. etc. Those were intoxicating days of the last days of the freedom struggle. Today we salute the memories of those noble souls who sacrificed their lives in the service of the motherland.

(Continued from Page 8)

suffocating us these days and it will have an impact on our collective conscience as well. We spread evils fast but don't make efforts to spread

the good word. Dr. Singh himself says that people belonging to the majority should live amongst the minorities to understand their

problems, fears and concerns and to accept them as their own. Then only a beautiful India is possible. He also advises the minorities to engage

themselves with the rest of the population and avoid walking the path alone. The minority should also learn to judge a person by his deeds rather than his/her religion. He goes on to add that more minorities should get educated and become open minded so that a beautiful India can be envisioned and realised.

Dr. Kush Singh works in the Metropolis Lab in Mohan Estate. His Lab had a tradition of distributing sweets on Diwali. Realising that 18-20 staff members out of 60-65 were Muslims he got sweets distributed on Eid too this year. For his Muslim colleagues as well as his administration this was a welcome surprise. The Lab administration has now taken the responsibility upon itself to distribute sweets on Eid every year in addition to Diwali.

Dr. Singh is part of the national core team of Khudai Khidmatgar now. He is involved in day-to-day activities of Khudai Khidmatgar. He is also been made a trustee the Khudai Khidmatgar Trust. He believes other organisations like Khudai Khidmatgar should go among people and conduct dialogues and meetings for culultural exchanges between communities without any delay so that misunderstandings between the communities can be removed. He thinks extremism is rapidly spreading among educated youth. He says, 'I am a doctor and I know that when we are among our own community how vicious and vile we get.' Earlier when his friends used to say things against other communities he used to be perplexed as to what extent people can go to hate each other. He used to answer his friend that even if we agree that people in our country are bad it's us only who can take

them towards goodness, it's our duty. He says, 'Religion now a days is in the hands of opportunistic people who use it to serve their own agendas. Religion is meant to make a person a better soul and to elevate humanity to higher pedestal.' He appreciates the fact that Khudai Khidmatgar instead of rejecting religion has presented the human face of religion. He adds that Khudai Khidmatgar highlights messages of harmony on both Prophet Mohammed's birthday as well as Ram Navmi and this is why it is winning hearts and making a secular space among communities. He thinks both Gandhi and Frontier Gandhi also used this strategy for peace and brotherhood during their times. He says, 'The time I spent

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I admired the courage and commitment of people, however small in number, lighting candles at Karachi or taking out a procession at Lahore some years ago in memory of those who had died in the Mumbai attack. This is the time when India needs understanding. This is also the occasion when faith in good relations between India and Pakistan is tested.

But at the same time, Pakistan should understand and appreciate India's anger. Those who attacked Mumbai or Pathankot might be the Al-Qaida and the Taliban who are playing havoc in Pakistan as well. These are the organizations which are helping, training and arming them. Why have such extremists remained beyond the pale of law? Even when some of them were "detained" after the attack on India's Parliament, they were practically free to preach and spread poison. India suspects that

with Khudai Khidmatgar was a practical experiment which has removed many misconceptions that I had earlier. We all should live together in harmony and give time to understand each other with love and sacrifice. Then only a stronger, beautiful and development oriented India would emerge which was dreamt of by our forefathers. May our children play and rejoice in this beautiful and smiling India for which we are putting in our efforts.' He narrates that whenever he mentions to his office colleagues that he lives in Jamia Nagar they stare at him for a while in disbelief and this surprise sometimes leads to meaningful conversations. Dr. Singh is a mirror to the society, a ray of hope, light of love.

those arrested after the Mumbai carnage would have the front door of their house shut while the back door was open.

No world power, except Germany, has directly accused the Pakistan government for the attacks on Mumbai. Investigators believe that all attacks on India are linked to members of one terrorist group or the other in Pakistan. Whatever evidence that had India provided in the past Pakistan has failed to prod Islamabad.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA), which is probing into the recent Uri incident, was set up with a fanfare in 2009 to assuage public anger over a similar series of failure leading up to 26/11. They were entrusted with cases but the result so far has been dismal. What the NIA will do in the present case is to be seen. The nation is waiting for a retaliatory action.

Bhumi Adhikar Andolan-II

End caste based discrimination and ensure effective implementation of the SC/ST Act: The resource struggle is also inherently a caste and class struggle and Dalits and Adivasis have been at the receiving end. The caste based violence and systematic elimination of the rights and dignity of the community is being done in collaboration with the political and caste elite leading to their further impoverishment and disempowerment. The inability of the system to ensure justice to victims of the caste-based violence on every count has ensured its continuation without fear of any impunity. This is condemnable and unacceptable. Supreme Court and Higher Courts must take suo-moto cognizance of these offences and ensure fast tracking of the cases on line of the violence against women cases. This will not only ensure justice but also prevent future attacks on the community.

Bhumi Adhikar Andolan reasserts and reaffirms its faith in the reservations provided for the SC/ST communities by the Indian Constitution as a way to address the historical injustice. The ongoing attempts to subvert that by some political forces and caste groups in the name of economic justice is not acceptable and any heed to that by the governments and political parties is primarily based on vote bank calculations.

Withdraw all fabricated cases from the social and cultural activists, tribals, dalits, farmers and students: a number of activists have been framed on numerous false charges and incarcerated. In the current political climate, the targeting of

activists has increased manifold and thus their victimisation as well. As Bhumi Adhikaar Andolan, we extend support and solidarity to the activists and movements facing police oppression and support the effort to establish a people's commission to defend the rights of the activists.

Repeal AFSPA and Stop increased militarisation in conflict regions: Recent judgement of the Supreme Court has validated the long term demand of the movements for withdrawal of the AFSPA from J&K, and many of the North East states. Under AFSPA, many heinous crimes have been committed without any prosecution often feeding in to the vicious circle of continuing violence. The continued unrest is also due to

heavy militarisation within these areas, which often leads to hardships for the citizens of those areas.

Assert democratic rights of association, freedom of expression and raise voice against any incursion: A climate of fear and intimidation is being promoted specifically targeted at muzzling dissent, restricting freedom of association, assembly of citizens to criticise anti people policies of the government and control or close down any democratic spaces available for free speech and gathering. These attempts by the State and vigilante groups are not acceptable in the largest democracy of the world, and are completely violates the ideas and principles enshrined in the Indian constitution.

Socialist Party (India)

National Committee of the Socialist Party met at Delhi on 15-9-2016. Girish Kumar Pandey, working president was in the chair. Prominent among those present were Pannalal Surana, Sandip Pandeyy, Satish Agrawal, Faisal Khan, Rajshekharan Nair, Shriniwas, Harminder Singh Mansahia, Sachidanand Singh, Renu Gambhir, Neeraj Kumar, Shashank and Janakiprasad Goud. The committee took the following decisions:

1. As Jayanti Panchal had tendered resignation from the post of treasurer, Neeraj Kumar was elected as the treasurer.

2. Neeraj Kumar and Adv. Shashank were authorized to form national committee of the SYS.

3. National Conference of the

Party will be held on 12 and 13 November, 2016 at Chediram Dharmashala, Lucknow. Three delegates from every such district in which party members are enrolled so far will participate in the National Conference. State Secretaries should communicate their names and postal addresses to Janakiprasad Goud, President, U.P. State before 20 October, 2016.

4. Mobilise party organization to contest Assembly elections in U.P. Punjab, Uttarakhand, and Goa. Membership enrolment drive to be concluded by 31 December.2016.

5. Chairman of the Central Parliamentary Board will appoint Election Committees for U.P. and Punjab very soon.

–Pannalal Surana

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Published on Sunday, September 25, 2016 & Posted on Wednesday September 28, 2016 at Mumbai Patrika Channel, Mumbai GPO-1

Appeal

Dear Friend

Hindi medium school for children of migrant labourers coming from Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Nepal: This school was started two years ago in order to provide education to the children of labourers so that they do not work as child labourers. Children of this school are taught in Hindi language. Today this school is running from two different areas of Mundra taluka, namely, Mundra and Samagoga, catering to the educational needs of more than 700 children. The education is provided free of charge to these children. Besides, they are provided with bus facility, uniform, books and mid-day meals. The school has also got recognition from the Gujarat government for classes 1 to 8 of these schools.

We need your support in our effort to provide education to these children. We are requesting you to sponsor atleast one child, at a cost of Rs. 2000/- per child per annum. Our target is to raise sponsorship for 500 children.

The donations to the YMC are tax-exempt under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act, 1961. Your Cheque/Draft may please be drawn in favour of "Yusuf Meherally Centre" and sent to the following address:

Hindi medium school for children of migrant labourers coming from Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Nepal: This school was started two years ago in order to provide education to the children of labourers so that they do not work as child labourers. Children of this school are taught in Hindi language. Today this school is running from two different areas of Mundra taluka, namely, Mundra and Samagoga, catering to the educational needs of more than 700 children. The education is provided free of charge to these children. Besides, they are provided with bus facility, uniform, books and mid-day meals. The school has also got recognition from the Gujarat government for classes 1 to 8 of these schools.

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Dharmendra Kumar

The Project coordinator
Yusuf Meherally Centre

At+post –Bhadreshwar,
Tal-Mundra, Kutch,
Ph-02838282375,

Email-yumeher@rediffmail.com

The donations can be sent to us by way of bank transfer too. Our bank details are:

Name of the Account: Yusuf Meherally Centre

Account No. 071510003139, Dena Bank, Branch: BHADRESHWAR

IFSC Code: BKDN0330715 (used for RTGS, IMPS and NEFT transactions)

Branch Code : 330715, Mundra, Kutch, Gujarat, India