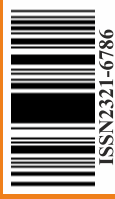




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PROUT

A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis



PROUTIST BLOC, INDIA
The Political Alternative India Needs Today



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"If you really want to give respect to humans, especially those with no social prestige, then you are to arrange for their education, social standing and economic establishment."

– Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

Fundamental Principles of PROUT

1

No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth without the clear permission or approval of the collective body

2

There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution of all mundane, supra mundane and spiritual potentialities of the universe

3

There should be maximum utilization of the physical, metaphysical and spiritual potentialities of unit and collective body of the human society.

4

There should be a proper adjustment amongst these physical, metaphysical, mundane, supra mundane and spiritual utilizations.

5

The method of utilization should vary in accordance with the changes in time, space and person and the utilization should be of progressive nature.

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Ácárya Santosánanda Avadhúta

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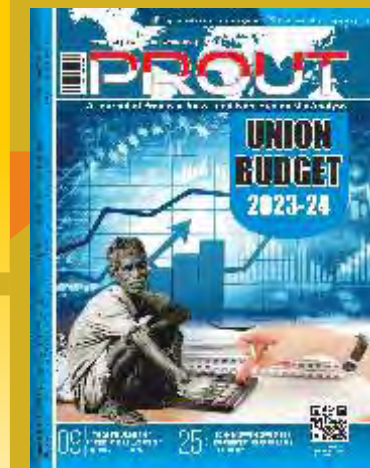
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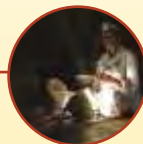
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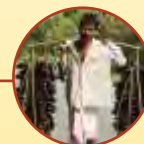
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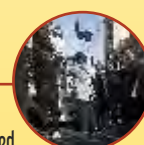
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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

ONE YEAR OF UKRAINE WAR— NATIONALISM REFUSES TO DIE

When Russian forces first crossed the border into Ukraine, people everywhere were frightened in fear and anger. There was no other news that occupied the shocked world's attention. All that seems distant now, though the war is still there and people are still dying, bombs rain down, and missiles strike, all that looks relatively routine. And people dying have become just numbers. This feigned apathy allows merchants and brokers of war to go on as just business.

Russia hardly gained territory from May to August 2022 after its initial gains in March. From September to November, Ukrainian forces took back large chunks (almost 54% as per news reports) of its territory aided by the US-provided Himars precision rocket system. For the Americans, it is just another proxy war, and they are too happy to contribute to it and add to the profit of their arms manufacturers.

Initially, Europe was worried about how energy supplies to their homes and factories would get affected, but not anymore. They have found alternative sources and have more or less moved on. Before the war, Europe depended on Russia for 40% of its LNG supply, but today it is below 10%. With that, the war could go on forever, and it did not take long for armament producers in NATO countries like Germany, France, Poland and the Czech Republic to increase arms production. Sadly the road to war seems to be paved with gold. It leaves no one crying in the corner but the mothers of soldiers and civilians who have died and are dying. And random bomb attacks and troop clashes continue for no apparent reason. It is as if the motions of war must go on to save face, even if few die for a meaningless cause.

Still, there is no sign of peace. Ninety-five percent of Ukrainians are convinced their military victory over Russia can only gain peace. And they feel that the Russian army can be defeated. While on the other hand, Russians have been made to believe that they have already won the war and that Ukraine and its Western patrons continue to wage an unwinnable war. The US has publicly stated that it will go along with Ukraine for as long as it takes. American taxpayers have poured tens of billions of dollars in weapons, munitions, combat vehicles, tanks and missile systems into Ukraine's defence. And now the American public is questioning this. The West does so because the Ukraine war was never about defending Ukraine but a proxy war against Russia to secure regime change.

Still, nationalism refuses to die, and wars are its natural consequence. Ukraine is an excellent example of that, like many others recently. And to keep it going, armament manufacturers work round the clock to produce smart and ultra-smart missiles and bombs and deadlier tanks and other war munitions. Nationalism belittles the United Nations, which provides lengthy reports filled with platitudes to get some of its credibility back. The pen never looked weaker than the sword; because every country votes with its short-term nationalist interests. It allows arms dealers to fulfil their deadlier long-term goals.

The idea of fighting wars over land today is meaningless when the internet and laboratories dominate the finances. But as long as the land is there and enough people die for it, nationalism will continue to create these meaningless wars in this age. So it's time there is a genuine and effective World Government with suitable powers, espoused by Prout's founder Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar. ●



I have two comments about this March 2023 journal. First, the Journal starts with two full-page advertisements. And the Turkey Apocalypse article doesn't mention the Prout-related issue of the earthquake disaster. It is a Prout journal, not AMURT.

The outbreak of 5 February, looking at the videos of the Turkiye calamity, the primary cause of the disaster was not the earthquake but the poorly built houses. Both new and old buildings collapsed. It is now the main focus in the country, and they are trying to cover it up with earthquake news. More than 120 Constructors have been arrested.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/64568826>

- Rasatmakananda

Decentralized Economy

Most countries in the world have centralized economies. That is the leading cause of most of the world's economic problems. Decentralization is the answer. Another reason is that the leaders do not genuinely love the people.

- Ram Sinai, Barabanki

Union Budget 2023-24

It is a very well-written article with several good suggestions. The cover design is especially striking and says it all.

- Vani Mehta, Lufhiana

Turkey Apocalypse

The human toll and physical damage to civil infrastructure and the year-long unwinnable war are terrible. It's

time that world leaders find a solution so that ordinary people do not suffer needlessly anymore.

- Stacey Cooper, Ottawa

Right and Wrong

Objective morality is very elusive in this world of subjectivity. The article throws new light.

- Anil Kothari, Mumbai

Economic Democracy

The first aim of any economic policy should be the economic upliftment of the masses, especially those poor and hungry. Only then would democracy be true. But, unfortunately, what we have in India and other countries is political democracy backed by capitalists' money power. That has not and can never solve economic problems.

- Chinnaswamy T, Chennai

Concept of Society

We humans all over the world are socially interdependent. The internet has brought people even closer, and it proves the point.

- Navin Bhatia, Bhopal

Repressed Eunuchs

An excellent piece that highlights this repressed section of human society. Eunuchs are just as human as men and women, and it is good that after years of struggle, they have received recognition from the Supreme Court of India.

- Maya Dwivedi, Monghyr

Genetically Engineered Agriculture

It is an eye-opener and sheds light on the reasons for the ongoing Russo - Ukraine war. Ecologically clean and high-quality food is the natural answer for human nutrition.

- Divya Dalmia, Baroda

Power of Normalizing Beliefs

It is true that though slavery is legally abolished, in today's society,

it continues in many insidious forms. One of them is the exploitation of the poor by the rich.

- Farida Khan, Pune

Cover February Issue

The editorial sets the magazine's tone - I think it should be about PROUT and its local work and global network and message to the world. The message should be how PROUT is helping the planet.

No more poor, starving people on the cover or in the magazine; it just repels. It does not attract and makes the person feel guilty. We want people to get inspired by PROUT to join and give their blood to serve humanity—pictures of young people serving in villages like the one from Assam. Even the person's profile can highlight how he got the idea to help, how he lives and his own words about what he does. That is the only article I read. 90% good news about how PROUT is implementing its theory or other moralists' are doing practically—only beautiful inspiring pictures or, at the most, views of "before" and "after" stories.

- Didi Anandarama

The views are noted for moderation. However, Prout is the cry of suffering humanity. The cover picture reflects the cover story by Prout's Founder, "Democracy and the People"; how democracy hasn't helped the people, especially the poor and the starving. --- Eds.

March Issue

Thank you so much for another magnificent March 2023 issue of Prout Journal, featuring such important articles: Union Budget, Decentralized Economy, One man army in Assam and West Bengal against Child Marriage, Turkey Apocalypse and its immense Human costs, Economic Democracy and People's Economy, The Concept of Society, The Repressed Eunuchs, The Power of Normalizing Beliefs. ●

- Acarya Dhanjoo Ghista



In many villages of Assam, if one pays close attention as one goes to a house, one will see an earthen pot hanging from one post in the 'pirali'. In every village house, such a vessel would hang on some post. In the morning, the womenfolk always keep a handful of rice in the pot after husking the rice.

At night the young men of the village band together and collect that rice from the house

A Unique Idea to **HELP**

and deposit it in the 'namghar' (the treasury of sorts). The rice is sold at short intervals, and one person is entrusted with the money.

It is called the 'Alms Fund', and villagers are extended help during hard times with the money from this fund. Sometimes even people from other villages are helped. Nobody feels the pinch setting aside fistfuls of rice, but over a year, it translates into a lot of money. Poor people sometimes borrowed from this for weddings and other obligatory social ceremonies.

If such a practice were followed in villages all over India, the poor people would get much relief, especially during bad times. ●



Advancement in ⁶ Human Society

"According to PROUT, changes take place in a cyclic order."

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar



Social advancement is the triadic blending of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. When a particular theory or thesis loses its competence and power to effect the collective welfare, an antithesis is created against the prevalent theory. As a result of clash and cohesion between these two opposing forces, a resultant is created, which is called synthesis. Is it true that the welfare of society is only possible in the synthesis stage? When those with the duty and responsibility for materializing social welfare neglect minorities or people in

general, the synthesis of a particular age transforms itself into the thesis of the next age.

The underlying principles relevant to the question of social justice are:

- The universe is a moving phenomenon, like a moving panorama.
- Everything in this empirical world has its roots in relativity.
- Everything is moving within the orbit of time, space and person.

In the synthesis stage, a particular social, economic and political theory may be beneficial

in a particular place or to a particular group, but this is no guarantee that the same theory will prove equally beneficial with changes in time, space and person. In changed circumstances, oppressed people, who pass their days in distraction and despair as victims of social injustice, put up an antithesis against the synthesis of that period. Numerical majority and physical might are not the sole prerequisites for the emergence of an antithesis. If the oppressed are an intellectual group, then they can put up an antithesis no matter how few their numbers are. The former ideology ceases to be a synthesis as

soon as the antithesis is created. It becomes the thesis in the next phase. So, in the second phase, an antithesis will again emerge against that very thesis. In this phase, an unabated struggle will continue as long as a synthesis does not arise. Theoretically, synthesis is not the absolute factor, the final clash or the last word; for thesis, antithesis and synthesis occurs within the bounds of relativity.

According to PROUT, changes take place in a cyclic order. In some eras of the past, the toiling masses were dominant. At that time, there was no human society or civilization, and even the concept of the family was almost non-existent. Such a period was called the Shúdra era. The Shúdra era is followed by the Kśatriya era or the age of the warriors. As a result of clash and cohesion, the dawn of the Vipra era became discernible on the horizon of the social cycle. When the warriors, those with Herculean strength, started ignoring and hurting the sentiments of the Vipras or intellectuals, the Vipras evolved an antithesis against the thesis of the Kśatriya era out of vindictiveness and revenge. But the saga of exploitation and suffering knew no end. When the Vipras started an offensive against the bourgeois class, the dissatisfied and disgruntled bourgeoisie launched a crusade against the thesis of the Vipra age. When the once disgruntled classes began to engage in exploitation, profiteering and black marketeering, thriving off the lifeblood of others, the exploited, oppressed and rebellious people started a bloody revolution to destroy the bourgeois class.

Such movement of the social cycle will never cease, will never stop. Sadvipras, or spiritual revolutionaries, will inspire and mobilize the crusading human spirit against barbarity, injustice



and rapacity and help accelerate the speed of antithetical social movement. Afterwards, during the synthesis stage, they will take the leadership of society into their own hands. If proper adjustments are maintained with time, space and person, the Sadvipra-inspired synthetic age will be permanent. In a society governed and administered by these Sadvipras, the synthetic structure of society will remain intact, although different eras may come and go. The Shúdra era will come, but there will be no exploitation by the Shúdras. The Kśatriya era will come, but exploitation by the Kśatriyas will not be possible because of the synthetic order prevailing in society..

Only Sadvipras can constantly maintain proper adjustment with time, space and person. Those who propagate materialist philosophies, but are morally and spiritually conscious, are quite incapable of constantly maintaining such appropriate adjustments, for all changes take place within the purview of relativity. Those who have accepted the Supreme Entity as their goal – those who believe in universal humanism and reflect universalism in the fullest measure

– are alone capable of constantly maintaining proper adjustment, for under the influence of a spiritual ideal, their temperaments become great and benevolent. Due to their benevolent idealism and mental development, they naturally look upon all with love and affection. They can never do any injustice in any particular era or to a particular individual. Sadvipra society is both the aspiration and demand of oppressed humanity; dialectical materialism is fundamentally wrong and defective.

In all countries and at all times, Sadvipras must wait until the emergence of an antithesis against any particular thesis. So long as an antithesis has not evolved, Sadvipras will continue working worldwide to bring about the psychological background for the antithesis of the next phase. The moment the auspicious dawn of renaissance or synthesis comes, Sadvipras will take the reins of the leadership of society into their own hands.

The welfare of society is not possible through dialectical materialism. Dialectical materialism may be suitable and appropriate for the well-being of human society at a certain age. Still, in the very next era, it may prove to be a brutal instrument of exploitation and destruction. Prout is the only solution, for it recognizes and accepts the necessity of changes in time, space and person. Therefore, it will go on constantly maintaining a ratio. The policies and programmes of Prout formulated for a particular era, for a particular place and for particular people will not remain fixed in new conditions. They will adjust to changes in time, space and person. Such are the fundamental principles advocated by Prout. Thus, dialectical materialism cannot benefit human society and may only have some use for a particular era, time or person. ●



PROUTIST BLOC, INDIA

The Political Alternative India Needs Today

■ Ravindra Singh

Today the word 'politics' has come to mean, in common parlance, something that involves dishonesty, corruption, betrayal, opportunism, and nepotism. Politics, which plays a crucial role in shaping our society and making important decisions that affect our lives, has come to be viewed in a negative light because of rampant instances of politicians engaging in unethical behaviour, corruption, and dishonesty, which has led to a loss of trust among the people. Instances of bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and cronyism among politicians are too numerous to be counted.

Political parties are





increasingly prioritizing their interests over the needs of the people. Instead of working towards the betterment of society, politicians can be seen engaging in partisan politics, resulting in gridlock and a lack of progress. Moreover, political discourse has become increasingly polarized and divisive, with individuals often attacking and demonizing those who hold opposing views. It has created an environment of hostility and intolerance, further eroding people's trust in politics and politicians.

In these bleak times when our politics touch new lows daily, renowned philosopher Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar shows us the light. Although Shrii Sarkar criticises politicians for their hypocrisy and all the damage they have done to society, he doesn't take a negative view of politics per se. So he urges good people to participate in politics. "Proutists", says, "are not against politics or political science, but they have to fight against professional politicians. Only Sadvipras (spiritual revolutionaries) have the right to engage in politics." And to this end, he asked his followers to form a political party.

Birth of a Game Changer: PBI

In 1968, Shrii Sarkar asked the then-sitting Congress Member Parliament (MP) Shashi Ranjan Sahu to resign from congress party and launch a political party based on Proutistic ideals. Finally, on December 6 1968, Proutist Bloc, India (PBI) with a 'Swastika within a circle' as its symbol, was born and duly registered with the Election Commission of India. The major national dailies like The Statesman carried the news on their front page. Since its inception, PBI has been actively taking part in electoral politics. It contested Parliamentary elections in 1971, 1989, 1991, 2014, and 2019, and Assembly elections in 1969, 1972, 1974, 1977, 1989, 1990, 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2019. Prominent proutists from Bihar, Delhi, HP, Karnataka, Maharashtra, MP, Odisha, Punjab, UP, West Bengal, Gujarat, Haryana, J&K, and Odisha contested these elections. Although it hasn't registered any electoral victory, PBI has a clear blueprint for achieving it. All the past elections contested by the party will go down in history as the initial steps taken by a party set to change the face of politics for ever.

Vision and Mission

Today there is a widespread belief that success in politics is unattainable without resorting to unethical and unjust practices, which implies that one cannot secure a legislative position without engaging in immoral means. This belief is not wholly unfounded. However, PBI aims to turn the tide and lead the moral forces to victory by accomplishing the following objectives:

1. Polarize politics and send a clear message to society that only individuals with moral integrity can participate in political activities. And the measure of an individual's morality will be based on their private and public conduct.
2. Unite disgruntled moralists, people having mere good moral values are not enough. People with an unwavering fighting spirit and a revolutionary mindset must challenge immoral and exploitative forces.
3. Focus on mass mobilisation to establish a new socio-political order, with a primary thrust on creating a mass awakening.
4. Establish harmonious coordination with other PROUT activists and movements and maintain empathetic relationships with like-minded organisations and activities.

Ultimately, the goal is to bring moralists and Proutists into power through a PROUT government.

Kanpur National Convention, 2023: Charting Out the Way Forward

It was to reiterate its Vision and Resolutions and chart the way forward that PBI held its annual Convention in Kanpur on 18-19 February this year. With the theme '**Mission 2024: PBI's March to Victory**', the Convention saw the participation of about 300 party delegates from Delhi, Haryana, UP, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Maharashtra and Karnataka.

The event was inaugurated by Prof. A.K. Bhaskar, PBI National President, with the garlanding of the photograph of the founder of Prout and PBI. Then, welcoming the delegates, PBI's National Convener Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta expressed his gratitude for their unwavering support





for the PBI. He emphasised the importance of the convention as an opportunity for the party leaders and cadres to come together and discuss the challenges facing the country and the Party and the ways to address them. He outlined the PBI's key objectives, stressed the need for collaborative and goal-oriented efforts, and urged the attendees to participate fully in the convention's deliberations to find practical solutions to various issues.

The Party President, Prof. Bhaskar, welcomed the delegates from different states and said, "All the problems of the world can be solved by the implementation of PROUT, which is possible only when we have a Prout-friendly government. I am sure that PBI will emerge as a strong platform for the moralists from every walk of life; and it will lodge them in the seat of political and non-political power. The convention, I hope, will take us a step forward to our cherished goal."

On the first day, Public Relations Secretary Ravindra Singh gave a PowerPoint presentation on '*Asli Azadi – Economic Democracy*.' Then, with the help of a series of illustrated

Ppt slides, he presented PROUT's concept of Economic Democracy and the means to achieve it, i.e. Decentralised Economy. Then, elaborating on the two concepts and the associated principles, he explained various facts and data to bring home the point that economic freedom is real freedom; and political democracy will become more meaningful and fruitful once people have guaranteed and increasing purchasing power.

He concluded the presentation with his Hindi poem (*Gar sabke sab ho jayen Hindu*) on the futility of fighting for

communal supremacy and the need for creating a world where everybody has the wherewithal for a dignified human life.

Kanhu Charan Behura, the General Secretary of PBI, outlined the party's future programs. Behura also noted that the message of PBI has resonated with people, leading to an expansion of the party in different states. He said the party is all geared up for the General Elections in 2024. The party has decided to contest at least 10% of seats. All State Presidents must submit within 3-4 months a list of potential candidates and the names of respective





constituencies. He said there are around 9 lac booths in India. We need to start booth-level mobilisation and publicity as soon as the constituencies are finalised. And the best way to do that would be to organise more agitations and campaigns to highlight the problems of the common people.

On the second day, a rally comprising 300 people was taken out. Then, holding placards and shouting slogans supporting farmers, labourers, small businesses, unemployed youths, Amiirii Rekha and one human society, the party cadres and office-bearers marched peacefully

through the main roads of the city.

After the rally, a memorandum of the following demands addressed to the Prime Minister was sent to the Governor:

1. Amiirii Rekha (ceiling on wealth) : Physical wealth is limited. If a handful owns most of it, most of the population is deprived of even the basic necessities of life: food, clothes, shelter, education and medication. Today, 10% of Indians own more than 80% of the country's wealth, while 50% of Indians hold just 3%, which is a glaring disparity! Hence, PBI demands a ceiling on wealth, i.e. nobody should be

allowed to accumulate wealth beyond a certain limit. And the maximum must not exceed ten times the minimum.

2. Industry Status to Agriculture: The farmers and labourers, who contribute most to our economy, have been worst-hit. The farmers, having no control over the price of their produce, have to either make a distressed sale or abandon agriculture or commit suicide. Therefore, PBI demands that agriculture be accorded Industry status on Proutistic principles.

3. Blanket ban on alcohol: The consumption of liquor destroys all physical, intellectual and intuitional faculties and is detrimental to the all-round development of human beings. Alcohol destroys the human body's glands, sub-glands, nerves and nerve cells. Besides, it destroys the family of the addict emotionally and financially. PBI, therefore, demands a total ban on the sale, purchase and consumption of alcohol throughout the country.

4. Statehood to Vidarbha: Since the beginning, Vidarbha has been continuously neglected. A meagre portion of Maharashtra's budget is



allocated to Vidarbha, which hardly suffices to fulfil the needs of this region. Despite holding 2/3 of the minerals and 3/4 of the forests, Vidarbha has had inadequate industrial development. Most of its coal and other mineral resources are sent to other parts of the state and the country, leading to the shortage of Power and the underdevelopment of different industries in the region. Therefore, PBI believes that Vidarbha's development is possible only when it is accorded the status of a full-fledged state.

Odisha State President Kedarnath Sahoo said, "We have been fighting for the problems of the farmers for the past several years, but the relief won is only temporary. The permanent solution is industry status to agriculture on the proutistic lines." He informed that PBI (Odisha) would soon launch an awareness campaign in the state with the slogan '*Jagrit Matdata, nitivadi neta, vikendrit arthvyavastha*' (Conscious voters, moralist leaders, and decentralised economy).

Maharashtra State President

Viveka Dehankar underlined the importance of mobilising and educating the local people about their rights over the local resources. He said we need to talk more about Prout's cooperative model of agriculture and industry, which is the only viable solution to unemployment and the problems of workers in both organised and unorganised sectors of the economy.

UP State President R.P. Singh Chauhan discussed the party's progress in the host state. He said the state unit is contacting good people and trying to convince them to join PBI and work wholeheartedly to get into power via the electoral process. He called upon all the proutists to strengthen PBI in their samajas by using local issues and sentiments. Besides, he expressed his gratitude for the privilege accorded to the UP unit to host the event.

Delhi State President Advocate Amitabh Verma, who also compèred the last session, claimed that if the poverty line were rationally determined, about 70% of the population would fall below it. He added that only 1% of

people hold 60% of the country's wealth, while 10% hold more than 80%. Therefore, he said, the party should project 'Amiirii Rekha' as its central demand and agenda, for it is the panacea for the problems of poverty, unemployment, corruption etc. It appeals to everyone, regardless of caste region, religion, or gender.

Octogenarian social activist Sultan Singh, who also serves as the president of Rashtriya Sharabbandi Sanyukt Morcha (RSSM), a coalition advocating for a complete ban on alcohol in India, was a distinguished guest at the event. In his speech, Singh lauded PBI's efforts to mobilise moral forces to effectuate a revolutionary transformation in the country's political landscape. He conveyed his best wishes to the party for its endeavours.

Dr Tarani Prasad Singh, who was inducted as the executive president of Bihar State Committee at the Convention, expressed his optimism that PBI would soon become a preminent power in Indian politics, thanks to the party's morally and spiritually driven leadership and its





impeccable philosophy that combines the sublime with the practical.

Professor Ashutosh said that in the last 70 years, different parties and their coalitions had ruled the country, but they have utterly failed to solve the problems of the commoner, as they have no intention to serve the nation. He urged the party cadres to expose the immoral forces, snatch power from them and establish economic democracy in the country with moralist leadership at the helm.

Sharing his experience as a candidate in the Bihar Elections, he said, "My experience was both exhilarating and challenging. I campaigned tirelessly, engaged with voters, and tried to articulate the party's vision and policies effectively. The campaign was emotionally draining, I faced criticism, and scrutiny. However, the experience was incredibly rewarding; I connected with voters, built a network of supporters, and worked to make a positive impact on the community. Although I lost, as the outcome of the election hinges on factors beyond the candidate's control, the

experience of running for office can be transformative, both personally and politically, so don't hesitate to contest."

Besides the above speakers, Vidarbha convener Madhukar Nistane, Bihar state secretary Prem Shankar, Odisha state general secretary Pitambar Bhuyan, and Bandita; Yawatmal (Maharashtra) district president Arun Kapile; Youth Federation Secretary (Vidarbha) Mohan Pawar, Students Federation Secretary (Vidarbha) Atul Atram, and UP state committee members – Ratan Lal Mishra, Ramji Mishra, Mahesh Chandra Katiyar, Surendra Kumar Patel, Ravi Shukla, Ashok Nishad, Manoj Sachan, Sagar etc - also spoke.

In the concluding session, UP State President R.P. Singh Chauhan, Maharashtra State President Vivek Dehankar, Ramji Mishra and Madhusmita Das, Santosh Giri, Pradeep Tripathi, and Abhishek Mishra were felicitated for their exemplary service to the party.

Rakesh Ranjan, RP Singh Chauhan and Amitabh Verma hosted different sessions

effortlessly, holding the audience in rapt attention. Ashutosh Gupta and Ratan Lal Mishra recited some fine pieces of inspiring poetry, while Proutist singer Ram Prasad Nirala kept the atmosphere lively by singing some revolutionary Proutistic songs.

In his closing address, National Convener Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta said, "The challenges facing the country can only be addressed by leaders with strong moral values. The primary goal of PBI, therefore, is to promote moral leadership in the country and make morality a mandatory requirement for individuals seeking a role in politics." He stated that PBI is the only viable political option for Indians today as it can provide an alternative to the prevailing socio-economic system fueled by greed and sustained by the governments since 1947. Expressing firm belief that 2023-24 will witness PBI register victories after victories. It was amidst resounding slogans: *Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar amar hain! PBI zindabad, the national convention came to an end* ●

(Continued from previous issue)



What Right and Wrong Consist of, and Vidyá-Avidyá in a Secular Framework **AN OBJECTIVE MORALITY**

■ Ácárya Acyutananda Avadhúta

Those configurations of *citta* can be characterized as selfish (consciously or unconsciously) and involving a crudifying action.

As the example of the picture in my *citta* of an old college friend shows us, the *guṇas* are forces not only of crudification, but also of configuration—they shape the *citta* into each of the multiplicity of “precious jewels” (and less savoury objects) created by “the dexterous hand of *Máyá* [*Prakṛti* in Her phase of creation]”. Some of those configurations are selfish

“Virtue is that which helps to expand the mind”

and involve crudifying actions – both – and each of the two, “selfish” and “crudifying”, is a piece of what we mean by “wrong”.

In fact, I think it's an empirical reality that selfishness is both the root of all crudification/ extroversion, and the root of all wrong – two aspects of the same thing.

Selfishness is what we experience when we are increasing our distance from *Nirguṇa Brahma* and from *Puruṣottama*.

“Now, what is good and bad? . . . The physical, mental, or spiritual action that helps you . . . that lessens the distance between you and your Lord is good. And your physical, psychic, or spiritual actions that increase the distance between you and your Lord is bad. That which encourages the proximity between you and your

Lord, your goal, your idealistic goal, and the distance is decreased, lessened, is good. And when it is increased, it is bad.” (“Auto-Suggestion and Outer Suggestion”)

“A big radius [between oneself and *Puruṣottama*, Nucleus Consciousness] means that one thinks about oneself in each and every sphere of life.” (“The Excellence of God-Centred Philosophy”)

“All burdens, all confusions, all considerations of respect and disrespect, are connected to the ‘I.’” (“Mantra Caetanya”)

If a configuration is selfish alone, that doesn't necessarily qualify it as wrong. That might be a semantic debate – whether it's wrong or not might be a question of definition. A desire to eat when one is hungry or drink when one is thirsty or rest when one is tired increases our distance from *Nirguṇa Brahma* and from *Puruṣottama* if we don't remember that *Brahma* is doing everything. But the actions of eating when one is hungry or drinking when one is thirsty or resting when one is tired are not in themselves crudifying,

only sometimes so. If what one eats is food taken away from someone else (at least from someone who needs it), and moreover if what one drinks is an intoxicant that does not harm anyone else but harms oneself, or if one rests even though one sees one's neighbour's house catching fire (though one didn't cause the problem), the action “makes the mind narrow and selfish.”

“In my opinion virtue is that which helps to expand the mind, by whose assistance the universe increasingly becomes an integral part of oneself, and vice is that which makes the mind narrow and selfish. And the realm to which the mind of a person engaged in virtuous activities travels, is heaven, and the realm where the mind of a sinner races about in a wild frenzy, is hell.” (“Justice”)

Narrowing/contracting the mind is the equivalent of increasing one's distance from one's goal.

So however you picture *Avidyā*, just picture all wrong impulses as specific little pieces of that, not all of that.

Those configurations of citta can be recognized by one's own viveka or by the vivekas of others.

“For ‘conscience’, the Sanskrit term is *viveka*.” (“Auto-Suggestion and Outer Suggestion”) Beyond defining *viveka* and saying that this important faculty exists, P.R. Sarkar has said little about it. It is clear that it can help one know whether a proposed action of one's own would be right or wrong; not so clear that it can help one evaluate the morality of a proposed action by someone else. It is clear on the other hand that proto-psycho-spirituality can help one evaluate the morality of a proposed action by someone else—

“What happens through this proto-psycho-spirituality? When a person is guided by it to think in a particular way, and sees that one's own benevolent mode of thinking is not reflected in other people's activities, then that person can easily realize their true nature. So those who practise this proto-psycho-spirituality can easily recognize those demons in human framework” (“An Ideology for a New Generation”)

– but not clear beyond that, either by its etymology or through P.R. Sarkar's story of boys running in a field, what proto-psycho-spirituality is. Is it simply a highly-developed component of *viveka*?

And how much of our *viveka* is in our biology, that is, how much of it are we born with, and how does the balance of it develop? (I will address this soon.)

So wrong, I think, is a multiplicity of natural phenomena – all those phenomena that consist of configurations of *citta*, configurations that 1) are caused by *Avidyāmāyā* operating within human *citta*, and 2) can be characterized as selfish (consciously so or unconsciously) and crudifying, and 3) can be recognized by one's own *viveka* or by the *vivekas* of others (to some





extent) – or (as an abstract noun) the concept of all that.

What right consists of is best analysed in light of what wrong consists of. This is because wrong is created by a pushing force, a proactive, causative, creative force, “the force of positivity”, while right is created by the recoil of that force. So right has basically already been explained in the course of the above analysis of wrong. Mostly from that analysis, we can conclude:

Right, too, is a multiplicity of natural phenomena – all those phenomena that consist of configurations of *citta*, configurations that 1) emerge when some of the *citta* in the human mind, crudified during *saincara*, returns to its earlier subtlety due to the waning of the *guṇas*, and the action of the *kuṇḍalinii*, caused by *Vidyámáyá* operating within human *citta*, and 2) can be characterized as selfless and subtilizing (subtilizing to the individual), and 3) can be recognized by one's own *viveka* or

by the *vivekas* of others, to an extent – or (as an abstract noun) the concept of all that.

Vidyá does not create anything completely original; it only works its art with what *Avidyá* has already created.

I mentioned earlier that : *As soon as some of Nirguṇa Brahma gets crudified, even a little bit, there will be a force of Vidyámáyá trying to pull that crudified part back. . . . Living beings will experience that force as a longing for the Great, that is, they will feel an attraction by the Great, and each clash will awaken that longing so that they can find cohesion, each time, on a higher level on which they have become free from at least that one clash. . . . newly subtle desires . . . must automatically pop into the mind, or rather relatively subtle citta must automatically form itself into such desires, simply because it has been freed to do so as the guṇas wane. And that kind of process could be a factor in the origin of the virtuous, selfless intentions that human beings are capable of*

also. But in humans, especially humans whose kuṇḍalinii has been awakened, the kuṇḍalinii must play some role in the appearance of righteous thoughts.

It may be easier to picture how a pushing force would bring something into existence than how a pulling force would do that, and it is the former that brings wrong thoughts into existence, the latter that brings right thoughts into existence.

The Practical Lessons That We Can Learn from This Analysis

Without an extremely good understanding of right and wrong, since morality is the base of *sādhana*, our *sādhana* will suffer; and hopefully this analysis will help us to understand. Our understanding of right and wrong is ultimately intuitive, a function of our *viveka*, but I think that analysis with our rational minds can help us refine our *viveka*.

How much of our *viveka* is in our biology, that is, how much of it are we born with, and how does the

balance of it develop? Certainly we don't all have equal power to tell right from wrong. It seems to me personally that we must develop our *viveka* throughout our lives, by means of *sādhana* and rational analysis and also, for many if not most persons, by means of psychotherapy. Psychotherapy is often a more direct way than *sādhana* to correct the downstream effects of childhood traumas, which both damage us psychologically and distort our perceptions of practically everything – right and wrong being not least among those things.

Suppose you have to decide whether to support a particular candidate for *bhukti pradhān* or local civic office. That candidate is clearly the best but is a person you envy. The envy stems most fundamentally from something that distorted your development in early childhood, but the memory is repressed, and mechanisms such as denial prevent you from seeing the issue. The result is that you will do the wrong thing and not the right

thing. The developmental framework I have used here is the framework used by depth therapy, that is, a kind of psychodynamic therapy that tries to help the person reconnect with and thus get substantially free from childhood traumas. But though I have described this issue using this framework, I will not weigh in here on whether some form of depth therapy, or some other psychodynamic strategy, or some directive strategy, might work best for most individuals.

It seems that some good work is being done to develop a spiritual psychotherapy: “although religion can have a negative impact on mental health in some cases, such as religious abuse or negative beliefs, religion and spirituality often promote positive coping techniques and good mental health.”¹

And my hope is that the biggest lesson from this analysis may involve the material for secular readers that is about to follow. I hope that the line of argument in that material may not

only be beneficial for secular people, but may also be a tool of *pracāra* for us.

In that stand-alone part of my article (starting with the next installment), I will not mention *Vidyāmāyā* and *Avidyāmāyā* as such, since they may lack any scientific evidence for their existence, and may from a scientific perspective qualify only as beliefs. But scientists would have to agree that within human minds there are both selfish impulses and selfless impulses, with their own observable psychological accompaniments. So I will argue that those psychological accompaniments can be explained, as I have explained them above for spiritual readers, as contraction of our experience in the case of selfish impulses, and a liberating self-forgetfulness in the case of selfless impulses.

<https://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/issues/spirituality> ●

(To be concluded)



PROUT IDEOLOGY

Remarks on Implementation

"Implementing coordinated cooperation can be successful only when a suitable environment is available."

Prof. R.P. Singh



Prout ideology had existed for more than sixty-three years since the 5 June 1959 event in Jamalpur, Bihar. So naturally, the question repeatedly arises on various associated fronts: When will Prout be grounded? Are we serious enough to implement Prout? Or we will continue in high ivory tower theoretical thinking. The responsible and senior people must articulate and share their views on the issue and formulate a plan of action.

In some instances, Prout's features and policies are reflected knowingly or unknowingly and are discernible in populist government schemes. The following are some examples:

Minimum Requirements of Life

Prout says:

Yugasyasarvanimnaprayojanam sarvesam vidheyam. [The minimum requirements of an age should be guaranteed to all.]

Reflecting the concerns of Proutistic economy schemes are

being implemented by the present government but in a context and manner that does not empower people or eliminate the dependence nexus.

For example, a guarantee for food is available for BPL families. In addition, continuing on the commitment to ensure food and nutrition security, the central government is implementing, from Jan 1, 2023, a scheme to supply free food grains to all antyodaya and priority households for the next one year. It will

improve the access, affordability, and availability of entitled food grains for about 81 crores under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) beneficiaries.

Earlier, to ease the hardships faced by the poor due to economic disruption caused by Covid-19, the Government initially launched Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) for the period from April to June 2020. However, considering the need for continuous support to the poor and the needy, the scheme has been extended and implemented in various phases.

Guarantee for housing is also assured through Pradhanmantri Awas Yojana for affordable housing by providing Rupees 2,50,000 in five equal instalments. It has two components: Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) (PMAY-U) for the urban poor and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin) (PMAY-G and also PMAY-R) for the rural poor. Under this housing, loans are availed by the beneficiaries for 20 years under the credit link subsidy scheme (CLSS) from the start of a loan.

Other popular schemes are Saubhagya Yojana electricity connection, Ujjwala Yojana LPG connection, access to drinking water and Jan Dhan banking facilities, etc. Guarantee for clothing is also provided indirectly through NGOs. In addition, there has been an umbrella provision of Direct Benefit Transfer through the Giro banking system since 2013. But the irony is that education and medical care are being transferred increasingly to the expensive private sector or provided through increasing involvement of private agencies so that the poor or even middle-income classes can hardly afford it.

Prout Provides Further:

Yugasyasarvanimnaprayojanam sarveśam vidheyam. [The minimum requirements of an age



should be guaranteed to all.]

Then, *Atiriktam pradatavyam gunānupātēna*. [The surplus wealth should be distributed among meritorious people according to the degree of their merit.]

It postulates that we should provide top amenities and incentives to the meritorious to unleash entrepreneurial energy in all spheres of life for social progress and welfare. This rule is widely accepted, but the right wing seems more interested in opposing the balancing mechanism of reservation than the proper implementation of meritocracy. The enlightened masses feel that politicians of any breed or line are united in their self-serving behaviour.

Then the ideology also provides: *Sarvanimnam, navardhanam sama jaiivalakṣaṇam* [Increasing the minimum standard of living of the people is the indication of the vitality of society.]

The reality we confront today is different. The rise of crony capitalism and electoral dynamics driven by dogma-centred politics has resulted in extreme societal

inequality, persistently eroding the purchasing capacity of billions of people and declining their standard of living.

B) Co-ordinated cooperation

Implementing coordinated cooperation can be successful only when a suitable environment is available. The conditions apply to almost every new enterprise model, policy and technology. Hence our approach and struggle should be directed at creating an appropriate environment for implementing the 'Coordinated-Cooperation' based enterprises and economy in all walks of life.

Cooperative ventures have been, so far, just a political tool in the hands of governance rather than a middle sector of the economy. The rightist approach can never allow the emergence of cooperatives over and above the private sector.

C) Green Development

Prout exhorts:

Sthūlasukṣmakāraṇeśucaramopayogaḥprākartavyahvicārasamarthitāmvantanainca.

[There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution

of all mundane, supramundane and spiritual potentialities of the universe.]

Sthūlasūkśmakāraṇo'payogāhsus antulitahvidheyāh.

[There should be a proper adjustment amongst these physical, metaphysical, mundane, supramundane and spiritual utilizations.]

Deshakālapātraehupayogāhpariy arttanteteupayogāhpragatishiilāh bhaveyuh.

[The method of utilization should vary in accordance with changes in time, space and person, and the utilization should be of progressive nature.]

The concepts of green and sustainable development are implied in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), designed to be a “blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all” and part of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. One hundred ninety-three countries agreed upon them in September 2015. They are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals to transform our world: The 17 goals are:

Goal 1 : End poverty in all its

forms

Goal 2 : Zero Hunger

Goal 3 : Health

Goal 4 : Education

Goal 5 : Gender equality and womens empowerment

Goal 6 : Water and Sanitation

Goal 7 : Energy

Goal 8 : Economic Growth

Goal 9 : Infrastructure, industrialization

Goal 10 : Inequality

Goal 11 : Cities

Goal 12 : Sustainable consumption and production

Goal 13 : Climate Action

Goal 14 : Oceans

Goal 15 : Biodiversity, forests, desertification

Goal 16 : Peace, justice and strong institutions

Goal 17 : Partnerships for the goals

These Sustainable Development Goals are now points of consideration for policymakers and intelligentsia in every system of governance worldwide. India is not an exception. Also, pollution control, carbon credit and green development were issues at Earth Summits and other relevant forums. But, unfortunately, too many sermons were made to the

developing countries.

In India, eco-friendly techniques are propagated by ministries in their various development schemes. But the most significant challenge has been controlling the capitalist greed for easy profits in violating law and policy in connivance with immoral politicians and bureaucrats.

Concluding Remarks

Rather than waiting for practical implementation, we should go on up to our capability exposing the current system and propagating the ideology in theory with helpful directions. The fact is that nothing meaningful can be realised unless the Proutist policies are implemented in toto. Until then, exposing the deficiencies of the current system and propagation of ideology aggressively are necessary.

Divine plans are subject to the divine time frame and not as per our whimsical hastiness and will. Hence, the only path is to vigorously follow the path of PROUT in letter and spirit with revolutionary zeal, organisational acumen and collective wisdom without waiting for a more suitable time. ●





People generally think that movement means some protest, taking out rallies, agitation, etc. However, the concept of social movement is an effort by a large group of people to achieve a particular goal for change in any sphere - physical, psychological and spiritual.

" Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's concept of movement/ revolution is entirely different. As per His views, Movement/ revolution means, every aspect of collective life – social, economic, political, cultural, psychic and spiritual – is completely



"By starting an economic social movement, a mass movement can be formed."

Social Movement

Narendra Rajpurohit

transformed. New moral and spiritual values arise in society which provide the impetus for accelerated social progress. The old era is replaced by a new era – one collective psychology is replaced by another. This type of revolution results in all-round development and social progress." (Prout in a Nutshell Volume 4)

To comprehend the excerpt of Shrii P. R. Sarkar, one has to understand the concept of revolution and evolution, i.e. evolution means change occurred through a natural process, revolution means to bring change by application of force, and revolution is a subset of movement. Thus, the Samaj movement is for uniting the people to attain economic freedom so that they move on the path of spirituality.

To understand the social movement, first, we discuss society. Shrii PR Sarkar says that *samanam ejati iti samaj* – that community of individuals who have decided that we all will live together, enjoy happiness, and support each other in sorrow. To keep people united, some sentiment is necessary. As per Shrii P.R. Sarkar, Spiritual sentiment will unite humans - "Unity among the members of any society or social structure is absolutely necessary otherwise the structure will start disintegrating. Lack of Unity among the members of society because of too much self-interest in the

individual members, the formation of groups for economic or social advantage...not only brings about the downfall of society but also completely wipes it off from the face of the earth." (Prout in a Nutshell – 3) He further says, "Those who indulged in vain criticism and slandering instead of trying to remove the factors dividing the human race created even more societal problems. That's why there is more disunity than Unity in human society today. (Prout in a Nutshell – 7)

Humans have a natural attachment and love for the geographical environment in which he lives and the language he speaks. Humans have much love and attraction towards their things. Therefore, PROUT has divided the world into 244 Socio-Economic Units (samaj) for the proper economic and Cultural development and balanced development of individuals and society. Of these, there are 44 Socio-Economic Units (samaj) in India. For the development of each economic and social unit, it is necessary to pay attention to the following.

1. Studying in your local language will evolve your intelligence and eliminate a narrow approach to social issues.
2. Education in the local language will make people aware of the exploitation so that a responsible reaction against the exploitation arises naturally.
3. Education is necessary to cultivate rejection of all kinds of exploitation.

Teaching in one's mother tongue, or local language sensitises them to fight against exploitation. However, most people are busy dealing with existential problems that they can neither think about nor do anything for themselves. Thus, they become

trapped in an exploitative system. Some people cannot do anything because they fear their existence will be threatened if they protest. Now the time has come to create an exploitation-free society. If this is delayed, humanity will continue to suffer.

When the fissiparous tendencies are promoted by matter-centred classes weaponizing insecurity and hatred, the need for social movement is felt to make the society self-reliant, exploitation-free and indivisible. Therefore, the Samaj movement has to focus on a two-fold approach to achieve these goals.

- a. Political Movement.
- b. Socio Economic Movement

The purpose of forming a political party is to capture political power. So before joining the mass movement, if you have a political party, people will start thinking this is like any corrupt political party. It will divide people rather than unite them, defeating the Samaj movement's sole purpose. Participation from all walks and strata will not be achieved, and political rivalry will arise. Only party movement can be fulfilled in this scenario, not the mass.

A mass movement can be



formed by starting an economic or social movement, and people from all sections of society will join. The social movement is a social, economic, and cultural movement. It will lead to social unity. The movement may taste failure in two ways, either by brute power or money. If the movement is not strong, the capitalist tendencies can fail the movement with its power of money. Or they can divert the movement's core issues and goals in a different direction. Capitalists do not want to create moral people because honest people will not tolerate exploitation.

Samaj is a socio-economic-cultural movement; because it has to be all-inclusive. Samaj movement is for uniting the people to attain economic freedom so that they move on the path of spirituality. Sentimental factors like language, cultural heritage, historical achievements, and traditions (apart from common economic problems and potentialities, geographical features etc.) are used so that the masses will rise above the narrow sentiments of caste, creed, religion etc., and get united to make a self-confident, strong group to fight against all sorts of exploitations.

It is difficult for every person to get basic facilities in this capitalist system. That's why mass movement is needed for economic development, cultural expression and balanced development of society.

People who hail from the same samaj, speak the same language and have the same cultural expression need to unite for the mass movement. Participation and representation from all walks and sections of society in the movement is paramount. It includes all strata of society, i.e., youth, labourers, farmers, intellectuals and students.

First, we must identify the felt local problems and work on them

to solve them with local support. Then, people or all the stakeholders should be organised to deliberate on the solution and work on it with the same spirit to resolve the problems and sufferings.

“Local people are defined as those who have merged individual socioeconomic interests with the socioeconomic interests of the socioeconomic unit they live in. The primary consideration is whether or not people have merged their individual interests with their socioeconomic unit, regardless of their colour, creed, race, mother tongue, birthplace, etc. Those who earn their livelihood in a particular socioeconomic unit but spend their earnings in another socioeconomic unit should be considered as outsiders or non-local people, as this practice is not in accordance with the interests of the socioeconomic unit in which they are employed. It results in the drainage of the capital necessary for the continued growth of that unit and undermines its economic development.” (Prout in a Nutshell - 13, chapter- Socioeconomic Movements).

When people realize you are fighting for their cause, they will cooperate with you. When any Samaj knows the people's wavelength and the balance of scales of the public mind is with them, then only one can think of the registration of a political party. The Proutists will direct the social movement. Proutists should work as a non-political group, strictly adhering to the principles of Yama and Niyama. Presenting samaj as a political party before mass movement will defeat its spirit and purpose.

Since the Amra Bengali society/ Samaj has been registered as a political party, why should other samajas likewise not be registered? All the conditions essential for the movement in Bengal are present like Bengal has



a cultural identity; it is in their nature to raise their voices against exploitation; there's a strong language sentiment and economic consciousness. That's why perhaps, to begin with, Shri P. R. Sarkar might have granted permission to register Amra Bengali. Therefore, the respective Samaj leaders must examine their stage and maturity before registering as a political party.

The Samaj movement starts with positivity. An example is popularising the concept of block-level (or district-level) planning for 100% employment and economic prosperity. For this, the samaj activists have to prepare block-level planning. In case sufficient technical experts are unavailable among samaj activists, the assistance of outside persons can be sought. Government employees from different departments, environment activists, farmers, NGOs, etc., who hail from the area or are genuinely concerned about the region will come forward to participate.

It is reiterated that presenting Samaj as a political party before

the establishment of the mass movement will defeat its spirit and purpose. If Samaj is registered as a political party, many in the society will stay away. That's why Shri P. R. Sarkar has divided the world into Socio-economic Units.

From the heat and dust and the churn of the Samaj socio-economic movements, from among those who direct these movements, Sadvipras will emerge. They will engineer change in society at the social and economic levels.

Therefore, first, we should carry the local people along and organize mass movements to address the current burning issues of the Samaj. Thus, samaj movement should put their step forward keeping in mind the aim and object:

*'aya nijaparo veti gaanā
laghucetasām udāracaritānā tu
vasudhaiva kuumbakam॥*

(This is mine, that is his, say of the small minded people, The wise believe that the entire world is one family) thereby will aid in achieving the purpose and goal of the Samaj movement. ●

Huge Pendency in INDIAN COURTS

Arun Prakash



Still the end of last year, the number of pending cases of all types and at all levels rose to 5 crores. More than 85% of cases were pending in district courts. Over 169,000 were pending for more than 30 years in the district and high courts. The pendency of cases costs 1.5%-2% of India's GDP.

Expressing concern over the issue of pendency, India's Law Minister Kiren Rijiju recently said that while such cases are likely to

come down in the Supreme Court and high courts, the "real challenge" is in the lower courts. He added that he felt that very shortly, the Indian judiciary would go paperless. He said the judicial process is time-consuming, and a digital judiciary will greatly impact the justice delivery system; once all documents are available at the click of a button, things would move faster.

The oft-repeated cliché "Justice delayed is justice denied" is very true. There are many reasons for this immense pendency

in courts all over India. The main reason for the enormous backlog of cases is the inadequate infrastructure that has resulted in overburdened courts and many other reasons. In addition, the commoner has become more aware of his rights. Though this is not exactly negative, it has contributed to the immense backlog of cases. Recent socio-economic advances and increased awareness of legal rights have encouraged more people to approach law courts for justice.

Public Interest Litigation (PIL) and others

Public Interest Litigation (PIL) and other new rights, e.g. Right to Information (RTI) and judicial activism, are among the most effective tools for safeguarding citizens' rights. It is imperative to implement social policies on problems such as individual rights, civil rights, public morality, etc. So, PILs being taken up by the courts have given birth to judicial activism, and the active judiciary's introduction of new devices like PIL resulted in more cases.

Judicial activism in India means the Supreme Court takes up public interest suits that courts abroad would never touch. It can be condemned as judicial overreach or lauded as judicial activism. Judicial activism is good when the executive is seen as insensitive and unwilling to implement its own laws and rules or when corruption and partisanship vitiate administrative action beyond any reasonable limit, then judicial activism is a good thing.

But judicial activism can also be excessive. Democracy requires that legislators and executives should be able to act quickly and not be hobbled for years by legal delays and public interest petitions. It is difficult to imagine any other democracy where many laws and executive actions are challenged in public interest suits. India needs a judiciary that works and legislatures and executives that work. So, to cut delays, the court should hear only cases that merit its scarce time. Litigants have typically fought in lower courts for over a decade and are desperate for closure. Every irrelevant case taken up by the Supreme Court is an injustice to those waiting in the queue.

For instance, in the recent case of demonetization, which the Supreme Court heard, it was argued that it was important for the courts to judge whether the RBI was adequately consulted. We can

have a thousand debates on the relations between the executive and other agencies, but the Supreme Court is not a debating society with an infinity of time. Its time is scarce, so only the most important issues merit a hearing.

Another reason is — there are not enough judges (only around 21,000). The current Judge to Population ratio is 10 to 1 million. The Law Commission report in 1987 recommends at least 50 to 1 million. And the population has increased by over 25 crores since 1987. What is problematic is that the Centre states that the States must take the lead in increasing the number of judges, and the States say the Centre should take the lead. Also, the number of judges is low, and the appointed judges are taking extended vacations, especially in High Courts.

There are not enough courts

Similarly, the Indian Judiciary has insufficient resources, so there are not enough courts. Both Centre and States are showing disinterest in spending on the Judiciary. The Indian Judiciary is allotted only 0.1% to 0.4% of the budget. Hence, modernization and computerization have not embraced all the courts.

And there is too much litigation from the Government Side, the largest litigant in India, responsible for around half the pending cases. Sometimes, one government department sues the other, leaving decision-making to the courts. Also, in most cases, when the government files a case, it is seen that the government side fails to prove the point.

The quality of judges in lower courts is low.

The Indian Judiciary has badly failed to attract the best brains and talented students. As the quality of judges in lower courts is not always up to the mark or the judgments are not satisfactory, appeals are filed against the

decisions in higher courts, which again increases the number of cases. The peculiar reason for such dissatisfaction is that Judges lack specialization or are unwilling to exert themselves enough.

Then there's vague drafting of laws.

Obsolete laws, which are part of the statute books, faulty or vague drafting of laws, and their multiple interpretations by several courts are also reasons for prolonged litigation. Some of these laws date back to the 1880s. Even now, if a person wants to do something, he is shown a law drafted in the century before last and told to stop doing it.

Among all these is the frequent and regular granting of adjournments by the courts at the behest of lawyers, which, apart from breaking the backs of the litigants, compounds the delay. Recently the Supreme Court came down heavily on a Madhya Pradesh court on this. Our milords should take a cue from a Pakistani judge who changed their justice system overnight through a simple resolve: a case will be adjourned only under three conditions: "If the lawyer dies, if the accused dies, and if I die." Trials there that would take ten years now take one!

Finally, in India, it is hoped that our honourable judges are using their spare time fruitfully to ponder what is troublesome for the nation. And the nation gives them enough spare time to do so. These statistics would open my eyes. Currently, the Supreme Court has 193 working days (nearly 200) in a year, High Courts 210 and Trial Courts 245 days. Moreover, the Supreme Court has these vacations in its annual calendar—a summer break of 45 days, a winter break of 15 days, a Holi vacation of one week and a Diwali vacation of two weeks! ●



Cross East Asia, populations are greying faster than anywhere else in the world, and while younger generations shrink, older increase. Yoshihito Oonami wants to retire and give his worn body a rest. So instead, every morning at 1:30, Mr Oonami, 73, wakes up and drives an hour to a fresh produce market on an islet in Tokyo Bay. While loading vegetables into his car, he frequently lifts heavy boxes and strains his back. He then drives across Japan's capital city, making restaurant deliveries up to 10 times



As Asian Societies Age, 'Retirement' Just Means More Work

Ageing

■ Bhupendra Singh

East Asian Societies

daily. Mr Oonami says, “As long as my body lets me, I need to keep working, it is not fun, but I do it to survive.”

With populations across East Asia declining and fewer young people entering the workforce, increasingly workers like Mr Oonami are toiling well into their 70s and beyond. Companies desperately need them, and older employees desperately need the work. Moreover, early retirement ages have bloated the pension rolls, making it difficult for governments in Asia to pay retirees enough money each month to live on. Demographers have warned about this looming time bomb in wealthy nations for years.

But Japan and its neighbours have already started to feel the effects, with governments, companies — and most of all, older residents — grappling with the far-reaching consequences of an ageing society. The changes have been most pronounced in the workplace.

For some older people, the demand for workers has given them new opportunities and leverage with employers, especially if they felt pushed out by early retirement ages in favour of younger workers. Now, these ageing nations are grappling with how to adapt to the new reality — and potential benefits — of an older workforce while ensuring that people can retire after a

lifetime of work without falling into poverty. In East Asia, where populations are greying faster than anywhere else, more flexibility is urgently needed. Japan, South Korea and China have all been forced to experiment with policy changes — such as corporate subsidies and retirement adjustments — to accommodate population shifts. With the rest of the world not far behind, many nations will likely look to Asia for lessons in responding to similar crises.

Social scientists say that one would panic about it and run around being frightened, or feel it's a very complex problem, and that we will have to adapt our lives and institutions in lots and lots of different ways for the needs of the older workers. Long before Mr. Oonami started delivering vegetables, he tried working in an office and as a cabdriver. Eventually, he decided he preferred the solo life of a truck driver. That decision consigned him to perennial contract work rather than one with lifelong jobs of guaranteed salaries, regular promotions and corporate retirement benefits. As a truck

driver, Mr. Oonami would often lift heavy cargo, which became unsustainable for him after he turned 50. His doctor told him that so much lifting had worn down the cartilage in his spine. “Moving the boxes was very rough for my body,” Mr. Oonami said. He switched to smaller delivery jobs and landed a contract at the produce market about 15 years ago. Yet even as he approached Japan's traditional retirement age of 60, Mr. Oonami could not afford to stop working. Having held contract jobs his entire career, he is only eligible for a basic national pension — about 60,000 yen a month, or about \$477 — not enough to cover his daily expenses.

Japan isn't the only country in East Asia where older people have no choice but to keep working. In South Korea, with a poverty rate among older people close to 40 percent, a similar proportion of those 65 and older still work. In Hong Kong, one in eight older residents works. The ratio is more than a quarter in Japan — compared to 18 percent in the United States. In Japan and South Korea, temporary job agencies and

unions have formed to support these older labourers. While many must work out of economic necessity, employers have become more reliant on them.

To cope with what demographers call “super aging societies,” policymakers in East Asia initially focused on trying to spur births and tinkering with immigration laws to shore up workforces. However, such measures have done little to alter the ageing trend line, as fertility rates have plunged and many countries have resisted large-scale immigration plans. That has left employers desperate for workers. In Japan, for example, surveys show that as many as half of companies report shortages of full-time workers. As a result, older workers have stepped in to fill the gaps. “We have so much unused and untapped working capacity,” said Naohiro Ogawa, a visiting fellow at the Asian Development Bank Institute.

The temporary recruitment agency in Tokyo — Koureisha specifies that applicants must be at least sixty. Fumio Murazeki, its president, believes employers were growing more receptive to



hiring older workers. “People who are over 65, or even up until 75, they are very active and healthy,” he said. Rental car agencies and building concierge services are eager to hire older workers, said Mr Murazeki. One popular job for older contract workers is to sit in the front passenger seat of service vehicles while electricians or gas repairers assist clients on-site. The contract worker can move the vehicle when necessary, helping companies avoid parking tickets or traffic fines, Mr Murazeki said. At Tokyo Community, a property management company for apartment complexes in Tokyo, almost half the staff is 65 or older, said Hiroyuki Ikeda, head of human resources. With a salary of just 2,300,000 yen a year — less than \$17,146 — the jobs do not appeal to younger workers, while older people are willing to accept the low pay to supplement their pension income. In addition, the Japanese government now provides subsidies to small- and medium-sized companies that install accommodations for older workers, like additional railings on staircases or extra rest areas for workers.

Gloria, a company outside of Tokyo that produces uniforms for police officers, abolished its mandatory retirement age six



years ago because of a labour shortage. Instead, the company built a ramp to the front door to assist its older workers. In addition, it moved electrical wires previously strung across the factory floor to the walls and ceilings to prevent employees from tripping. On its website, Gloria says it wants to “become a company where people can work until they themselves decide they want to quit.” Likewise, Aikawa Unsou, a delivery company, installed grip handles in its trucks

to help drivers climb into and out of vehicles. “The work environment has to be ageing-friendly,” said Feng Qiushi, an anthropology and sociology associate professor at the National University of Singapore. “They need to provide training opportunities and provide flexible retirement opportunities.”

While social media often showcases inspirational septuagenarians lifting weights or running successful small businesses, older people in China, Hong Kong, Japan or South Korea are just as likely to be low-paid office cleaners, grocery store clerks, delivery service drivers or security guards. Full-time, stable employment is reserved for the relatively young in these countries, leaving many older workers to engage in precarious, low-wage contract jobs after being forced out of their long-term employment by low retirement ages. Moreover, state-backed pensions usually do not cover basic living expenses once they retire. In Japan, China and South Korea, the average monthly pension is under \$500.





Governments are trying to nudge higher retirement ages to help fend off a labour shortage and keep up with pension payments, which has created resistance. In China, “people get angry,” said Sheying Chen, a professor of public administration and social policy at Pace University in New York. “They say, ‘I worked full-time and made it to retirement age — you want me to work more?’” More often, it is employers who balk at legislative efforts to lift the retirement age. With the prevalent seniority-based pay systems across East Asia, companies want to push older employees off the payroll, not extend their time on the job. “Even if older people are equally productive, if you're forced to pay them more because they have been hanging around longer, their cost-effectiveness is going to be lower,” said Philip O’Keefe, a director at the Centre of Excellence in Population Aging Research in Sydney, Australia.

Some older people are forging their own working opportunities without more government support. Li Man, 67,

was forced to retire at 45 from a job at a state-owned refrigerated warehouse in Beijing. The government told her it was too dangerous to continue working in freezing temperatures. Ms Li figured she could still work “in the prime time of my life” to afford her daughter’s tuition and living expenses at film school in California. Instead, she started babysitting and selling homemade dishes to neighbours. “Going back to work has made me less anxious,” said Ms Li. Yet lately, she has been plagued by back pain and high blood pressure. “Maybe it’s time to retire,” she said.

Eiji Sudo, 69, who had spent more than four decades working maintenance and construction jobs at Tokyo Gas, a natural gas supplier, wasn’t quite ready to retire. He retired at 60, and the company offered him a four-day-a-week contract at about half his peak salary. Once he hit 65, though, the company would no longer extend his contract, he said. To earn enough money to travel comfortably with his wife, Kazue, Mr Sudo wanted to keep working. So he signed up with the Koureisha

agency and now works as a contractor for Asuqa, a gas pipeline company in Tokyo. Three days a week, he drives to neighbourhoods where the company installs or repairs gas lines, knocking on doors to inform residents of upcoming construction work.

About one in 10 workers at Asuqa are 65 or older. Most officially retired at 60 — the company’s retirement age — and subsequently accepted contract roles at reduced pay. “We have always had to supplement by rehiring older workers,” said Kazuyuki Tabata, an Asuqa manager. Mr Sudo said he enjoys travelling across multiple suburbs and meeting new people. He said it keeps him curious and engaged and is better than playing golf daily. “Every person is different,” he said. “It is good for me.” His wife, who faithfully packs him a homemade lunch when he works, appreciates that he gets out of the house: It means they both have “our ‘me time,’” she said. Still, “it would be very sad for anyone to die working,” she added. “You shouldn’t work until the end like that.” ●

People of mixed British and Indian descent were referred to as Eurasians and later as Anglo-Indians. The community in India is mainly urban and Christian. It traces its origin to the earliest contact between Europe and India in 1498 when Vasco da Gama landed at Calicut (now Kozhikode) on the Malabar Coast of southwestern India. Portuguese Governor Alfonso de Albuquerque, who conquered the city of Goa in 1510, encouraged his countrymen to marry Indian women to help establish Portuguese authority. The offspring of those marriages were known as Luso-Indians. As the Portuguese gradually abandoned their Indian possessions or lost dominance in the region, Luso-Indians merged with the local Indian population. For the most part, the descendants of these Luso-Indians are known today as Goans, and they are concentrated in the state of Goa, in Mumbai, and along India's western coast. Especially in the larger

The Forgotten ANGLO INDIANS

 Karunakshim Vatsalam



“People of mixed British and Indian descent were referred to as Eurasians and later as Anglo-Indians.”

cities, such as Mumbai, Madras (now Chennai), and Calcutta (now Kolkata), the Goans and other Luso-Indians retained much of their European cultural heritage and amalgamated with the local community of mixed British and Indian descent—those for whom the Anglo-Indian ethnic category would ultimately be named.

Soon after 1639, when the British East India Company established a settlement in Madras, the Company reluctantly allowed their soldiers to marry locals. Married soldiers with family ties were thought more likely to be better behaved than bachelors. As a result, the British military population in India increased from a few hundred soldiers in the mid-18th century to 18,000 in the Royal and Company armies of 1790. In the 18th and early 19th centuries, it was typical for British officers and soldiers to take local wives and start families, owing to an initial lack of British women in India. Looking at the records of wills from the early 1780s, a third of all British men in India named their Indian wives and children their inheritors.



Many second-generation British officers were born and raised in India, such as Lieutenant-Colonel James Kirkpatrick, born in Madras in 1764, who wore Mughal-style clothing and spoke Tamil as a first language. Though Christians by birth, they adopted local Hindu and Muslim customs such as not eating pork and beef and even becoming vegetarians. Kirkpatrick, in 1800 married a Muslim noblewoman Khair-un-Nissa, after converting to Islam, had two children, and assimilated into the Hyderabad elite. Others like William Fraser similarly assimilated themselves into local Indian culture, even patronizing artists and poets such as Ghalib, and had dozens of children with many women, both Hindu and Muslim.

Records of Wills and the last testaments of those years show at least a third of all British men in India married Indian women or left their inheritance to their children. 83 of 217 wills in Bengal between 1780 and 1785 contained bequests to Indian companions or their natural children, and rich gentlemen often left substantial bequests to their Indian partners and children. When Major Thomas Naylor in 1782 bequeathed to his companion Muckmul Patna Rs 4000, a bungalow and a garden at Berhampore, hackery, bullocks, her jewels, clothes, and all their male and female slaves, he treated her as he might a wife. Where they could, gentlemen sent their Anglo-Indian daughters to the ladies' seminaries in Presidency towns and to England for further education and were married off to fellow officers. Some daughters of senior officers became substantial heiresses whose wealth was a notable marital attraction. Still, there were many daughters of impoverished officers raised in military orphanages after their fathers' deaths who were lucky if they found suitable husbands.



In the late eighteenth century, few could afford a wife on their salaries. It costs approximately £50 a year (Rs 24 to Rs 40 a month) to provide for the wants of an Indian companion and her attendants, compared with £600 to support a British wife. Besides saving in very few cases, when men returned to Britain, the Indian companion and children were left behind in India. British soldiers could not bring them, and many officers and civil servants feared the social and cultural consequences. The public argument against marriages to Indian and Anglo-Indian women skirted the question of race and focused on their social

consequences: they did not mix well in British society, lacked education, were reluctant to leave India when their men retired, and - probably most important of all - would handicap the career of an ambitious husband.

During British rule in India, children born to unions between British and Indian parents formed the basis of the Anglo-Indian community. This new ethnic group formed a small yet significant portion of the population and became well-represented in certain administrative roles. Anglo-Indians were mainly isolated from both British and Indian society. Their documented numbers dwindled from roughly 300,000 at

independence in 1947 to about 125,000 – 150,000 in modern-day India. During much of the time that Britain ruled India (the Raj), British-Indian relationships faced stigma, which meant that the ethnicity of some Anglo-Indians was undocumented or identified incorrectly.

By 1830, the proportion of illegitimate births registered in the Bengal Presidency had fallen to 10%. Moreover, British wills in Bengal in 1830-32 record less than one in four bequests to Indian women and their children compared with almost two in five fifty years earlier. For all the social disapproval, however, officers and Company servants continued to marry Anglo-Indian girls. It was thought that in Calcutta alone, there were more than 500 marriageable Anglo-Indian girls in

the 1820s, compared to 250 English Women in the whole of Bengal.

Over generations, Anglo-Indians intermarried with other Anglo-Indians to form a community that developed its own culture. Their English language school system, strongly Anglo-influenced culture, cuisine, dress, and Christian beliefs helped bind them together. Still, it separated them from fellow Indians and British society, which considered them half-castes. But the community identified itself with and was accepted by the British until 1791 when Anglo-Indians were excluded from positions of authority in the civil, military and marine services in the East India Company. During the Uprising of 1857, Anglo-Indians sided with the British and consequently

received favoured treatment from the British government in preference to other Indians. Over time, Anglo-Indians were specifically recruited into the Customs and Excise, Post and Telegraphs, Forest Department, the railways and teaching professions – but they were also employed in many other fields. The Anglo-Indian community also had a role as go-betweens in introducing Western musical styles, harmonies and instruments in post-Independence India. During the colonial era, genres including ragtime and jazz were played by bands for the social elites, and these bands often contained Anglo-Indian members.

In 1821, a pamphlet entitled "Thoughts on how to better the condition of Indo-Britons" was written to promote the removal of prejudices existing in the minds of young Eurasians against engaging in trades. It was followed up by another pamphlet entitled "An Appeal on behalf of Indo-Britons." Prominent Eurasians in Calcutta formed the "East Indian Committee", intending to petition the British Parliament to redress their grievances. John William Ricketts, a pioneer in the Eurasian cause, volunteered to proceed to England. His mission was successful, and on his return to India, by way of Madras, he received a standing ovation from his countrymen in that presidency; and was afterwards warmly welcomed in Calcutta, where a report of his mission was read at a public meeting held in the Calcutta Town Hall. In April 1834, in obedience to an Act of Parliament passed in August 1833, the Indian government was forced to grant government jobs to Anglo-Indians.

By the mid-19th century, there were around 40,000 British soldiers, but fewer than 2,000 British officials were present in India. With the opening of the



Anglo Indian mother and daughter circa 1920



Suez Canal, passage time reduced considerably, and many British women came to India. As they began arriving in large numbers around the early to mid-19th century, primarily as family members of officers and soldiers, British men became less likely to marry Indian women. Intermarriage declined after the events of the 1857 Uprising, after which several anti-miscegenation laws were implemented. As a result, Eurasians were neglected by both the British and the Indians.

Over the years, things became more and more difficult for most other Anglo Indians. Increasingly they came to suffer the worst racial prejudice of Indians and the British: the Indians refused to mix with them. Despite their fierce and unwavering loyalty to Britain, the English rigidly excluded them from their clubs and drawing rooms. Behind their backs, they were cruelly ridiculed as 'chee-chees', 'Blackie Whites' or 'Chutney Marys'. Though they achieved modest prosperity in government jobs, they remained effectively ostracized by rulers and ruled. As Independence approached, an idea was mooted for a Eurasian Homeland—a kind of Anglo-India Israel in the Chota Nagpur Hills in Southern Bihar, present-day Jharkhand. But the scheme never materialized, and

McCluskie Gunj, their supposed homeland, lies desolate and impoverished today.

They identified themselves as people of India rather than a specific region such as the Punjab or Bengal. In 1919, they were given one reserved seat in the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi. They were for the British against the nationalist Congress Party. In 1926 the All India Anglo-Indian Association was founded to represent their interests; it holds that Anglo-Indians are unique in that they are Christians, speak English as their mother tongue, and have a historical link to Europe and India and celebrate August 2, as World Anglo Indian Day.

During the Indian independence movement, the All India Anglo-Indian Association was opposed to the partition of India; it is then president Frank Anthony criticized the colonial authorities for "racial discrimination in matters of pay and allowances, and for failing to acknowledge the sterling military and civil contributions made by Anglo-Indians to the Raj.

Their position at the time of India's independence was difficult. Given their English ancestry, many felt a loyalty to a British "home" that most had never seen and where they would gain little social acceptance. Feeling that India was

no longer safe, they left en-masse; some 2500 made new homes in America, Canada and Australia, where their hockey teams, the Harlequins, gained brief celebrity. Many more immigrated to England. 'Back home', their distinct character was lost in the post-war melting pot, like Engelbert Humperdinck (born Gerald Dorsey from Madras). Cliff Richard (Born Henry Webb, the son of an Anglo-Indian train driver from Lucknow) became famous until they had thrown away their old names and identities like a set of unwanted and unfashionable clothes.

Many Anglo-Indians left the country in 1947, hoping to make a new life. Instead, they emigrated to the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, the United States and New Zealand, forming part of the Indian Diaspora. The exodus continued through the 1950s and 1960s, and by the late 1990s, most had left, with many of the remaining Anglo-Indians still aspiring to go. Yet many have adapted to local communities in India. Those who remained in India—the optimistic, the old or the nostalgic stayed in the face of the same Indian resentment. An increasing generation, especially the girls, tended to intermarry and could blend in. Still, others, particularly the older ones, found it hard to change their ways. ●

Continued from previous issue

The Fight Over Land and Genetically Engineered AGRICULTURE



 **Mitchel Cohen**

Slay the Devil

Monsanto Is The Devil, And The Devil Must Be Slain. But It's Not The Only One. In the U.S., powerful figures such as Hillary Clinton, Bill Gates, former President Barack Obama, and current President Joe Biden have rejected the demands of the anti-GMO coalitions.

Fed up with the pharmaceutical /agribusiness company lies, movements like “Millions Against Monsanto,” networks like the “Organic Consumers

Association,” dynamic “activists” such as Rev. Billy and his “Church of Stop Shopping Choir” (whose performances of “Monsanto Is the Devil” galvanized New York audiences for weeks on end). The movement for community-supported agriculture coalesced family farmers and anti-corporate activists. They exposed the government agencies' revolving door—an arrangement whereby the big agriculture and pharmaceutical corporations place their hirelings onto U.S. regulatory boards such as the Food and Drug Administration. Monsanto's

lackeys in government write their laws and block even tepid demands for the labelling of GMO products at Monsanto's behest.

Billionaire Bill Gates—a major investor in Monsanto and proponent of genetic engineering (as well as experimental vaccines in the so-called “Third World”)—seized the opportunities he envisioned (and created) regarding a future of massive food shortages in global grain production, that we are seeing today; Gates began buying up acre after acre of farmland on which to grow GM crops. Former Secretary

of State Hillary Clinton used taxpayer money to stomp worldwide promoting Monsanto's controversial GM seeds; she mouthed the industry's talking points as though they were gospel. The Clinton State Department intervened at Monsanto's request "to undermine legislation that might restrict sales of genetically engineered seeds." U.S. diplomats brought financial, diplomatic, and even military pressure on behalf of Monsanto and other biotech corporations.

The World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) is [sic] helping biotech run the latest war in Ukraine," writes Christina Sarich in *Natural Society*. "Make no mistake that what is happening in Ukraine now is deeply tied to the interests of Monsanto, Dow, Bayer, and other big players in the poison food game. Exposed by the California-based *Oakland Institute* in 2014, the World Bank and IMF provided a loan of \$17 billion to Ukraine. Hidden from mainstream media exposure in the U.S., the World Bank and IMF loan "has opened up Ukraine to major corporate inroads," writes Joyce Nelson in *The Ecologist*. "Loan conditions are forcing the deeply indebted country to open up to GMO crops, and lift the ban on private sector land ownership. U.S. corporations are jubilant at the 'goldmine' that awaits them."

In late 2013, the then president of Ukraine, Viktor

Yanukovych, rejected a European Union association agreement tied to the \$17 billion IMF loan, whose terms are only now being revealed. In *The Ecologist* in September 2014, Joyce Nelson thoroughly examines the IMF-Ukraine loan packages. The following few paragraphs below are taken directly from that report: Instead, Yanukovych chose a Russian aid package worth \$15 billion-plus a discount on Russian natural gas. His decision was a major factor in the ensuing deadly protests that led to his ouster from office in February 2014 and the ongoing crisis.

Ukrainian law bars farmers from growing GM crops. Long considered "the breadbasket of Europe," Ukraine's rich black soil is ideal for growing grains, and in 2012 Ukrainian farmers harvested more than 20 million tons of corn."

War

Russia's military incursion into Ukraine has both obscured and heightened the competition between the GMO/non-GMO modalities for the export of grains and the use of vast acreage of land for GMO cultivation, just as it is a direct outgrowth of the more obvious fight between the U.S. and Russia over who controls the energy pipelines to Europe. One important consequence of the U.S.'s response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine—the administration of sanctions on Russia accepted by many countries in Europe but not in Asia or South

America—is the driving up of the costs of fuel, fertilizer, pasta and bread throughout the world, as well as increasing farmers' economic insecurities which threaten consistent and dependable food production. Add to that, perhaps, the recent explosions, fires, and plane crashes at nearly two dozen food processing facilities across Canada and the U.S.

Also driving up prices in the U.S. are large, sudden and unexpected mandates reducing available railroad transport of nitrogen fertilizers, diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) and other farm-related equipment, just in time for spring planting season. Russia, which manufactures much of the world's fertilizer (estimated at 25%), derives it—along with the energy pipelined to Europe—from fracked "natural" gas. Fracking—banned now in New York State but not in Pennsylvania or other states—is as environmentally destructive in Russia as everywhere else. There was a moment a few years ago when things might have gone differently when, along with the marketing of organic foods, came opposition to the use of synthetic fertilizer and pesticides (part of the definition of what in Europe is meant by what it means to be "organic"). But with Russia now as fully invested in "mainstream" corporate agricultural technology as the U.S., that hope is greatly diminished.





Sanctions' Unexpected Consequences

On March 27, 2020, Russia's Minister of Agriculture signed Order #160, establishing a process for registering genetically engineered (GE) events for feed use, "making it possible for those events to be imported after registration." However, the existing mechanism for registering GE products for food use is still in effect. Therefore, as of October 2020, Russia continues to ban cultivating and breeding GE plants and animals.

Still, in Russia, just as in the U.S., the ideology of industrial modernization is disguised as "progress." Individuals and social movements are portrayed as "anti-progress," which trivializes opposition to the imposition of the IMF's neoliberal structural adjustment programs. Today in Russia, food regulation is virtually non-existent. Sausages, fish, mineral water, wines, chocolate and even bread are adulterated. Diabetes is rampant. And the liberal intelligentsia uses the cover of "scientific progress" to dispense support for Monsanto and its genetically modified agriculture—a hallmark of the IMF's structural

adjustment programs.

United Nations World Food Program Executive Director David Beasley, who oversees international aid to refugees, warns that his agency is out of money. "We need a billion dollars for the next six months and we have just a little over 10 percent of that," he warns. That is an amount that the world's wealthier countries could make up in a heartbeat ... if they cared about the suffering of people in Ukraine, Yemen, Libya and

elsewhere. But, unfortunately, it is chicken feed compared to the amounts President Biden has asked Congress to provide. They could end this war (and most wars, such as the bombing of Yemen) on the spin of a dime instead of perpetuating it.

But they would rather keep the fight over who controls the energy pipelines to Europe and whether to allow genetically engineered crops in Ukraine—among other decisions and actions that Russia, Ukraine, Europe, and the U.S. have been dancing to.

In June 2020, "the IMF approved an 18-month, \$5 billion loan program with Ukraine," writes the Bretton Woods Project. The Ukraine government lifted the 19-year moratorium on selling state-owned agricultural lands after sustained pressure from international finance institutions Olena Borodina with the Ukrainian Rural Development Network commented that "the agribusiness interests and oligarchs will be the primary beneficiaries of such reform...This will only further marginalize smallholder farmers and risks severing them from their most valuable resource."



Ukraine saw several large protests against the privatization of its land and agriculture. A bill lifting the moratorium was passed in an emergency Parliamentary session in March. According to a May press release by U.S.-based think-tank the Oakland Institute, this coincided with mandatory Covid-19 stay-at-home orders across the country, “effectively quelling potential protests or demonstrations.” U.S. sanctions imposed on Russia reflect the return of U.S. National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski's geo-political Cold War stratagems—what he termed the “Grand Chessboard.” While Ukraine's Zelensky government welcomed the IMF and World Bank's stipulations insisting on the growing of Monsanto's GM crops, it is not clear at the time of this writing how tightly Putin and the Russian Duma are willing to chain Russia to existing relations with Monsanto/Bayer and the technologies of the genetic engineering of agriculture.

On the one hand, the war has driven Russia further away from its prior anti-GMO policies, even though one could surmise that its new relationship with Monsanto

would be negated by the sanctions and push Russia back into the “organic food” direction. But the Russian government seems now willing to forego its potential market for organic crops *and* energy in Europe, blocked by the sanctions, and pivot to China. On the other hand, China has been driven closer to Russia due to the war in Ukraine—especially as the potentially huge market opens for Russia's products there and in other Asian countries which do not claim the same strictures on how food is grown.

As I had written earlier, it is complicated, with several different forces at play. We never hear about the Oakland Institute's May 2020 analysis in U.S. mainstream corporate media, nor even on some erstwhile “Left” media like *Democracy Now*. Who would know, in the U.S., that “on April 28, 2020, President Volodymyr Zelensky signed a bill into law authorizing the sale of farmland in Ukraine, lifting a moratorium in place since 2001. This bill is part of a series of policy reforms upon which the IMF conditioned its \$8 billion loan package. “Amidst an ongoing economic crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented

street protests against the lifting of the moratorium by Ukrainians who are overwhelmingly opposed to the law.”

The Oakland Institute concludes that “opening the sale of land will benefit Western agribusiness interests and oligarchs who will now further consolidate ownership of land and intensify large-scale, industrial agriculture in 'Europe's Breadbasket,' at the expense of Ukrainian farmers. While conditionalities accompanying Western foreign assistance are common practice, the way Ukraine has been forced to put its land for sale has no precedent in modern history.”

Meanwhile, the World Food Program's David Beasley's appeal to push politics aside to help the world's children is especially gut-wrenching...and ignored unless it serves some immediate ideological purpose: “Don't make us make decisions between taking food from the children in Ukraine to the children in Yemen,” Beasley pleads. But that is precisely what the U.S., Russia, and Ukraine sectors of the world's capitalist class are doing. ●

Concluded



Asia's Long Working Hours

"Employees in Asia have the longest working hours globally but it comes at the price of productivity and ill health."

Aditi Sengupta

Workers in Asia are known for their complex working ethics, which have contributed to its miraculous economic rise. But has it come at a cost? According to an AIA Vitality Healthiest Workplace survey conducted by Rand Europe, which surveyed more than 26,000 employees in the Asia-Pacific region regarding their health and well-being, Asian countries top the longest working hours globally.

The unwanted top spot went to Hong Kong, with 46% of employees working more than 50 hours weekly. Coming in a distant second is Sri Lanka, which has 35%, Malaysia at 33%, Thailand at 24% and Australia at 20%.

But working longer doesn't necessarily mean more work has been done. For example, Hong Kong lost 77.4 days in the average amount of productive time lost per year due to absenteeism and presenteeism, which means when someone is present at work but is too ill or distracted to perform effectively. Malaysia lost 73.4 days, Thailand 56, Australia 50.4 days and Sri Lanka 48.

Here is a short overview of what working hours in Asia look like:

- Singapore : Employees work eight hours per day and 44 hours per week.
- Malaysia : Employees work eight hours per day and 48 hours per week.
- Indonesia : Employees are working 40 hours per week, seven hours per day for a six-day workweek or eight hours per day for a five-day workweek.
- Hong Kong : There are no statutory provisions on working hours for employees aged 18 and above.
- China : Employees work eight hours per day and 40 hours per week.
- Japan : Employees work eight hours per day and 40 hours per week.
- Thailand : Employees work eight hours per day and 48 hours per week.

Samson Tse, who runs a master's programme in counselling at the University of Hong Kong, explained the plight of Hong Kong workers. "Employees in Hong Kong suffer from a lack of physical and mental space. There is little job security, and sick workplace cultures, transmitted from stressed bosses, are commonplace," he said.

Asia's pressure cooker work culture has affected productivity and workers' physical and mental health.



For example, 61% of Hong Kong workers reported feeling unwell due to work-related stress, followed by Malaysia at 57%, Thailand at 53% and Sri Lanka at 43%. Sri Lanka has the biggest proportion of employees reporting depression at 15%, with Hong Kong at 12%, Malaysia at 7%, Australia at 5% and Thailand at 4.5%.

Poor diet has also contributed to Asian workers' poor health, with nearly 85% of Hong Kong and Malaysia employees eating fewer than five portions of fruit and vegetables daily. These countries also had the highest proportion of physically inactive employees. And the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization has warned that Asia could suffer the consequences of an unhealthy workforce in the long run.

"Poor dietary choices and sedentary lifestyles are leading the countries of Asia and the Pacific into a future of lower productivity and ballooning public healthcare costs." The average length of working time in different countries depends on several economic, social and societal factors. Another important factor is the extent to which part-time work is widespread, which is less common in developing countries. In 2017, the Southeast Asian state of Cambodia had the longest average working hours worldwide among 66 countries studied. The working time per worker was around 2,456 hours per year, just under 47 hours per week. In Germany, on the

other hand, it was just under 1,354 hours per year (26 per week and 3.7 per anniversary), which was the lowest of all the countries studied.

In most countries, the weekly working hours are decreasing with increasing prosperity and higher productivity. In Germany, for example, the average weekly working time of a person not employed in agriculture and working full-time fell by almost 40 percent between 1870 and 2010. In developed countries, the average working time is usually significantly shorter than in developing countries. However, there are exceptions. These include countries such as South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan which still have comparable long working hours despite high incomes.

Everybody's talking about how traditional 9 to 5 jobs are dying out in favour of the pros and cons of flexible working schedules. But, we cannot help but wonder: are we working more now, with greater flexibility, or we're at the same eight hour work span? So, we decided to cover standard working hours in Asia in this blog post. First, however, we cannot even start this article without looking into our work hours during the past century. The standard 40-hour workweek is a recent thing, believe it or not. In the U.S., the law was passed in the 1940s, and before 1817 people worked up to 100 hours a week! And even though many things have changed for the West, the East remained one of the harshest working environments of the modern age.

The country with the highest number of working hours in Asia, South Korea, passed a law in July 2018. They reduced their working week from 68 hours to 53 hours to boost the productivity of their workers. Boosting productivity was not the sole reason behind this decision. The South Korean government believes a shorter workweek will increase the country's birth rate. By working more, we achieve less.

Average work hours per week were the best in Asia and the Pacific in 2019, significantly in South and East Asia. In contrast, it was the shortest in North America, Europe, and Central Asia, significantly in northern, southern and western Europe, in keeping with the newest report of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Among developing nations, India, China and Brazil have much longer working hours, with Brazil exhibiting a downward pattern which started in the 1970s, as per the report titled 'Working Time and Work Life Balance Around the World'.

Globally, the sectors that had the longest weekly work hours in 2019 have been wholesale and retail commerce (49.1 hours), transport and communications (48.2 hours) and manufacturing (47.6 hours). Those with the shortest weekly hours of work have been agriculture (37.9 hours), training (39.3 hours) and well-being companies (39.8 hours). However, excessive calls for the well-being companies sector arising from the Covid pandemic would have considerably elevated common work hours, per the report.

The occupational group with the longest common

work hours was plant and machine operators and assemblers, who laboured 48.2 hours per week on a mean, adopted by service and gross sales staff at 47.0 hours per week. In distinction, each professional and staff in elementary occupations, together with expert agricultural staff, laboured a mean of 40.2 hours per week. The report mentioned that diminished working hours and extra versatile working time preparations, like those used throughout the Covid disaster, can profit economies, enterprises and staff and lay the bottom for more significant and wholesome work-life stability.

The ILO research, primarily based on knowledge collected from 160 international locations — it's the primary one performed by the Organisation that focuses on work-life stability — discovered that a substantial portion of the world workforce is working both lengthy or quick hours when in comparison with regular eight-hour day/40 hour working week. For example, over half of all staff were frequently placed in over 48 hours per week, while a fifth of the worldwide workforce worked quick (half-time) hours of less than 35 per week. Moreover, informal economic system staff are likely to have lengthy or quick hours, as the report mentions.

The report checked out two principal features of working time: working hours and working time preparations, and the consequences of each on enterprise efficiency and staff's work-life stability. It features a range of new statistics overlapping work hours, each earlier than and throughout the Covid disaster. The research additionally regarded the disaster response measures governments and companies used throughout the pandemic to assist in preserving organisations functioning and staff employed. It discovered that an elevated proportion of staff on diminished hours helped to forestall job losses.

Long-term changes are additionally highlighted. "The large-scale implementation of telework nearly everywhere in the world that was feasible to do so, changed...the nature of employment, most likely for the foreseeable future," as per the report. The Covid crisis measures additionally yielded highly effective new proof that gives staff extra flexibility in how the place and after they work might be optimistic for them and enterprise, for instance, by bettering productivity. Conversely, the report states that limiting flexibility brings substantial costs, including increased staff turnover. "There is a substantial amount of evidence that work—life balance policies provide significant benefits to enterprises, supporting the argument that such policies are a 'win-win' for both employers and employees," it says.

"The so-called 'Great Resignation' phenomenon has placed work-life balance at the forefront of social and labour market issues in the post-pandemic world," mentioned Jon Messenger, lead writer of the report. "This report shows if we apply some of the lessons of Covid crisis and look carefully at the way working hours are structured, and their overall length, we can create a win-win, improving both business performance and work-life balance," he mentioned. ●

IRAN PROTESTS

Doctors Treating Protesters Killed, Tortured and Detained

An increasing number of doctors and medical workers continue to be arrested, detained, tortured and killed by Islamic Republic forces for treating wounded protesters, in direct violation of international law that requires the protection of medical personnel as they carry out their duty to provide care to any individual in need.

Since the outbreak of anti-state protests across Iran after the September 2022 death in state custody of 22-year-old Jina Mahsa Amini, more than 81 doctors, health workers and medical students in Iran have been detained. According to the latest report from the Iranian Committee Following the Status of Detainees, two women physicians have died under highly suspicious circumstances. Many of the detentions were carried out without any warrant. “The beating and detaining of doctors who are trying to treat wounded individuals lay bare the inhumanity and criminality of the Islamic Republic,” said Hadi Ghaemi, executive director of the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI). “Protecting doctors who are treating the wounded is one of the most basic principles of international law. The global medical community, as well as the UN and governments worldwide, should forcefully and publicly demand that the Islamic Republic immediately cease its detainment and violence against doctors treating protesters,” Ghaemi added.

CHRI also calls on the UN Fact-Finding Mission, established by the UN Human Rights Council in November 2022, to investigate the Islamic Republic's atrocities while repressing nationwide protests, to investigate these cases, and to hold Iranian authorities accountable. The World Medical Association states, “Governments ... should comply with the Geneva Conventions, to ensure that physicians and other healthcare professionals provide care to everyone in need in situations of armed conflict and other situations of violence. This obligation includes a requirement to protect healthcare personnel and facilities.” In addition, physicians have a responsibility to treat all wounded individuals and “not abandon the wounded and sick,” irrespective of circumstance. “All of these cases regarding the state's persecution of doctors and medical workers should be referred to the Fact-Finding Mission established at the UN Human Rights Council for investigation,” Ghaemi noted.

The doctors have been accused of disturbing national security and committing a crime for treating rioters. Still, as doctors, we make an oath to treat every human being, whether they're critics of the government or those who are suppressing them. The assistant prosecutor of Branch 3 of the Revolutionary Court in Mahabad, Yasser Gozli, told us he would teach us a lesson so that no other doctor would ever dare to treat those who deserve to die for opposing the Islamic Republic. We appeared to be treated with respect and weren't physically abused, but the way we were interrogated was excruciating because they went on for hours without a break. They told us lies and wanted us to admit that helping the injured had nothing to do with our duty as doctors but was somewhat politically motivated.

On Nurses Day, November 30, 2022, several Basij (a paramilitary force under the authority of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps) militia commanders visited a medical centre in Karaj Alborz province, causing a confrontation with the staff. “Without coordinating their plans with us, officers from the local Basij unit came over to the clinic to offer gifts, flowers and sweets to the medical staff and took pictures of every one of them. But the staff, who are mostly women, returned all the flowers and gifts and objected to being filmed and photographed,” one of the clinic personnel told CHRI.

“An argument broke out between the head of the clinic, who is a woman, and the Basij officers. She defended her personnel and now the security officials have made threats against her.”

The source continued, “Since the protests began, many of our female colleagues have been showing up at work without wearing a headscarf. They were angry that the same Basij militiamen who beat women to death on the streets, were giving them flowers. We didn't want to allow them to publish photos of us for their propaganda.”

Global Medical Community Must Speak Out Against Severe Violation of International Law. ●

TIME COMES

- Shrii Shrii Ānandamūrti

F

our hundred crores [4,000,000,000] years ago, this earth was created. It attained its present structure two hundred twenty-three crores [2,230,000,000] years ago. But there was only a gaseous form of 800 crores [8,000,000,000] years ago. Everything changes wherever there is time, space, or person factors. And hence it is that things are temporary. The root word of "temporary" is tempus, from which "time" also comes.

Self-centred persons don't have Paramatman as their goal but something else. Outwardly they say that Paramatman should be obtained, but in their inner mind, they desire something else. Such people outwardly say that Paramatman should be obtained, but in the inner mind, they desire fame and riches and have the crude object as their goal. Whatever the inner mind says is the goal of the Jiiva (microcosm). Whatever the feeling in the external mind is not the goal. But in the inner mind, because his goal is the crude object, his ultimate achievement is Prakṛtiliina. Prakṛti means the phenomenal world. Their existence will be transformed into the phenomenal world, i.e. the conscious man becomes a crude object. There is one more word for the Samadhi in the Prakṛta Shakti: Jada Samadhi. Jada Samadhi is very much below human existence, and to be free from that is also very difficult. After crores of years, there will be human life. Just see how dangerous it is! So with Parama Puruṣa, don't have two personalities, inside something and outside something else. Become the same as you are within. The entire mental structure, the whole of ectoplasmic stuff, will be converted into the quinquemental world.

Some people have the correct Esana but don't have the right direction. They know that Parama Puruṣa is the goal but lack natural movement. It is said that spiritual practice should not be performed by studying from books. For it, a Preceptor is essential. Reading the book or hearing from others, if a man starts doing Sadhana, that too is dangerous because, in that case, a clear conception of the goal is not formed. Hence one does not know where one is going. The boat is sailing, but the sailor does not know where the boat will go. The sailor will ultimately get exhausted and have some accidents in the long run. There are also some people who have the correct Esana but don't have the correct direction. They know that Parama Puruṣa is the goal but they don't have the real direction. It is said that spiritual practice should not be performed by studying from books. For it, a Preceptor is essential. Reading the book or hearing from others if a man starts doing Sadhana, that too is dangerous because in that case a clear conception about the goal is not formed. Hence one does not know where one is going. The boat is sailing but the sailor does not know where the boat will go. The sailor will get exhausted ultimately and will have some accident in the long run.

In that case, when such persons die, the state after death is known as Videhaliina. Their existence is not finished herein, but their feelings remain in the ideational world as an abstract. This, too, is as dangerous as Jada Samadhi. The difference between Jada Samadhi and Videhaliina is that in the former, there is folly because of a hidden desire. Still, there is no folly in the latter, but the correct direction could not be had. Hence everybody should know that without supervision, nothing should be done. Everything should be done with proper direction and proper guidance. For instance, people utter the word revolution loudly, but revolution does not mean putting buses and trains on fire or removing the railway lines. It causes damage to the government, and the government is the people's. Therefore it is damaging to the people themselves. All these are destructive approaches. The persons who make such harmful methods lack knowledge. Just like that, if some hodge-podge is made in Sadhana, it means a lack of knowledge. Because of this, both the individual and society are harmed. So this is Videhaliina. Hence Videhaliina will surely be there if there is no love for Paramatman.

And where there is love for Paramatman, there is action and knowledge also, service to humanity is also there, Sadhana is also being performed, in that sense, if there is duality (Dvaeta Bhava) between Parama Puruṣa and the devotee – in such a case if there is an excess of Iishvara Bhava (Cosmic Ideation), Sadhaka enjoys Bliss, and temporarily he becomes free from miseries. That state of Bliss is Bhava Samadhi. The persons who attain Bhava Samadhi are devotees, but the duality exists. Everybody is born out of Parama Puruṣa, so how can there be two – the devotee and the Parama Puruṣa? Hence in Bhava Samadhi, a much higher stage is not attained. As long as there is Bhava Samadhi, there is Bliss, but after this, the aspirant is an ordinary human being. ●



PBI is Here to Change the Status Quo in Politics



On 4th March, the committee of Proutist Bloc India (Vidarbha) met at the state guest house in Yavatmal city, Maharashtra. Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta, National Convener of PBI, was also present in the meeting. He had reached there to join 'Vidharbha Jagraan Yatra' and march from Yavatmal to Nagpur the next day on 5th March.

Addressing the participants, he explained in detail how the movement for statehood to Vidarbha can be made successful. He said, "The politics today has been dominated by immoral forces. The only objective of politicians and their political parties is to grab power by hook or crook. And for this, they can stoop to any extent individually or in coalition with others. In short, there has been no end to the plight of common man even in independent India. But now PBI is here, fully determined to change the status quo, and make morality the only currency in politics."

Later, there was a detailed discussion on the progress of the party in the region. Madhukar Nistane, Convener,

Godda District (Jharkhand) Committee of PBI Formed

As a part of the ongoing efforts of the party to expand nationwide, Proutist Bloc, India's national convener Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta met local Proutists, and other educated conscious youths in Godda, Jharkhand on 12 March.

The meeting led to the formation of ad hoc Godda district committee of the party, comprising of 9 members, with Sunil Kumar as its president and Asim Ananda as the general secretary.

Speaking to the participants, Acharya Santosananda said, "PBI was conceived and founded by the



greatest personality of all times, Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, to provide a platform for moralists in India. Shri PR Sarkar wanted to see the moralists work collectively and in a coordinated way to seize political power democratically, especially by participating in electoral politics." He went on to describe the history of PBI—the times and circumstances when the party was launched.

He also talked about the party's electoral performance up to the last polls.

Following his address, the ad hoc Godda district committee was formed. The committee resolved to enroll at least 100 new members of the party within a month. Additionally, the committee passed a resolution to shortlist candidates for the upcoming Vidhan Sabha and Lok Sabha elections. The committee also decided to contest maximum seats in Santhal Pargana region.

PBI Holds a Big Public Meeting in Ghatanji



Proutist Bloc, India (Vidarbha) held a public meeting on 14th February in Ghatanji, Maharashtra, aimed at mobilizing the general public to participate in the upcoming Vidarbha Nirman Yatra. The yatra is scheduled to be held from 25th February to 5th March, and the purpose of the meeting was to garner support for the cause of development in the region.

The meeting was organized under the leadership of Madhukar Nistane, Convener of PBI (Vidarbha), who emphasized the importance of the yatra in bringing about positive change in Vidarbha. The event was attended by several prominent political figures, including Vivek Dehankar, state president of PBI, along with district president Arunji Kapile, city president Ravi Kuthe, youth president Mohan Pawar, Vidarbha coordinator Madhukar Nistane, Arunbhau Kedar and Mukesh Masurkar of Jai Vidarbha Party.

The leaders present at the meeting spoke at length about the various issues faced by the people of Vidarbha, including the agrarian crisis, lack of infrastructure, and unemployment. They emphasized the need for greater focus on the development of the region, and called upon the people to participate in the upcoming yatra.

The Vidarbha Nirman Yatra is seen as a significant step towards addressing the long-standing issues faced by the people of Vidarbha, and the public meeting organized by the Proutist Bloc, India (Vidarbha) was aimed at mobilizing support for the cause. The event was well-attended, with people from all walks of life participating in the discussions and sharing their views on the issues facing the region.

The meeting concluded with the leaders expressing their gratitude to the people of Vidarbha for their support and participation, and urging them to continue to work towards the development of the region.





AMURT/AMURTEL Receives Accolades in Turkey and Syria



A humanitarian operation led by AMURT/AMURTEL (Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team), with volunteers from Turkey, Italy, and Romania, has been successfully completed after two weeks of service. The team provided much-needed humanitarian aid to the people in Turkey, including the distribution of essential items like tents, sleeping bags, blankets, and hygiene items.

According to reports, the team distributed 105 six-person tents, 40 winter sleeping bags, 1000 undergarments, 500 blankets, 1,200 hygiene items, 5,000 pairs of winter socks, and 300 pieces of clothing. In addition, 350 children received toys, coloring books, and crayons.

The team also restocked three medical clinics in the area with \$3,700 worth of medicines and set up five foldable sofa beds for the doctors. Furthermore, the team conducted an all-day training on





Emergency Psychology, Self-care, and PSEA for 32 psychologists.

The humanitarian operation by AMURT/AMURTEL has received wide coverage in the media, with reports of their work published in several prominent newspapers.

AMURT/AMURTEL is continuing their relief work in Syria too, where they have been providing essential services to those affected by the ongoing conflict. Their work in both Turkey and Syria is commendable and has been widely appreciated by the people in the region.

Vidarbha Nirman Yatra : PBI Participates in a Big Way

A number of social and political organisations in Vidarbha joined hands to hold Vidarbha Nirman Yatra, a public awareness march from 25 February to 5 March.

To ensure that the message reached as many people as possible, the march passed through most of the major towns and cities of the region. A number of office-bearers and cadres of Proutist Bloc, India (PBI), under the leadership of Madhukar Nistane, Convener (PBI, Vidarbha), also participated in the march.



The primary objective of the march was to highlight the issues of Vidarbha, and thereby create public awareness and support for the movement for statehood to Vidarbha. The movement for statehood to Vidarbha has been gaining momentum in recent years, with many people in the region feeling that they are being neglected by the government.

The yatra covered several villages and towns in the Vidarbha region, with meetings and rallies held in each location. The leaders who were present at the yatra addressed the crowd, focusing on the need for development in the region and promising to work towards the betterment of the people. They also discussed various issues such as the agrarian crisis, unemployment, and lack of infrastructure in the region. The yatra concluded on March 5th, with the organizers expressing their gratitude to the people of Vidarbha for their support and participation.

Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta, National Convener of PBI, also walked with marchers in the last phase of the March from Yavatmal to Nagpur.

Addressing the enthusiastic marchers, he said, "There has been a constant demand for statehood to Vidarbha; and there have been many movements to this end, but sadly, the people of Vidarbha have always been betrayed.

"I am glad to see your enthusiasm and commitment. I am sure that now this long cherished dream will soon take a physical shape. Besides, we also need to ensure that the leadership of the movement is in the hands of the moralists, who should also stay at the helm even after the goal is met." He assured of PBI's full cooperation and support to the movement. He said the party will, individually and collectively, fight for Vidarbha tooth and nail.

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

TAKE THEM WITH YOU

ÁMI JETE CÁI, TUMI NIYE JÁO
BÁDHÁR BÁNDHÁ SAB CHINRE DÁO
ÁMI JETE CÁI, TUMI NIYE JÁO

MOR CITTERA CAINCALATÁ
MOR HRDAYERA UDBELATÁ
MOR MANERA UCCHVALATÁ
SAB KICHU MOR TUMI NIYE JÁO

I wish to go,
Please take me with You.
Tear off all obstructing bondages.

The restlessness of my being,
The agitation of my heart,
The passion of my mind
My everything,
Take them with You.





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