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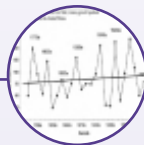
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MOTHER COURAGEOUS

Ravina, a 32-year-old mother of an infant, jumped into an overflowing nullah in Bhopal on October 1st evening to save two strangers being swept away. She placed her eight-month-old son on the ground, jumped into the turbulent waters and managed to swim back with one of the men, but the other died. "There were dozens of men standing and watching the two men drowning. If even one of them had helped, we'd have saved them both," brave heart Ravina said. The body of the other victim was found downstream the next day. Both of them were farmers. Police lauded Ravina's courage, and the SHO Bains of Nazirabad rewarded her.

The two farmers, Jitendra Ahirwar and Raju Ahirwar of Kadhaiyashah in Nazirabad had gone to spray pesticide on Jitendra's soya bean crop in Khajuriya village in Bhopal district, Madhya Pradesh. When they crossed over, the water was shallow. In the evening, however, it rained heavily, and they found their way back blocked by a raging flood. Nevertheless, Jitendra and Raju tried to cross the nullah ignoring warnings from the villagers. They had walked a few steps into the swirling waters when both were swept away. Ravina, who lives in a hut nearby, was cradling her infant son when she saw the two drownings.

She did not hesitate even for a moment. She hurriedly placed her baby on the ground, jumped into the swirling waters and started swimming towards the two men. She managed to grab Jitendra, pull him to safety, and jump back in to save Raju, but it was too late. Raju's brother Suresh informed the police, after which rescuers arrived and went looking for him. It was not until the next day that they found his body. According to the SHO, Ravina was heartbroken that she couldn't save Raju. ●



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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

ONLY PROUT CAN BRIDGE THE GAP

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while inaugurating flats for economically weaker sections of the society at Kalkaji Extension, New Delhi, on November 2, very rightly said, “bridge the rich-poor gap”. He handed over 575 keys to those who had completed all the formalities in a complex of 3024 flats. Authorities built the flats for those residing in the nearby slums and working as domestic help. Each flat cost around Rs 11.41 lakhs, and those allotted had to pay Rs 1.42 lakhs, including Rs 30,000 for five years of maintenance charges. As reported in national media, the PM also said that for decades, the system of governance was plagued by the mentality that poverty is a poor people’s issue. Still, for him, the poor remained central to policy-making for his government. Words were very comforting indeed. They, along with other numerous welfare schemes announced and in operation, no doubt show that the PM’s heart is in the right place.

The Census defines slums as areas unsuited for human habitation. As per the latest Census and press reports, in Delhi, the capital city, with a population of 22 million, 1.8 million live in 22 slum clusters. And as per the Indian Express report of February 11, 2019, India has 6.5 crores of slum dwellers. And in the larger context of national poverty eradication, are these welfare schemes enough? As per a UNDP report, even though 415 million people exited multidimensional poverty in 15 years from 2005/6 to 2019/21, India, with 228.9 million, still has the highest number of poor people in the world. Out of this, children are the hardest hit, with one in five, i.e. 97 million poor children.

Regarding unemployment, the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy estimates that 6.5 % of India’s population comes to over nine crores of people without jobs. Present estimates indicate that there are around 1.8 crore government and 1.2 crore private jobs, i.e. three crores. To reach the figure of 9 crores would require three times more employment. One simple way to double the present employment would be to reduce working hours by half. That is from the current eight hours to four. This suggestion may sound facetious to economists schooled in capitalistic thought but is certainly doable, provided the leaders have a genuine love for the people and show courage to be satisfied with lesser profits with a rational distribution of wealth as per Proutistic economic principles.

For that, there must be a Proutist government, which alone could permanently bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. The Proutist Bloc India (PBI) must therefore go all out to win elections and capture power in the centre and the states to implement these economic principles. As Prout’s founder Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, proclaimed in June 1979, “when PROUT is established, everybody’s progress is guaranteed, people will not seek jobs – jobs will seek people”. ●



Revolution Against Dogma

An amazing eye-opener for all readers of Prout. As Prout's founder rightly says that all dogma must be rooted out. That is what the young women of Iran are trying to do.

- Abhishekh Sharma, Lucknow

Women - Iran's New Revolutionaries

An excellent cover story, especially in the context of the current turmoil in Iran. The Editorial is also very apt. Human beings like their freedom, and no one likes to be chained by dogma. These are the millennial generation, who are at the forefront of revolutionary societal changes.

- Veena Sarpotdar, Nasik

Problem of Wealth Concentration

The well-researched article throws into the spotlight what ails our present economic system. No wealth concentration should exist, and no individual or group should have unlimited wealth. It is the root cause of the world's current problems.

- George Thomas, Norway

At The Dawn of the New year

With so much turmoil happening worldwide, there is an urgent need for (i) the development of cosmic thinking and new academic disciplines, such as cosmology and yogapathy, (ii) formulation of innovative governance of cities and states, for social justice and equality, and progressive living of the people, (iii) promoting global citizenship

and harmony among nations, (iv) liberation of oppressed countries: Ukraine, Yemen, and Palestine, (v) women's rights and empowerment (such as in Iran, Afghanistan) and (vi) addressing the UN sustainable development goals.

May we also initiate a new vision and role for Ananda Marga in communities in India and worldwide towards developing a new era society: (i) developing new knowledge across academic disciplines and even new sciences—such as the science of mind and consciousness, (ii) involving spiritual civilization, living in union with the all-pervading divinity, (iii) promoting global citizenship, of one's identity transcending geographic and political borders and (iv) inscribing a cosmic outlook, and thinking beyond the confines of this physical world.

I hope that going forward; we can all come together as per the:

S a m ' g a c h a d h v a m ' sam'vadadhvam, Let us move together, let us sing together, Sam'vomanna'msi ja'nata'm, Let us come to know our minds together. Yatha'vah susaha'sati, as we, to truly know one another, become one to catalyze a cosmic civilization on this Earth.

- Acarya Dhanjoo Ghista USA

Revisiting Nationalism

The concept of nationalism has outlived its purpose in this science and space exploration age. Instead, humanity needs to now focus on universalism and how humans should reach for other planets and the stars.

- Sampath Nair, Kottayam

Western Ghats Ecology

It's a good treatise on planet Earth's frail and vulnerable ecology. But, of course, the more people are environmentally conscious, the better.

- Lakshmi Das, Howrah.

The Jute Press

It is regrettable that despite laws and guidelines, women, usually the sole breadwinners in the family, have to face such humiliation and abuse at the workplace. All employers have a moral duty to protect their female employees and should be held accountable.

- Rajashree Ramdas, Mysuru

Ghana's Susu System

Microfinance has empowered many and lifted millions out of poverty. More and more people should facilitate this system started by its founder Muhammad Yunus in Bangladesh.

- Kalidas Rai, Jammu

Climate Change and Debt Crisis

Pakistan's floods show a striking example of the damaging effects of climate change worldwide. It is a serious environmental issue that the world's leaders need to tackle urgently.

- Harish Malhotra, Gurugram

Rights of Nature

Nature should never be taken for granted, for it can strike back with devastating consequences. However, this movement highlighting the rights of nature is a step in the right direction.

- Carlos Da Costa, Brazil

Climate Change and Food Crisis

Some of the effects of climate change are heat waves, cold waves and unseasonal and erratic rain. It naturally affects food production, which depends on nature for irrigation, and is reducing the yield of crops substantially. In turn, it causes malnutrition and affects children's nutrition, especially in developing countries. So we must do something urgently. ●

- Tritpti Gupta, Delhi

Bridging the Gap Between Affluent and Common People

■ Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

There are many attractions in society, and it is human nature to run after them. Communism exploited this human tendency by promising to give equal wealth to all. But the mundane resources in the world are limited, so is it possible to provide equal wealth to all? No, and the attempt to do so is a dazzling ostentation. Now communism has met its end. Communism was a “bogusism” – mere ostentation of verbose language and nothing else.

Rather than giving equal wealth to all, the proper approach is ensuring everyone is guaranteed the minimum requirements of life. As the income of people increases,

the radius of their minimum requirements should also increase. To bridge the gap between the more affluent and common people, we have to increase the minimum requirements for all. In addition, We should provide the maximum amenities to meritorious persons to enable them to render greater service to society. It should be done by setting aside some wealth for those with special qualities, but the provision of the maximum amenities should not go against the common interest.

However, we can add something more. Besides increasing the maximum amenities of meritorious people, we must also increase the maximum amenities available to common people. Meritorious people will earn more than common people, and this earning will include their

maximum amenities. But the common people should not be deprived of maximum amenities, so there should be efforts to give them as much of the maximum amenities as possible. There will still be a gap between the maximum amenities of the common people and the maximum amenities of the meritorious, but there should be constant efforts to reduce this gap. Thus, the common people should also receive more and more amenities. If maximum amenities are not provided to common people, no doubt there will be progress in society, but there will always remain the scope for imperfection in future. Therefore, what constitutes both the minimum requirements and the maximum amenities should be ever-increasing. This idea is a new appendix to PROUT.





If the maximum amenities of meritorious people become excessively high, then the minimum requirements of common people should be immediately increased. For example, if a person with special qualities has a motorbike and an ordinary person has a bicycle, there is a balanced adjustment. But if someone with special qualities has a car, we should immediately try to provide the common people with motorbikes.

A proverb refers to plain living and high thinking, but what is plain living? Plain living eighty years ago was not the same as today, so plain living changes from age to age. The standard of value also varies from age to age. Thus, both the minimum requirements and the maximum amenities will vary from age to age, and both will be ever-increasing. If this were not so, there would be no economic progress in society.

So, our approach should be to provide the minimum requirements of the Age to all, the maximum amenities of the Age to those with special qualities according to the degree of their merit, and the maximum amenities to the common people as well. The

minimum requirements of the Age as per their money value plus the maximum amenities of the Age as per their money value are to be fixed and refixed, and fixed again and refixed again, and so on. In this way, you must elevate the people's standard – you must go on elevating their standard of living.

The Amenities of Life

The amenities of life are those things which make life easy. The word “amenity” comes from the Old Latin word *amenus*, which means “to fulfil the desire” or “to make the position easy”. Amenities mean physical and psychic longings. Whatever will satisfy the physical and psychic longings of the people will be the amenities of the age. We should favour common people with maximum amenities. For example, previously, people used to dig a well to get drinking water, carrying it to their houses. Later water tanks were constructed, and now drinking water comes through pipes. In this way, the amenities of life have increased, and life has become easier. Though the aim is to get water, the system of getting it has become more effortless and more convenient.

Take another example. Suppose school children receive the minimum requirements of life. If they are provided with free snacks, this amenity will be over and above the minimum requirements. Again, in most trains, there are first and second-class compartments. First-class passengers already get special facilities, but if free tea or coffee is given to the passengers in the second-class compartments, it will be considered an amenity.

More and more amenities will have to be provided to the common people with the progress of society. This process will generate the impetus to collect and utilize more and more resources, and the proper utilization of the collective resources will elevate the standard of living of both the common mass and the meritorious people.

As the need for the minimum requirements is fulfilled and the supply of the maximum amenities increases, the struggle for daily subsistence will gradually decrease. People's lives will become increasingly easy and enjoyable. For this reason, PROUT guarantees the minimum requirements and the maximum amenities to all.

One Age will go, and another will come, and human longings will also change. In one Age, a particular type of breakfast is accepted as the standard, and in the following Age, it will be considered substandard. Today people eat bread and butter, but according to the standard of the next Age, people may eat fried rice or sweet rice. Thus, the maximum amenities of life should be guaranteed to everyone, and we should continuously elevate their standard.

The jurisdiction of maximum amenities will go on expanding with the progress of human beings. Human beings are marching ahead, and their longing for different psycho-physical pabula is also increasing. We must guarantee the minimum requirements of the Age, and the maximum amenities must also be guaranteed. We must provide maximum amenities in the existing environment.

As life becomes increasingly easy, there will be greater opportunities for intellectual pursuits. A day will come when there will be hardly any need for human beings to work. It may sound strange today, and perhaps we might not like to hear such a thing, but that day will surely come. Physicality will be transformed into more and more intellectuality, and intellectuality will be transformed into the culminating point of spirituality. To move ahead from physicality to intellectuality is the Proutistic order. It is the surest movement of human life – it is the surest movement of human destiny.

Whatever is feasible and practical has been said in Prout. Marxism built castles in the air and encouraged people to dream a meaningless dream. Prout has not done this, nor will Prout do it. Prout will do that which is feasible and practical.

If the common people and the



meritorious people are treated the same, the capable people will not be encouraged to develop their higher potentiality. This is the reason why brain drain is happening in India. When talented people leave India, they leave it for good. Providing exceptional amenities for those with special capabilities will stop the brain drain.

PROUT's approach is to Guarantee the minimum requirements for all, maximum amenities for all, and special amenities for people with special capabilities. This approach will ensure ever-increasing acceleration in the socio-economic sphere. The question of retardation does not arise; even the question of maintaining speed does not arise. There must be acceleration. Acceleration is the spirit of life, the spirit of existence, and the spirit of the existential faculty. One may not be a genius. One may be a member of the ordinary public and not properly accepted or respected by all. Still, even then, one will get the minimum requirements and maximum amenities in an ever-increasing manner according to the environmental conditions and demands of the day.

So what is the significance of this new approach?

- 1) Minimum requirements are to be guaranteed to all.
- 2) Special amenities are to be guaranteed to capable people. In addition, special amenities are for people of special caliber as per the environmental condition of the particular age.
- 3) Maximum amenities are guaranteed to all, even to those with no special qualities – to the common people of common caliber. Maximum amenities are to be guaranteed to all as per environmental conditions. These amenities are for those of ordinary caliber – the common people, the so-called downtrodden humanity.
- 4) All three above are never-ending processes, and they will go on increasing according to the collective potentialities.

This appendix to our philosophy may be small, but it is of a progressive nature and a progressive character. It has far-reaching implications for the future. ●



A TIME TO PREPARE

Awareness of an economic crisis does not mean that we should bide our time until the collapse occurs. We should prepare ourselves for it now..



Ravi Logan

We can see the future that's coming at us, those of us paying attention. It's presently a little indistinct, but each day the picture sharpens in resolution. It is a future that is both ominous with potential for destruction and brilliant with potential for transformation.

The side that is terrifying is the growing “mega-crisis” — a system of many crises, linked in their underlying primary cause to the greed of capitalism. There is now much evidence of this emerging mega-crisis:

- ❖ Massive flooding in the Indus Valley, tarmacs buckling from unprecedented heat in London airports, the Great Salt Lake drying out from protracted draught, electric system brownouts from air-conditioning overload, catastrophic forest fires and mega-storms — all resulting from a changing climate
- ❖ The uber-rich unrelentingly concentrate more and more wealth under their control, destabilizing global economic resiliency
- ❖ Neo-fascists expanding their capacity for violence, deepening their penetration into the affairs of state, dividing the society into “us” and “the other”, and bringing down democracies
- ❖ The uncertainty of supply chains and the dwindling resource base disrupting the smooth functioning of the global economy
- ❖ More and more of humanity without life-sustaining access to clean water
- ❖ Anxiety, depression, withdrawal, frustration, sadness and anger claiming more and more of our emotional space
- ❖ The degradation and humiliation of the least among us and the different among us, even as the hearts of good people yearn to see the inclusion and care for all
- ❖ Social media amplifying ever more dangerous disinformation and conspiracy beliefs, making

pressing social and ecological problems more and more resistant to solutions

- ❖ The vibrancy of nature in retreat in virtually every corner of the planet.

Rising alongside these crises, there is an upwelling of planetary trends that give hope that another, a better world is possible.

- ✓ Humanity linked planetarily as never before—our oneness palpable and beautiful
- ✓ New technologies becoming available that can amplify our human potentials
- ✓ Eco-villages, cohousing and neo-tribal longings that are rebinding our fragmented social existence
- ✓ The rise of powerful paradigms – like permaculture and solidarity economy and PROUT -- that seek to reintegrate the complex layers of natural and economic systems in ways that are life- sustaining and assure healthy abundance
- ✓ The renewed and widening interest in perennial philosophies and spiritual traditions that deepen awareness of Self and of connectivity with the ground of being
- ✓ A growing reverence for the planet that is our mother
- ✓ People are celebrating the social and cultural enrichment of living in our diversity.

These two opposing trends point to a time of transition, of transformation. On the one hand, there is the turmoil being caused by the worn-out ways of the past; on the other hand, there are the ways of a new era rising to find expression and bring new life to society. These two paths cannot coexist; they will clash and bring struggle. There will come a great crisis, but it is out of the crisis that change will occur.

Dornbusch's Law

In economics, a proposition known as Dornbusch's Law states: *Crises take longer to arrive than you can imagine, but when they do come, they happen faster than you can imagine.*

Economists first applied Dornbusch's Law to currency crises, but its relevance is not limited to this sphere. For example, Putin's ambitions to invade and annex Ukraine built up over the years. One day the life of the Ukrainians went on as usual, and the next, their lives were in turmoil, with millions scrambling to survive or to fight.

Dornbusch's Law applies as well to our dire global situation. The global systems of power and commerce have remained remarkably resilient, despite being more and more out of balance. Built on greed, the capitalist global economic system is inherently unsustainable. Yet, it continues to resist collapse. Prediction after prediction of the downfall of capitalism have come and gone, but the system remains preternaturally alive.

But how long can it endure? The greed-driven workings of modern capitalism undermine the vitality of social and ecological life, spawning crisis after crisis. Consider some of the realms of crises that are primarily caused by the dynamics of capitalism: Climate change is unrelentingly approaching a point of no return. Environmental destruction is rapidly degrading the integrity of ecosystems. Humanity is using resources at a rate far beyond earth's carrying capacity. Authoritarian rule, plutocracy and ethnic chauvinism are paralyzing democracy. And the concentration of wealth by the uber-wealthy has brought unprecedented disparity.

When an economic crisis comes, it will certainly hit suddenly; it will happen much faster than we would





have thought. And with much greater intensity. Shrii P. R. Sarkar foretold that “Capitalism is not congenial to the integrated growth of human progress. A day is therefore sure to come when Capitalism will burst like a firecracker.”

We go about our business, blinded to the looming future of capitalism imploding. Even as the Russian troops amassed on Ukraine's borders, Ukrainians did not expect the full-scale Russian invasion; there was not an all-out mobilization in preparation. Life went on pretty much as usual. It is now humanity's situation writ large.

There may be many who recognize that our situation is serious and who have dedicated themselves to bringing change. But even most of those who press for change do not take seriously the possibility that crises will come with the sudden onset predicted by Dornbusch's Law and Shrii Sarkar's warning.

When Russian troops did cross the border, the Ukrainians quickly united and dedicated themselves with resolve and bravery to defending their country. Similarly, when the economic collapse comes on a scale that fully grabs our attention, humanity will quickly pull together in our common struggle for survival. At that time, systems will break down, but at the same time, possibilities will open up. And these conditions change — profound change — can happen relatively quickly. Many people will be actively looking for new ways of social and economic functioning, and institutional resistance to progressive reforms will soon fade. People will demand change and struggle for change.

Now is the Time to Prepare

The full-on crisis of capitalism will bring an opportunity for a “reverse shock doctrine.” However, rather than using the shock of an economic crisis as an opportunity to impose neoliberal reforms, as the global capitalists have so often done, the crisis of capitalism will be our time to roll out a vision for an

equitable, sustainable, cooperative, life-supporting economy.

Shrii P. R. Sarkar has advised, “Wise people should utilize this moment. We are near the last stage of the capitalist era. If an impact is created, it will help the suffering humanity. It is the most opportune moment. If the positive impact we create coincides with the explosion [of capitalism], the effect will be excellent.”

Awareness that a full-on economic crisis can open up opportunities does not mean we should bide our time until the collapse is upon us. On the contrary, the wiser we use this time of relative normalcy to prepare and position ourselves, the more effective our capacity to respond to collapse will be, and the more significant our positive impact will be. The fate of many people and much life on the planet will be determined by how well we've prepared.

What does adequate preparation look like? First, of course, many things need to be done. But most of all, if we are to guide change forward, we first need to provide clear answers to two essential questions that famed economist David Korten has put forward: What is the vision of the new society we want to birth? And what is the pathway we need to take to get there?

If the vision and strategy are made clear, these ideas, these understandings, will come to the fore and be taken up and put into practice. The visionary theory of the Progressive Utilization approach will no longer be confined to a few romantic minds. It will emerge with force to provide a reliable pathway forward for humanity.

The wait for the moment of action has been longer than many had imagined. In the late 1960s, Paul Ehrlich, in *The Population Bomb*, famously predicted that human created ecological collapse would cause millions to be starving by the 1970s. The petroleum geologist, M. Herbert King, expected global oil production to peak to occur in the 1990s creating a devastating energy crisis. Ravi Batra warned of a global economic depression by the 1990s; Thom Hartmann predicted economic depression by 2016.

Prediction after prediction has been made of capitalism's crisis. Yet, the resiliency of the capitalist system has held. But it's become more and more fragile. There's now a feeling — shared by many — that the centre will not long hold. That capitalism is now colliding with the pent-up contradiction between how nature works and capitalism's extractive economy works. And the contradiction between the needs of the many and capitalism's indulgences in the greed of the few.

If these growing premonitions prove correct, we are rapidly coming into the time of capitalism's implosion and a time to be actively engaged in building a new era to birth a new world. ●

In 2020, the world observed the largest one-year debt surge since WWII. It rose to \$ 226 trillion as the world was hit by a global health crisis and a deep recession. According to the International Monetary Fund the same year global debt rose to 256% of GDP. Debt figures had already reached crisis levels, but now governments must combat a world of record-high public and private debt levels, new virus mutations, and rising inflation. And when debt rises faster than economic output as has been happening recently, higher government debt implies more state interference in the economy and higher taxes in the future. Also such a crisis ends with severe limits on investment in education, health, and infrastructure among other things. These crises often spark civil unrest and government collapse, delivering a lasting setback to the growth prospects of the affected country.

What is International Debt

Historically, governments incurred debt to pay for wars and counteract recessions, while the private sector — businesses, homebuyers, and consumers — did so during times of prosperity. As individuals and families borrow money to pay for a house or education, countries borrow money from private capital markets, international financial institutions, and governments to pay for infrastructures such as roads, public services, and health clinics; or even to purchase weapons. Also, like individuals, countries must pay back the principal and interest on the loans they take out. But there are

CAPITALISM and World Debt

Arun Praksah

Poor countries pay a high price to service their debts, and this cost is mainly borne by people living in poverty.





The Impact of International Debt

Poor countries pay a high price to service their debt, mainly borne by people living in poverty. The massive debt payments that poor nations owe to rich ones and multilateral creditors like the World Bank and IMF take resources away from investments that benefit ordinary people and contribute to social and economic development. The obligation to meet debt service payments also means that aid from other countries like the United States is often used to refinance debt payments rather than improving health care, education, and other social services.

important differences between individuals and governments. If a person borrows money, they receive it directly and can use it to benefit the borrower. But if a country borrows money, the citizens are not necessarily notified or informed of the purpose of the loan or its terms and conditions. In practice, some governments have used loans for projects that do not meet minimum social, ecological, or economic viability standards. These loans have been used to enrich a small coterie of people.

This debt surge amplifies vulnerabilities, especially as financing conditions tighten

These are particularly striking in advanced economies, where public debt rose from around 70 percent of GDP, in 2007, to 124 percent of GDP, in 2020. On the other hand, private debt rose at a more moderate pace, from 164 to 178 percent of GDP in the same period. Public debt accounts for almost 40 percent of total global

debt, the highest share since the mid-1960s. The dynamics, however, differ markedly across countries. Advanced economies and China accounted for over 90 percent of the \$28 trillion debt surge in 2020. These countries expanded public and private debt during the pandemic thanks to low-interest rates, the actions of central banks (including large purchases of government debt), and well-developed financial markets. But most developing economies are on the opposite side of the financing divide, facing limited access to funding and often higher borrowing rates.

In *advanced economies*, fiscal deficits soared as countries saw revenues collapse due to the recession and put in place sweeping fiscal measures as COVID-19 spread. During the pandemic, governments and central banks supported further private-sector borrowing to help protect lives and livelihoods. In contrast, during the global financial crisis, the challenge was

to contain the damage from the excessively leveraged private sector. The significant increase in debt was justified by the need to protect people's lives, preserve jobs, and avoid a wave of bankruptcies. The social and economic consequences would have been devastating if governments had not taken action.

Sri Lanka's crisis illustrates a much larger crisis of both a geopolitical and economic nature. Witnessed was a significant loss of faith in capitalism, not just in the authority that imposes and enforces the rules. According to capitalism's tradition: a debt is contractually due before or upon maturity. The problem is in the rigidity of the rules. All debts must be paid, all debtors must be humbled, and it is beyond their imagination to forgive debts, let alone do so like the great acts of debt forgiveness of the likes of Hammurabi, the king of Babylon and other powerful rulers in the past.

But that limit on global

political power is just one element of the current crisis. The misuse of economic power, a more banal version of debt-trap diplomacy that has been an integral feature of the vaunted "rules-based order", has now emerged visibly as the central weakness of a system that breeds injustice. In his book *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, John Perkins highlights how the creditor-debtor relationship built around the US dollar and the international institutions contributed to the deprivation of sovereignty of many struggling nations, especially those rich in exploitable resources. By design, governments and entire populations were meant to fall helplessly into the trap.

The cases of Sri Lanka and Africa illustrate a changing perception of economic relations. The pattern is becoming too apparent for the comfort of policymakers in rich nations. They must be aware of it but cannot change their habits. It is partly because they count on their media, especially in the US, to keep every story framed in the way they prefer. But readers across the globe have begun to see through this.

Since the beginning of China's proclaimed Belt and Road Initiative, Western analysts have denounced a practice they see as threatening to compromise the sovereignty of nations needing external assistance. Andrew Backhouse writing for the Australian news site new.com.au sums up: "Critics argue China is involved in 'debt trap diplomacy', alleging the country issues loans in order to eventually secure strategic international assets." But the art of pushing nations into a debt trap has

been fundamental to US foreign policy, at least since the end of World War II. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been systematically used to that end, not necessarily through direct manipulation but through the imposition of ideological constraints. It has been the Capitalist trend in the past and is so now. The World Bank and IMF don't want China or anyone else to poach their exclusive domain of helping poorer nations.

There can be no doubt that creditors, whatever their nationality, enjoy a position of relative power over their debtors. They can easily abuse that power. Pretending that the financial assistance provided by the IMF or China should be considered an act of pure, disinterested generosity may serve the creditor state's propaganda interests. Still, it flies in the face of both economic reality and human psychology. Distinguished Wall Street veteran and economics research professor Michael Hudson in his book, '*...and forgive them their debts*', exposed, in historical detail, the fact that in ancient times, dating back to the growth of Mesopotamian civilization, debt forgiveness was an essential tool of government. The late anthropologist David Graeber developed a similar thesis in his best-seller, *Debt: the first 5000 years*. Jubilees were acts of massive debt forgiveness that permitted the renewal of economic relations and contributed to a sense of solidarity required in all complex societies.

The debt burden carried by impoverished countries also affects citizens in rich countries. Environmental damage has global repercussions. Widespread

poverty means people have less money to buy goods and services from other countries. Debt reduction for the poorest countries would not represent a new or unique policy for the United States. Over the years, we have substantially reduced debts owed by Poland, Jordan, and Egypt. After World War II, Allied Powers reduced Germany's debt significantly to allow it to rebuild. We also have, on occasion, reduced debts owed by African countries. In these cases, the U.S. has recognized that debt reduction can be sound foreign policy.

The world debt clock keeps on ticking. Every second, it seems, someone globally takes on more debt. Does it matter? After all, world governments owe the money to their own citizens, not to the Martians. Despite its many defects, capitalism has been a formidable engine of wealth creation over the last three centuries. Now the enlightened ones among them must ponder the fact the practical impossibility of getting their money must forgive these debts like Hammurabi (18th century BC) and also the venerable Emperor Asoka of Bharatavarsha (2nd century BC) proclaimed in his rock edict at Kalinga: "... by acting thus, you will discharge the debts you owe to me. And so that the Mahamatras can devote themselves at all times to inspiring the border areas with confidence and encouraging them to practice Dhamma, this edict has been written here".

The first step towards this end would possibly be to constitute a World Government as envisaged by Prout's founder Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, at the earliest. ●

What we call a financial crisis is really at its core a crisis of mismanagement and not just a crisis of management, but a crisis of management culture.

- Henry Mintzberg

WORLD AND INDIAN SLUMS

Karunakshim Vatsalam



Slums are a hazard to human health and safety due to the lack of space, ventilation, cleanliness, "hygienic drinking water facilities, functional bathroom areas and plumbing."

Slums are an urban phenomenon that comes into existence because of industrialization in and around cities, thereby attracting population migration from the countryside. Though slums are a rich source of the unskilled and semi-skilled workforce, they tend to burden the existing civic amenities. As a result, government agencies and NGOs have swung into action and initiated several measures to improve the plight of slum dwellers and make the slum

areas livable for the habitants. As of late, they are viewed as effective agents in urban development rather than a burden on urban infrastructure.

The UN Millennium Summit held in September 2000 also included this aspect under Millennium Development Goals. UN-Habitat defines a slum as a run-down area of a city having substandard housing, squalor, and lacking basic civic amenities. According to them, one billion people worldwide live in slums, mostly in developing countries,

where nearly one-third of all city dwellers live in slums. There are slums on all the continents and in all the countries worldwide. But between 1990 and 2005, the percentage of urban slum dwellers living decreased from 47% to 37% in the developing world. However, due to the rising population, especially the urban space, the number of slum dwellers is rising. Hence the slum population is likely to grow to two billion by 2030.

Below are five of the largest slums of the world sourced from The Borgen Project:



(1) Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa: its population is around 400,000, with 40 percent of its residents under 19 years old. This township grew up during the collapse of the apartheid system in South Africa.

(2) Kibera, Nairobi, Kenya; it is the largest urban slum in Africa, estimated to have anywhere from 200,000 to one million people. It has faced attention from news outlets, NGOs, the UN and celebrities worldwide but remains underdeveloped despite many efforts.

3. Dharavi, Mumbai, India: also famous among journalists and development organizations, Dharavi is home to somewhere between 600,000 and one million people. Unlike most slum areas, which are concentrated on the outskirts of large cities, Dharavi is located squarely in the heart of Mumbai. It has contributed to its surprising multi-religious, multi-ethnic diversity. It provided the backdrop to the Oscar-winning film *Slumdog Millionaire* in 2008.

4. Orangi Town, Karachi, Pakistan: In recent years, Orangi has become notorious as the largest slum in Asia, compared to Dharavi. With a population of over one million, Orangi was once the centre of ethnic conflict between the Pathan and Bihari gangs. Since then, the area has become known for its self-financed sewage system and booming cottage industry.

5. Neza-Chalco-Itza, Mexico City, Mexico: With around four million residents, the Neza-Chalco-Itza barrio has been considered the largest slum area in the world. Unique to this area is its diversity in housing arrangements. While most residents live illegally on authorized land, some live in former mansions-turned-low-income apartments abandoned by wealthy families.

India's Slums

As the population in India continues to increase steadily, so does the number of people living in slums. The India census defines "slum" as an area where people live unfit for human habitation.

They are a hazard to human health and safety due to a lack of space, ventilation, and cleanliness and a lack of hygienic drinking water facilities, functional bathroom areas and plumbing. The 2011 census showed the slum population to be 65 million, up from 52 million in 2001. Two thousand six hundred thirteen of India's 4,041 towns are classified as slums, which the report categorized as notified, recognized and identified. Notified and recognized slums are legally established, while identified slums do not hold official slum status by the Indian government. Therefore, the residents in identified slums do not have access to legal protection and civic services. Identified slums must have at least 300 people with 60-70 tenements. With the drastic population increase in the slums, these areas' few resources are becoming even more depleted and run down.

India's slum residents continue to have poor access to



government health services to prevent and treat diseases, which now include those brought about by a rapidly growing economy. Diabetes, coronary heart disease and hypertension are, to some extent, driven by sedentary lifestyles, poor dietary patterns, and obesity. As a result, communicable diseases, including malaria, typhoid fever, and viral infections, such as jaundice, dengue, and diarrhoea, are prevalent in the slums. Nutritional disorders: about 21% of adults are malnourished, and 15% show a tendency to be overweight. Undernutrition is a problem among under-five children, with almost half showing signs of various grades of protein-energy malnutrition (PEM); about 28% of those surveyed had episodes of diarrhoea in the past six months.

Women are often more than just the breadwinners for urban low-income families. They also run their households, hold families together, and raise children. According to the National Family Health Survey (2015-16), 48% of all Indian women experience physical, emotional, and sexual violence at the hands of their spouses. Slum life is often dangerous for women. Education is another affected aspect in slums. Although India now has 1.4 million schools and 7.7 million teachers, 98% of habitations have a primary school within walking distance. Nationally 29% of children drop out before completing five years of primary school, and 43% before finishing upper primary school. The high school completion rate is only 42%. The literacy rate in Delhi slums is 56%, with dropout rates from Classes I-X at 46% and enrolment in higher education (ages 18-23) at 45%. (Delhi Government Report) Educational quality is a major concern; reports show children are not achieving class-appropriate learning levels.



As per a recent Reserve Bank of India report, only about 53% of the total slum population in the country uses banking facilities, often due to the lack of documents needed to open an account. Most slum dwellers are self-employed or employed in informal work sectors and require daily credit for their livelihood. Only about 28% can get a bank loan and thus rely on moneylenders and private sources at exorbitant rates, often resulting in significant debt, intimidation, and violence if payments are overdue.

However, not all of the Census findings are negative. During the ten years under review, the Indian slum population grew slower than the general urban population. The average household size in slums is no larger than the average household size in urban areas. The slum literacy rate rose from 72.2 percent in 2001 to 77.7 percent in 2011. It is still below the overall Indian literacy rate of 84.1 percent.

Delhi's Growing Slum Population: Mass migration to Delhi, a beacon of hope and last

resort for poverty-stricken Indians, has resulted in millions living in substandard, squalid conditions. The authorities largely overlook these slum dwellers. The problem is too big to deal with for them, so they are not cared for at all. Their homes are little more than huts. There are usually no roads, water, sewers, electricity or other services. 1.8 million of Delhi's 22 million residents live in 22 slum clusters. They live day-to-day without the basic amenities of electricity, plumbing and gas. Most residents are unemployed or make less than Rs 80 (the equivalent of US \$ 1) daily as daily wage workers. Over one million of the growing Delhi slum population reside in identified slums and receive no aid from the government.

In theory, they have access to all these things, as well as healthcare, education, employment and the self-respect that comes with them. However, in practice, the services are either non-existent, inadequate and unable to cope or so far from the slums that

they are irrelevant. In addition, slum dwellers often lack the incentive to take advantage of what is available. Many have been there for generations, and their hope for a better life is extinguished in the misery and despair of slum life. It's also cultural: people are often not motivated to improve their circumstances due to their religious and societal convictions.

The Indian government is required to recognize slum settlements and their residents' rights to potable water and sanitation, but in Delhi, no new slums have been recognized since 1994 officially. There are about 750 big and small slums in Delhi, with at least 3.5 lakhs families living – 28% of the population. Around 55% of its slum households have open or no drainage systems and about 43% lack drinking water within the premises. In India, 45% of slum houses have just one room, almost 30% have two

rooms, and about 5% have no separate rooms. In addition, some 50% of households use firewood, kerosene, and other fuels for cooking, leading to severe health problems.

Future Slum Population in India: According to recent estimates, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh will have the largest share of the slum population in India by 2019. These states are already home to a large number of slum populations which mostly live in and around urban areas. By 2019, Maharashtra will be home to more than 20 million slum population in India, followed by Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. It was estimated in 2018 India's total Slum population would be 104 million.

NGO's Ameliorate Slum Conditions: WaterAid India, a part of the global network,

seeks to improve access to clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene for everyone everywhere. It works to help some of the main issues the growing Delhi slum population faces: lack of water, sanitation and hygiene, abbreviated as WASH. WaterAid aims to increase Delhi's access to WASH through deliveries, supporting communities to manage and monitor their services and advocating for improved WASH conditions from the government.

Asha is another organization seeking to aid Delhi's slum residents. Asha provides many services for slum dwellers, such as access to healthcare, financial services and education. In addition, they seek to meet the population's basic environmental and healthcare needs and empower and educate slum dwellers to change their futures. These are just two of the many organizations seeking to improve the lives of the growing Delhi slum population.

The United Nations has 17 Sustainable Development Goals. These are ending poverty and hunger, good health, quality education and gender equality. To achieve these goals, persisting slum conditions need to be addressed. India's urban population is expected to be around 800 million by 2051, with a significant need for housing in the informal sector in the form of slums. The need is urgent for all developing and developed countries to partner and reach these goals and improve lives. ●



THE POINT OF TAXATION

A



papers has been much bigger than the value of trade in real things.

If you know someone who works in the financial sector, you may think that he or she trades in currencies or stuff such as oil, timber and everyday commodities such as food, furniture, etc. Maybe, but there is a better chance that the person spends all his or her working time betting. An example of such betting would be - how much food prices would rise or fall due to climatic or other reasons. When entering this market, One

may soon offer one bet on the health of New Zealand sheep, the situation in Europe or Latin America following a possible second outbreak of the virus, or policies of the Chinese Communist Party to be expected within, say, six months. Such factors may certainly impact the economy, but why these sorts of things have developed into the speculative market many times bigger than the real-world economy is anyone's guess. There are many forms of "financial instruments", such as

described above, and such bets may be resold at different prices to whoever wants to buy them. Supra-capitalism is truly a global casino.

Tax the Rich

The particularly exploitative nature of supra-capitalism is conspicuous, as far less value accruing from it reaches back to the real economy than from the trade of actual goods and services. It is the main reason the fashionable reformists cry 'Tax the rich!', these days.

"Most countries realize that only imposing high taxes will not be successful once uncontrolled commercial freedom has been granted to businesspeople. In most countries today the revenue collected through sales tax, service tax, income tax, wealth tax, etc., is only a very small fraction of the total revenue that could be collected. Tax evaders are much more intelligent and skilful than those who collect taxes." (P.R. Sarkar; Human Society 1)

The super-exploitative supra-capitalist sphere is evolved and maintained by capitalist shrewdness. Can we expect, with even a minuscule degree of certainty, that the super-rich, who





are most financially adept and anti-social, will allow anyone to reduce their wealth even a wee bit if they can help it? The academic answer to that is that, most certainly, any attempt to tax the rich will be in the red. In crude language, when water, food and all other resources on the planet are not for the benefit of all but for supra-capitalistic profit - 'We are all heading for hell'.

A Fair Tax System

A sound system of taxation would first require us to plan in terms of a System-shift. The essential requirement would be for the economy to be decentralized and not centralized.

In a *decentralized economic system*, local people would be at the head. It would be up to them to decide how resources should be allocated and developed. Such a rational economic ownership and distribution system would make taxation function properly. Based on a decentralized—democratic—economic system, the chief principles of a fair system of taxation would be:

1. Essential commodities will have to be entirely tax-free.

2. No income tax.
3. Taxes should be levied at the point of production.

"If income tax is abolished and excise duty on excisable commodities is increased by only 10%, there will be no loss of government revenue. Nobody will try to accumulate black money when there is no income tax. All money will be white money, and as a result, there will be economic solidarity, an increase in trade and commerce, more investment, more employment, and an improvement in the position of foreign revenue. income tax is abolished and excise duty on excisable commodities is increased by only 10%, there will be no loss of government revenue. When there is no income tax, nobody will try to accumulate black money. All money will be white money and as a result there will be economic solidarity, an increase in trade and commerce, more investment, more employment, and an improvement in the position of foreign revenue."

A certain percentage of the farmers' produce should be collected as direct taxes. It is also

convenient for the government to realize taxes in the form of goods because it needs to store produce as insurance against future contingencies. Taxes in such a form can easily be distributed from government stores when people are in need. Moreover, this system will easily meet the requirements of people in the towns and cities.

Cooperative ownership cannot stand in open competition with an individual Enterprise. Thus, it requires protective armour—that is, exemption from sales tax, duties, etc. This protection should be withdrawn slowly. Protective armour should be limited to essential commodities only. Individual enterprises should be limited to commodities not essential for life, such as betel shops, tea stalls, restaurants, etc. At the most, business people should have the right to produce and distribute non-essential foods and fuels because there is virtually no chance of exploiting the common people by exerting undue pressure on them." (Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar) ●

Present Dilemma of the

INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Prof. R.P. Singh

The present international situation is very delicate. The world is on the brink of severe Depression and the threat of nuclear war. As per the 30-year cycle of Depression, the world is again entering into Depression after the earlier phase of 1989 to 1996. History has already witnessed the great Depression of 1929, and then again, after 30 years, the Depression of 1960 before the 20-year US-Vietnam war intensified in 1965.

According to the law of social cycle of Shrii P. R. Sarkar and commented by Professor Ravi Batra, the usual trend has been that after the start of every Depression, there are six yearly phases of inflation and war after a decade, right from the beginning of the Depression as is discernible from Figure 1. For example, there was a six-year phase of the Great

Depression during 1929-36. World War II followed it from 1939 to 1945. The institutions like IMF, UNCTAD, World Bank and RBI are already indicating that the world is entering a serious Depression. The Recession started with the outbreak of Covid at the end of 2019. The growth estimates for India have been reduced by one percent to 2.5 percent.

The Indian foreign policy is passing through a great dilemma. The multi-alignment approach is not so easy to pursue. America is using all pressure tactics to force India to support NATO and the

Western world. In the last eight years, India has made every possible effort to be friendly with America and its allies, particularly in its persuasion against worldwide terrorism and extremism under the leadership of Pakistan and its associates.

But Pakistan suits American National interests in many ways, so America is more oriented towards Pakistan. It is evident from the latest occurrences like heavy assistance of Rs 3600 crore to Pakistan for the repair of F-16 aircraft and support to the Azad Jammu Kashmir movement.

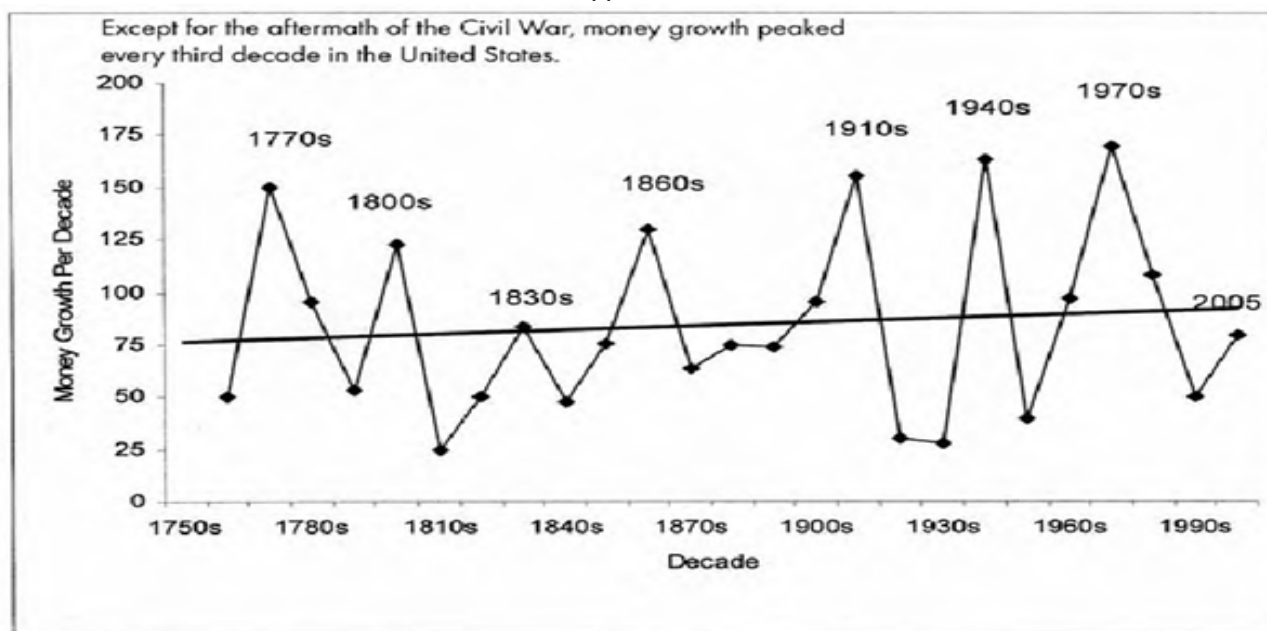
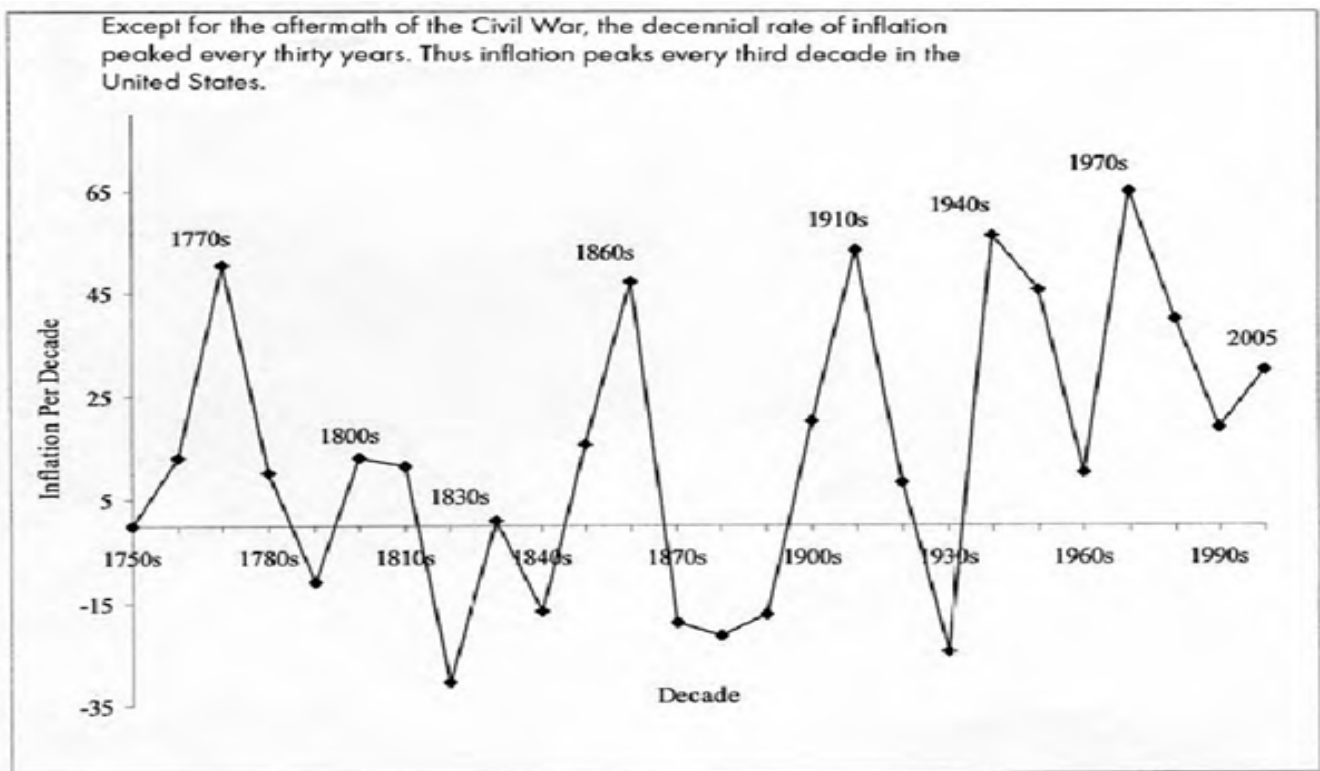


Figure 1 : Source: Ravi Batra, 'THE NEW GOLDEN AGE: The Coming Revolution against Political Corruption and Economic Chaos', 2007, PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, New York, p.46.



However, the ways of the West are much kinkier, as indicated further. Pakistan, being a small and weak economy, can be easily purchased and used by America for its strategic interests and to keep watch and pressure on India, China and Russia from this single platform. Attempts by some close allies of the US to rake up a divisive issue like Khalistan is also a similar strategy.

Money and Inflation Cycles

If India aligns with America and its allies it will certainly not be to the liking of its traditional friend Russia. Then enraged Russia may create problems for India through China and its allies. The vice versa is much more complicated. On the one hand, the West entices Pakistan with its sweet favours. But, on the other hand, it declares Pakistan the most dangerous nation. The intentions are understandable. Pakistan is, in itself, a failed state. It is moving fast towards civilian unrest and war. It cannot manage itself. So the responsible West feels that its

chaotic capabilities and inclination, including the military, need to be tamed by the West. The inherent dangers are that if Pakistan is balkanised by separating its POK as part of AJK and Punjab as part of Khalistan, there will not be less tension for India. But independent Balochistan may provide a more accessible base for the West to contain its neighbouring areas.

As of now, Pakistan has become a tool of the West entirely. It is an American vehicle for supplying dangerous weapons, including dirty nuclear ones, to Ukraine against Russia. But it has also been a string-puppet in the hands of China against India and Afghanistan. What a contrast! A weak Pakistan is on sale for any dangerous design against humanity.

The small nations and, more so, the weak nations are bound to fall easy prey to the selfish interests of the dominant forces. However, it is not the age of large animals and small countries. The truly enduring solution lies in universalism, effective world

government and movement for decentralized socio-economic development, as Prout propagates with its slogan: 'Moralists of the World Unite'.

Multi-alignment approach can be followed only by a robust system. To emerge as a strong power, India should follow two policies: one is to reject all narrowisms and dogma. The second one is that rather than boasting about being a World Guru, it should present itself as the world's democratic team player with an open mind to all sorts of good ideas, creativity and quality, as was done by Japan during the 1950s and 60s. Such a policy is not only helpful in preventing a divisive mentality, but it is also the key to rapid development.

We must reject dogma, but we should respect diversity and local public aspirations. Technological advancement, disciplined and respectful utilization of diversities and high morale of Innovators are three factors which pave further the way to sustainable progress and prosperity. ●



Santa Shishunala Sharifa

We find Samadhisthan in a small village of Shishuvinahala, also called Shishunala, in the Shiggavi taluk of Haveri district (erstwhile Dharwad district) of Karnataka state. There, one can daily see Muslims offering prayers as per their system from the left side and, at the same time, Hindus doing puja from the right side.

This place is called Sharifa's Gaddige, which does not conform to the tomb of any religion. It is a square platform encircling two neem trees growing together as one and twined by jasmine vines and the aroma of shredded flowers carried by the wind. The statue of Sharifa and his guru Govind Bhatta are installed side by side on the platform. There is a temple nearby called Sharifa mandir. Everything appears to be One here, depicting not only the unity message for Hindus and Muslims but also indicating the non-duality of the Creative Principle - the One

MYSTICAL POET OF KARNATAKA

Ganesh Bhat Sirsi

becoming Many. Santa (saint) Shishunala Sharifa is a unique personality of Karnataka culture. He is also called Kabir Das of Karnataka.

Santa Shishunala Sharifa (1819–1889) is a legendary 19th-century mystic minstrel poet, philosopher, and social reformer who lived in the people's hearts. He mainly delivered his messages through songs tuned in with his *Ekatara*. His compositions of *tatva pada* (moral poems) are in the Kannada language; many scholars opine that he also composed songs in Urdu, Telugu, and Marathi. Sharif is recognized as the first Muslim poet in Kannada literature.

Early Life

Muhammad Sharifa was born on

the 7th of March 1819 as the son of a couple named Imam Hazrat Saheb and Hazuma. Imam Saheb was a Hajaresha Qadri disciple whose dream was to unite Hindus and Muslims. Hajaresha Qadri used to give “Linga Deeksha” or initiation by tying a linga (symbol of Lord Shiva) around the neck of a disciple, as per the Lingayat tradition. Sharifa as a boy, was taught the tenets of both religions by his father.

Education

In the absence of formal schools, Sharifa studied at a school run by a Lingayat religious priest. Later, he opened a school in the local temple, worked as a teacher, and spread it to surrounding villages.

He was much impressed by the teachings of Basavanna, Allama Prabhu, and the like, apart from being adept in Islam and Vedanta philosophy.

Meeting Govinda Bhatta

Santha Sharifa accepted an unconventional Hindu Brahman, Govinda Bhatta, who cared little for caste or religion as his guru. One day, Govinda Bhatta came to Shishuvinahala, and Sharifa's father found Him seated under a tree. He asked Him to accept His son as a disciple. In front of the father, Govinda Bhatta called the young boy and said, "Hey Sharifa, who is your father?" The villagers laughed but were shocked when the boy brashly said, "What kind of question are you asking? Your father and mine are the same!". Govinda Bhatta laughed, patted the boy on the back and said, "Excellent, Sharifa! The land is fertile, the seed will sprout well. O Imam, leave Him to my care! From today, He is my son!"

Govinda Bhatta Nurtured Qualities of Sharifa

After accepting Sharifa as his disciple, Govinda Bhatta nurtured the unique qualities of young Sharifa that were beyond the logic of this world. The boy was curious about matters beyond logic and the world and the secrets of creation. Govinda Bhatta nurtured these qualities. Society was surprised by their closeness.

Namaz

One day, a Mullah asks Sharifa, "So, I see you've stopped coming to the mosque! Do you even remember what Namaz is?" Sharifa calmly replies, pointing at His own body, "I dwell in this mosque, so why go and come? I am in constant worship of 'I AM', so what can be greater Namaz?" The Mullah was dumbstruck.

Later Years

When Sharifa's parents started forcing him to marry, he was

disturbed and asked his guru Govinda Bhatta, "If I become a Samsari, won't I get stuck in desire and illusion?" Bhatta replied, "Why are you worried? Even in the worst rain, does the wind become wet? Does light become soaked? So go and get married!" Sharifa married and had a daughter. After his parents passed away, Sharifa, in quick succession, lost his daughter and wife. Sharifa quit his job at a young age and started participating in folk dramas, teaching simple lessons through daily experiences.

After Govinda Bhatta left His body, Sharifa lived on for another twenty years. When He started falling ill and realized His days were few, he decided to give up his body according to the "Sharana" tradition, in which ash is smeared on the body, and the feet of a Jangama, or Shaivite monk, are worshiped. The monk's feet are then placed on the head, and life is given up. Nobody agreed, but a Jangama named Hirematta Karibasavayya agreed on His insistence. Shishunala Sharifa left His body on 3 July 1889 AD.

Rites Performed As Per Hindu & Muslim Traditions

Even though Sharifa was born a Muslim, he lived as a Hindu. The leaders of both communities came together and agreed to perform the last rites as per both religions. They read the Quran simultaneously with the Hindu Mantras.

Composition of Poems

Shishunala Sharifa composed more than 400 songs. His songs are primarily extempore poems, composed with a deep sense of devotion, love and dedication towards the Lord, describing the extraordinary events in the background of village life. Sharifa picked up images of popular folk life and turned them into effective mystical metaphors.

Most of his collections were poems written and collected by

listeners. All of these were composed in streets, temples, and mosques. Extempore songs were composed in ceremonies like fairs and festivals. The revered saint composed poems (Tatvapadamoral poems) according to the situation and sang them to spread his philosophy of life and universal brotherhood. He never put down his verses on paper; they still are sung by many, as the compositions were passed for generations by word of mouth. Kumbara Mudukappa of Gudgeri, a companion of Sharifa, is said to have written down many of his poems.

He employed the contemporary language and details of life to infuse metaphysical meaning into it. He was well-versed in the oral folk tradition as well as written words. He could bend the Kannada language to his poetic expression and play with its metrical nuances. Yet his poems are far from simple, attempting to portray the **tantric or mystic** experiences in embellished language. He responded to contemporary issues also.

Teachings

Sharifa taught life lessons and straightforward ways to inculcate higher values and goad the mind toward the all-pervading Supreme Entity through folk dramas, songs, etc. Sharifa taught that faith in Hari, Hara, and Hazarat all the different ways that lead to the single entity; hence he cherished unity among Hindus and Muslims. He criticized blind faith and dogmatic practices of every organized religion. He advised as one would take good care of a horse, one has to take care of the mind by feeding it spiritual food. At times, whip it like a horse, so it behaves in a manner it can move in the right direction to realize the eternal truth.

This house (the body) moves around so much, yet through proper discipline, in this very

house, one can experience Shiva. Like a bird in a cage, Jiva has freedom only within the cage of body and mind. But, by the Grace of the Guru, the bird can spread its wings to fly through the entire universe. Sharifa propagated the principle of "Aham Brahmasmi" - that I am not just a human being, but verily Narayana Parabramha Sadashiva himself. (eg -poem -Na Na Embudu Nanalla). Sharifa considered women as the principle of Nature.

Famous Compositions

Here are a few compositions of Santa Shihunala Sharifa in Kannada. Since the words used in the poem have metaphorical and mystical meanings, taking the help of Google or other translators can mislead the student.

- ❖ Kodagana koli nungitha nodavva thangi (O my sister, see that the cockbird has swallowed the monkey – that means the mind though small, has realized the bigger universal mind)
- ❖ Gudiya Nodiranna Dehada (Look at the temple of the body-refers to that Body itself is a temple)
- ❖ Alabeda Thangi Alabeda
- ❖ Tharavalla Thagi Ninna
- ❖ Biddiyabbe Muduki
- ❖ Soruthihudu Maneya Maaligi (There is leakage in the upstairs of the house – refers



to weaknesses of the mind and being unable to move to higher levels)

❖ Duddu Kettadu Nodanna

Sharifa's songs have been sung and popularised by famous playback singers. In 1990 a Kannada feature film about his life titled 'Shanta Shishunala Sharifa' was released.

Understanding Sharifa

Saint Shishunala Sharifa is a poet and a great devotee, philosopher, mystic and social reformer. Sharifa was a sincere practitioner of Tantra meditation which leads to the exalted state of mind; this inner ecstasy gets expressed in an unusual behaviour resembling that of an intoxicated person, which confused the common people who used to see him as a neatly dressed, well-mannered person at other

times. Sharifa advocated unity in diversity- the Advaita philosophy reflected in his poetry.

Scholars debate over the classification of Sharifa's 'tatvapada' or songs. Some say it is Sufism; for some, it is to reform society; for others, it is devotional, etc. But, most songs explain the methods of concentrating the mind to realize the almighty. The principle of the single Absolute entity becoming many and unity in diversity has been elucidated in many songs. In some songs, he has clearly mentioned the different feelings and sounds a sadhaka (one who meditates) feels and hears during meditation. These expressions are only possible from a Tantra Sádha and a realized soul. Therefore, it is more apt to call Santa Sharifa a Tantra poet or Mystic poet. ●



Was Mars Born from the

EARTH

Richard Gauthier

In May 1986, Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar gave a discourse entitled “The Poles Shift Their Respective Positions”. He proposed that, due to past pole-shifts, the Moon and the planet Mars emerged from the Earth before its hard outer crust or lithosphere fully formed. Recently I made a new transcription of this recorded discourse and found that a significant sentence about the planet Mars had been left out of the published transcription of this discourse. We also made other significant corrections to the published transcription of the pole-shift discourse. Here is an excerpt showing the relevant sentence that was previously unpublished:

“As per old astronomy and also astrology, Mars (like the Moon) also came out of this Earth. But it didn't move around the Earth as its satellite. It started moving around the sun and became a planet.”

As the proposal is relatively new, it will be interesting to learn what further evidence there is that supports or opposes the idea that Mars was born from the Earth.

The currently accepted theory about the formation of our Solar System says that the Moon was created from the early Earth when a large planet-sized body hit the Earth. But according to this theory, the planet Mars is considered to have been formed the same way that the Earth was formed – from the gravitational attraction and accumulation of smaller physical bodies circling the Sun.

The following text is from the said discourse. Following the discourse is a brief discussion of several physical parameters of Mars and the Earth, and their orbits, that may lend scientific support to Shrii P. R. Sarkar's statements about the birth of planet Mars from the Earth. I hope this article will stimulate further scientific discussion of Shrii Sarkar's proposals about the Earth, Moon and Mars.

“Cardinal human principles are almost unchangeable. I say almost unchangeable because they always maintain a tactual relationship with cosmological order. And so, the cardinal human principles or cardinal points of humanities don't undergo any change or physical metamorphosis. But this is not the case with the physical world. In the realm of physicality, in the arena of physical emanations, such a thing may take place, and in the past took place several times in the history of this planet Earth and the history of so many other planets, stars, satellites, nebulae, and etcetera. In



Earth rising over the Martian horizon representational image

the physical sphere, change is the order of existence. In the psychic sphere, there is a change in the collective structure. But because that change maintains a link with the cosmological order, with cosmic conation, that's right; it is not so prominent as that of the physical sphere.

Take the case of our poles. The poles may shift their positions. In the past, such shifts took place several times in the annals of this planet and the history of so many other planets. As a result of this shifting, as a result of this change, if you say that the satellite moves in and out of this Earth when it was, its outer crust, within lithospheric order, was not so solid as it is now. And some are of the opinion that as a result of this, climbing out a moon from the Earth's lithospheric body, the Pacific Ocean was created. **As per old astronomy and astrology, Mars came out of this Earth. But it didn't move around the Earth as its satellite. It started moving around the sun and became a planet.** And that's why the name of Mars is Kuja in Sanskrit. *Shani raja Kuja mantrii* (Saturn is the king, Mars is the minister). Kuja. Ku means Earth. Ja means born out

of Ku. So in the physical sphere, such a change took place in the past and will take place in future.

The poles shift their positions. Now, as a result of this shifting, in the past so many times, the time taken by the Earth to move around itself varied. And also the time taken by the Earth in moving round the sun -- that is, its year -- also changed. Day and night jointly were not of 24 hours, and the year was not of 365/366 days. As a result of this change in polar positions, seasonal order also changed and its relationship with months varied so many times. And the order of our calendar, the system of our calendar, had to be changed in the past. If the poles change their position, the time taken by the Earth around itself will certainly be either lessened or increased.

And similarly, the time taken by the Earth to move around the sun will either increase or decrease. And perhaps you have marked nowadays; sometimes we see that the seasonal order is not maintaining proper adjustment with months. It shows that shifting is taking place fast. Now, as a result of this change, not only will the adjustment between months and

seasons be lost, but the environmental order and the ecological order of the Earth will be disrupted. And as a result of this disruption, there must be physical and biological changes in the structure of all living bodies, all living creatures, including plants. One could not find plants of the Tertiary age in the Cretaceous Age. One could not find the secretory plants and also animals of the Cretaceous Age in later ages, the Pliocene, Miocene, Oligocene, Mesozoic and Cenozoic ages, because - they also, their existence, births and deaths also depend on environmental order and also ecological adjustment, ecological balance. And as a result of the change of position of the poles, some people say that in the eastern hemisphere, the northern pole is moving from north to south, and in the western hemisphere, the southern pole moves from south to north. And one cannot assure that their relative distance will remain unchanged. So we should be prepared for the future. We should be prepared for the 'resultant' of this change or these changes in polar position, environmental order and also ecological structure.

As a result of this change, the magnetic structure of this Earth, and as a result of which other planets and satellites of this solar system, will also undergo certain remarkable metamorphosis. And if the magnetic order is disrupted, there will certainly be certain remarkable changes and metamorphoses in the electromagnetic vibrations of this Earth and the entire solar system. Moreover, with this type of changing electromagnetic vibrations, human thought waves will certainly be affected.

Our progress in the arena of science depends much on our progress in our knowledge of





Electromagnetic waves in space

electromagnetic waves and electromagnetic emanations. So our progress in the humanities and science field will suffer much, or rather may be assailed much as a result of this change. Nevertheless, we should be ready for such a change, and that change may take place in the very near future.

You know, human existence is not only an existence of physicality, an existence in physical structure. It is a mesh of

vibrations of so many wavelengths. So if the physical waves change, if the climatic conditions undergo a gigantic metamorphosis, the emanations and perceptions of nerve cells and nerve fibers will certainly be changed or disrupted. It may be for good, it may be for bad, but change is a must. In case of such a change in physical order and physico-psycho order, the change is sure to take place in the realm of

spirituality. We hope the movement... as we know, the movement of humanity, the movement of every living being, is from matter to consciousness, from extrovert to introvert. So the thought waves of human beings will be more of spiritual nature than they are at present. That is, humanities in that developed condition will be more spiritual-minded than they are, what they are at present.

The Cosmic Entity, the Supreme Cognitive Faculty, never stops His emanations in physical, metaphysical, supraphysical and spiritual strata. And in the case of the microcosm, if the change is neurological as a result of physical change, then certainly the nerve cells, the nerve fibers, if the nerve cells and higher nerve fibers do in some other way than what they are doing at present, then the thought waves of the Great, thought waves of the Supreme Cognitive Faculty, is sure to undergo some changing, some transmutation when it passes through human unit structure. And it is expected that under such circumstances, the progress of human beings in the realm of introvert will be more accelerated



than they do now. And suppose the poles in a particular small planet, like the Earth, shift their respective positions. In that case, it may be beneficial to human beings, or it may not be beneficial to human beings, but surely, the thought waves of the Supreme will do its own duty under changed circumstances. Here, humanities will be more meditative and will accept the ParamaPuruṣa, the Cognitive, Cosmic Cognitive Faculty, as its object of ideation in a better way and a more scientific style. One must not think that anything is fixed or stationary in this universe. Everybody moves – certainly, the poles move – and they have already started their function of shifting their respective positions. And you see, as a result of such a change, and if the change takes place quickly, another ice age may come here on this Earth. And the pre-condition and post-condition of the ice age may have a big gap – that means pre-age and post-age will have a long gap between them. But we have much expectation and hope from the human intellect. We hope if a catastrophe comes, the human intellect will be able to overcome such a catastrophe or arrange for shifting the population to another planet with a suitable environmental condition and



better ecological order. Let humanity rise, and let this development of humanity be more and more spiritually-oriented.”

Preliminary scientific evidence suggesting that Mars may have been born from the Earth

Could the planet Mars have been born from the Earth? The above discourse suggests that the births of both the Moon and Mars were associated with a shifting, perhaps a reversal, of the Earth's poles. Mars has only 11% of the Earth's mass, while the Moon's mass is only 1.2% of the Earth's mass. In addition, Earth's average density is

higher than Mars's – 5.514 g/cm³ compared to 3.93 g/cm³ (or 71% of Earth's density). It indicates that Mars' core region contains more of lighter elements than Earth's core. It is consistent with the material of Mars being formed from material near the surface of the Earth since this material would have been less dense than the material composing the core of the early Earth.

The current orbit of Mars is an ellipse with an eccentricity of 0.0934, while the current orbit of the Earth is an ellipse with an eccentricity of 0.0167. So the eccentricity of the orbit of Mars is about 5.6 times the eccentricity of the orbit of Earth. Currently, the minimum distance between Mars and the Earth in their two orbits is 33.9 million miles. The much larger eccentricity of Mars' orbit compared to Earth's orbit would seem consistent with Mars being born from the Earth and then going away into a separate, more eccentric orbit around the sun. The eccentricities of planetary orbits evolve in time due to the gravitational influences of other planets. As Shrii Sarkar's proposal is relatively new, it will be interesting to learn what further evidence there is that supports or opposes the idea that Mars was born from the Earth. ●



The moon from the International Space Station



I had been in different jails, first in Sorda Sub-Jail, then Brahmapur Circle Jail and later in Bhanjanagar Special Sub-Jail of Odisha, from mid-2011 to 2015, approximately three and half years, under false charges of 'sedition'. I was arrested again in 2019 for the second time in connection to an eight-year-old case that was utterly false and fabricated and put in Sorada and Bhanjanagar jails for another one and a half years.

I am on bail now. I have been acquitted in three of all the ten cases filed against me, the remaining seven cases are under trial. Here, I am providing a brief realistic account of the prison life I spent for five years in different jails of Ganjam District, Odisha during my two terms.

About 99 per cent of the under-trial prisoners are from economically backward sections

SHOCKING TRUTH OF PRISON LIFE

Nirakar Nayak



“About 99 per cent of the under trial prisoners are from economically backward sections of society and are mostly illiterate.”



of society, from so-called low caste and tribal communities, and are mostly illiterate. They call the 'prison', Thana (police station). They are ignorant of the law of the land and don't know its jugglery. They look up to God and often condemn themselves for suffering inside the Thana. They worship the Almighty in the dawn and dusk and think that it is the God who would rid them of this Thana. They never ask a judge or jailer to enquire about the progress of their case. They leave that matter to God.

More than half of the people have been languishing inside the jails for years together without trial. In their cases, Case Diary, Charge sheets, framing of charges, commitments (fit for trial) etc., are arbitrarily done by the police. It takes three to four years for a case to get 'commitment'.

Private witnesses of a case appear before the court as and when desired. But the government witnesses deliberately take years to appear. Moreover, despite repeated notices and summons, the government witnesses do not appear before the court on the plea of transfer to another district. Hence, they intentionally cause delay to the hearing of the case. Here, the sufferer is the under-trial prisoner waiting to get released.

It is upon the whim of the police when to send the CD Reports, Charge sheet and escort van. The police will send the CD report if they wish, produce the charge sheet if they feel so and provide the escort van if they want. If the police fail to discharge their responsibilities properly, the poor man will be condemned to perish in jail for years together. Ninety per cent of the people in this or that jail are entangled with false and fabricated cases lodged against them. If government employees, by chance, come to prison, they will be inside the jail for only ten to fifteen days and, by hook or by crook, get bail.

Politicians and rich people are getting bail smoothly even on theft, robbery and murder cases. During their stay in jail, they also

get a lot of respect. But when a poor and innocent person enters the prison, he is clueless about when he will be out. Even if many people apply for bail and are granted bail, they remain in that jail because they fail to arrange the required documents of land or house leases (conditions of surety for going out on bail) in their favour. It is because they belong to the homeless category.

While I was in Bhaanjanagar jail, one day, three innocent poor tribal youths came. They were from the Rayagada district. They mistakenly made a phone call to an unknown number. That phone number belonged to the Bhanjanagar Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate. Those tribal youths, unaware of the VIP receiver, had some fun during the phone call. That fun bought them dark days in their lives. They remained in jail for nearly two years. They could not even go on bail as they did not have the money. No lawyer could plead their case. Even their low-income family members could not come to Bhanjanagar and visit them in the jail.

Due to such a minor mistake, they remained behind bars for two years. They could not express their sorrow before anyone. After being jailed for nearly 22 months, the

court sentenced them to a further two months for that minor unintentional mistake they committed. They left after remaining another two months in jail as per the court's verdict.

Poor people from many such so-called low caste and tribal families are deprived of getting justice. Those who raise their voice for the rights of these people and Tribals are also branded as 'traitors'.

Laws and rules provide education, sports materials for recreation etc., to the prisoners, but everything remains in pen and paper. Nothing is available in reality. The menu of food is not being communicated to the prisoners. Foods with substandard quality are being given to the prisoners. Jail officials are violating the rights of prisoners. Legal Aid lawyers, who are supposed to make the poor aware of the law, sign the attendance register and leave. I don't remember that I attended any legal aid camp organized in any jail during my stay during these five years.

I was in Brahmapur jail between 2012 and 2014. There I observed that one of the inmates could not tolerate the insult of



being arrested in a false case and one day consumed poisonous drugs, thus suddenly falling ill. He died while undergoing treatment at Brahmapur Medical College Hospital. Upon his death, the concerned doctor reported in the post-mortem report that the prisoner died of a heart attack. However, the doctor, and the jail officer, all took recourse to falsehood and suppressed the matter.

In another incident, a person was arrested and brought to Sorda jail. He was beaten black and blue by the police while in police custody. He died within four to five days of coming to prison. It was a grave issue. But under pressure from some influential persons, the police, the doctors and the jail authorities suppressed the matter. Everyone kept quiet as if nothing had happened. That's when we came to know about this incident. We started a 'sit-in-dharna' within the jail premises against this brutal murder. We then brought the matter to light. But, instead of being immediately suspended, the police Inspector involved in this crime was transferred on promotion.

If any prisoner opens his mouth against any injustice, he will be beaten up with a plastic pipe and put isolated in a dungeon-like small room.

The day the judge or district collector comes for inspection, there is wholesome food to be served in the jail. After he leaves, the prisoners will get the same under-nutritious and sub-standard watery dal and rice full of small stones. A prisoner must remain in a prison cell for 15 hours out of twenty-four hours a day.

The dishonest and corrupt practices of the jail administration have never come out. A large number of officers are there in our system of governance who run fake administration after taking oath in the name of the Constitution. The corrupt practices



of public life are hardly discussed in any forum.

Rights of Under-trial Prisoners

After I came from jail, I talked with our advocate friend and other democratic rights activists regarding the rights of the under-trial prisoners. They are like senior advocates of the Odisha High Court, Prasant Jena and other human rights activists. Our advocate Jena replied, "Who will be granted bail and who will not, is an optional matter and discretion of the judges in the Indian Courts till date. The Supreme Court is even saying that while granting bail, it is not necessary to mention the reason why the court granted the bail. But it is, of course, being said that the 'discretion' should never become a 'discrimination'."

He also said, "If an accused is not granted bail after applying for the same in the Lower Court, we have the facility to approach the Higher Court. And if the accused is unable to engage a pleader, after asking the accused in this regard, the judge himself would hand over the case to the Legal aid centre of the National Legal Services Authority for free legal aid. Moreover, if the time limit prescribed for submission of the charge sheet is over but the police fail to submit charge sheet within this time limit, the facility of getting bail is available in the

Indian courts and the accused is entitled to bail as a matter of right, from the magistrate court itself, even in sessions' cases."

However, the lower court judges do not feel it is their responsibility to tell the poor prisoners that they are entitled to get bail if the charge sheet of the case is not produced. As a matter of right of an under-trial prisoner to get bail, whether he applies or not, he must be ensured to avail such facility to be bailed out. But, our legal system lacks such provisions, which is also a weakness of our judicial system.

(Postscript: *Tribal land that was encroached upon by politically powerful sections in Sorda and Polsara areas of Ganjam district, Odisha got free due to continuous agitation of same tribals. Nirakar Nayak was actively playing a role in that agitation and for that he came under the aggression of those encroachers. He was jailed for many years under false charges of riots, theft, criminal conspiracy and sedition (under UAPA & Sec.124 (A) of IPC). His jail experience was first published in Odia magazine Sangrami Chetanara Ganabhatti. Lalatendu Samantara has translated it from Odia. The cases against Nirakar Nyak are still under trial. He may be reached at : gassbhubaneswara@gmail.com*) ●

CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECTS PEACE AND SECURITY IN SOUTH SUDAN

Floods are affecting an increasing number of people

The recent flooding in South Sudan is the worst in over 60 years. South Sudan is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including droughts and flooding. Both long-term climate change, such as the gradual increase in temperatures, and short-term extreme climate events, like increased flooding, have indirect and interlinked implications for peace and security in South Sudan.

Unpredictable annual variations in extreme weather events, like flooding and droughts, affect agriculture-dependent communities and influence pastoralist mobility patterns and routes. Such changes may intensify tensions between herders and farmers, often concerning land, grazing, water and communal affairs.

Transhumance, including cross-border migration from Sudan through the Greater Upper Nile, exacerbates the spread of veterinary diseases and fuels environmental degradation and competition over scarce resources. What is transhumance? It is the practice of moving livestock from one grazing ground to another in a seasonal cycle, typically to lowlands in winter and highlands in summer.

Climate-related livestock losses compounded by pre-existing rivalries increase the risk of cattle raiding, which can trigger retaliation, communal conflict, displacement, deepening intercommunal rivalry and the formation of armed groups.

Ongoing conflict, governance deficits, insufficient resources, knowledge gaps and low technical expertise and capacity have weakened the ability of the Revitalised Transitional Government of National Unity of South Sudan (R-TGoNU) to integrate climate-related security risks into its efforts to manage communal and natural resource conflicts, as well as disputes over land ownership and rights.

Therefore, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) should continue to invest in knowledge and expertise in the areas of climate, peace and security and strengthen the R-TGoNU's capacity to adapt to climate change and integrate climate-related security risks into its early warning, prevention, mitigation and preparedness efforts.

The Challenge

Floods have worsened over the past years as South Sudan is suffering increasingly from the consequences of climate change. Floods affect between 750,000 and more than one million people every year, forcing half of them to leave their homeland for higher grounds.

Floods affect most areas along the Nile and Lol rivers and Sudd marshlands. In recent years up to half of all counties in South Sudan were affected by the floods. Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile States are the hardest hit, representing three-quarters of the affected people.

The inundation of schools, homes, health facilities and water sources impacts access to essential



services and livelihoods. For example, in November 2021, in Unity State alone, more than 100 schools were impacted by flooding, affecting access to education for over 60,000 students and the longer-term impact of the loss of education. The population affected by floods also faces an increased risk of disease. Women and girls continue to bear the brunt of the effects of climate change; female-headed households are especially vulnerable.



The Solution

Responding to the needs of the most affected, UNICEF and its partners are responding to the immediate needs of people affected and displaced by floods. It provides them with essential supplies, including soap, drugs, and education materials, while ensuring the continuation of lifesaving services such as healthcare, vaccination, nutrition and access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). To reduce the impact of floods on the most vulnerable population, UNICEF invests in flood resilience of local communities and preparedness activities, including pre-positioning supplies during the dry season when roads remain accessible. ●

A report by Asian News International (ANI) about the alleged “auctioning” of girls in Rajasthan's Bhilwara, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), taking cognizance, said that it would investigate the matter and the child rights body would ensure that the nexus gets banned and accused are punished. They would visit the village affected, meet the families, try to find the culprits involved, and see the accused punished.

According to news reports of October 26, caste panchayats in Rajasthan were committing this crime, like in Syria and Iraq, where girls are enslaved. Reportedly, in Bhilwara, whenever there is any dispute between the two parties, notably involving financial transactions and loans etc., instead of going to the police, the caste panchayats are approached for a settlement. It becomes the starting point of making the girls enslaved people. If they fail to honour their commitments, the girls aged between 8 – 18 are auctioned to recover money. However, the Rajasthan government denied reports of the selling of girls in the state.

The Chairperson of the National Commission for Women (NCW) has also taken cognizance of this extremely appalling and traumatizing crime and announced that a two-member fact-finding team of NCW is being sent to the Bhilwara district to investigate this. She added that similar incidents had been reported for the last few years, but the State government took no action. She will meet the Chief Secretary of Rajasthan and the Bhilwara Superintendent of Police.

Meanwhile, Rajasthan State Commission for Women also took cognizance of media reports that minor girls in some districts of Rajasthan are sold on Stamp Paper and issued notice to the Director General of Police and Bhilwara Collector. The State Commission demanded immediate action and a factual report in seven days. The Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights Chairperson condemned the Bhilwara incident and said that the Commission took suo-moto cognizance immediately.

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has also served notice to the Government of Rajasthan and to the Director General of Police, Rajasthan, to submit a thorough report mentioning the initiation of criminal prosecution against the perpetrators of such crime and their abettors/sympathizers. In a press note issued, it said that the report “must also contain the status of cases, including the registration of FIRs, charge-sheet, arrest, if any, in such incidents and the mechanism initiated to apprehend the people involved in such systematic crimes of flesh trade in the State. The report must also mention steps being taken or proposed to be taken against the public servant(s), who purported to have neglected perpetually prevention of such incidents.” ●

Remedy for India's High Infant Mortality Rate is Investment in Primary Healthcare

■ Ravi Duggal and TR Dilip

"As per the latest United Nations estimates for 201 countries (average of the 2015-2020 period), India's rank is an unenviable 151."

India's Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Under-five mortality rate (U5MR) show no significant decline. Hence, India's rank for IMR/U5MR performance globally continues to remain in the bottom quarter of all countries despite our robust economic growth rates. The only way this can be remedied is to invest much more in primary healthcare, ICDS, mid-day meals

and Manrega to secure the health and nutrition of its citizens, especially children..

What trend has been observed in India's infant mortality and under-five mortality rates in the latest Sample Registration System report?

There seems to be some euphoria in the country, with the Sample Registration System 2020 statistical report ('SRS') results

showing a declining infant mortality rate ('IMR') and Under-five mortality rate ('U5MR'). Several media reports have praised the decline, especially in states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. However, over the last decade or so, one has seen a secular decline of two to three points each year, so in that sense, the 2020 results are not spectacular in any way (see Table 1).

Table1: Trends in India's IMR as per SRS 2015-2020 – Figures are per 1,000 live births

Year	India	Madhya Pradesh (Worst performer)	Kerala (Best performer)
2015	37[36-38]	50[44-56]	12[8-16]
2016	34[33-36]	47[42-51]	10[6-14]
2017	33[31-34]	47[42-51]	10[5-14]
2018	32[31-34]	48[44-53]	7[4-10]
2019	30[29-31]	46[42-52]	6[3-10]
2020	28 [27-29]	43[39-48]	6[3-10]

Figures in parentheses indicate the 95 percent confidence interval ('CI') from the same SRS. Source: IMR from SRS reports and 95 percent CI from SRS bulletin for the respective years.



Do these trends actually denote significant gains

The SRS sampling frame is revised every ten years based on the latest census results, with the last revision in 2014. Therefore, the SRS sample within that decennial period is not independent. Hence, any overlapping confidence interval for an SRS estimate indicates that the trend or changes observed are statistically insignificant. The 95 percent confidence intervals for India's IMR overlap between succeeding years, including 2019 and 2020; hence, there is no significant decline in IMR to celebrate. More importantly, there was no significant decline in IMR in both Madhya Pradesh and Kerala between 2015 and 2020. However, such a reduction is expected as India still has a long way to go if we view India's performance globally.

As per the latest United Nations estimates for 201 countries (average of the 2015-2020 period), India's rank is an unenviable 151, with Iceland at the top (IMR of 1.25) and Sierra Leone at the bottom. On the other hand, most of our neighbours are well above India – Sri Lanka is ranked 67, China 83, Bhutan 138,

Bangladesh 141 and Nepal 143. India can be happy that Pakistan is close to the bottom at 190, but when we compare it with Sri Lanka, whose IMR is comparable to that of Kerala, India's IMR is over four times more than Sri Lanka's. Globally, India's IMR is three points higher than the World average.

India's IMR in 2020 is estimated at 28 per 1,000 live births and U5MR at 32 per 1,000. Within India, SRS 2020 tells us that Madhya Pradesh is the worst performer, with an IMR of 43 and a U5MR of 51. Among the larger states, Kerala is the best performer, with an IMR of 6 and a U5MR of 8, though the top performer across all states is Mizoram, with an IMR of 3, which is more than nine times less than the country average and over 14 times less than Madhya Pradesh.

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To sum up, we see huge

variations across states; assuming that the Kerala IMR/U5MR is what India should strive for, there is a long way to go. However, it also means that India's IMR/U5MR is much higher than all countries at the same level of economic development. For instance, the average IMR of upper-middle-income countries is 10, nearly three times less than India.

Why doesn't India's IMR/U5MR match up to the level of its economic category

The reasons are not hard to find. India is one of the lowest Public health spenders in the world, with a per capita spend of \$20.19 by both the Union and state governments in 2019, giving it a rank of 38th from the bottom and, as per the proportion of GDP, 23rd from the bottom. Apart from this, high levels of malnourishment and undernourishment directly impact infant and under-five mortality rates. India's rank is 101 out of 116, according to the Global Hunger Index Report 2020. This is despite India proclaiming it has the world's most extensive feeding program through the Integrated Child Development Scheme ('ICDS') and Mid-Day Meals.

Further, let's look at the components of IMR. First, we find that the most significant contributor to IMR is the neonatal mortality rate (death occurring less than 29 days after birth), which accounts for 72 percent of IMR, and further, the early neonatal mortality rate (death occurring less than seven days after childbirth), which is 53 percent of IMR. It indicates that a large chunk of IMR is due to medical reasons and the child-bearing women's poor health and nutritional status.

But when it comes to U5MR, the leading cause is malnourishment. Across the country, there are huge pockets of malnourishment of children, and

this is correlated to poor functioning and/or access to the ICDS program meant for under five-age group children. Further, the inadequate reach of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 ('MGNREGA'), which can assure minimal, decent wages for parents of such children and help them escape the malnourishment cycle and consequently infant or U5MR death.

Even a high-income state like Maharashtra has significant pockets of malnourishment-related infant and child deaths in Nandurbar, Palghar and Melghat, all of which are under the surveillance of the Bombay High Court through a PIL that has been running for over one and a half decade. High court orders have identified poor/inadequate primary healthcare facilities, poor functioning of the nutrition rehab centres, inadequate ICDS and mid-day meal budgets, and a lack of access to the MGNREGA. Yet, despite repeated strictures from the high court, the Maharashtra government has failed to remedy the situation adequately, and child deaths continue unabated.

What is the conspicuously peculiar trend in the data for some well-performing states

Within the SRS's IMR and U5MR

data, we see an outlier position of a few states and Union Territories such as Kerala, Goa, Himachal Pradesh and Lakshadweep. All these states have low IMR, but it is peculiar that their male IMR is 2 to 3 times higher than the female IMR, unlike most other states where the IMR of males is lower or similar to females. For example, in Kerala, the male IMR is 12, and the female IMR is 4; in Himachal Pradesh, the male IMR is 23, and the female IMR is 12; in Goa, 7 and 3, respectively; in Lakshadweep, 8 and 4 respectively.

India is one of the lowest Public health spenders in the world, with a per capita spend of \$20.19 by both the Union and state governments in 2019, giving it a rank of 38th from the bottom and, as per the proportion of GDP, 23rd from the bottom.

It is difficult to explain why these states have a higher favourable IMR for females. Maybe the answer lies in access to primary healthcare services, which are strong in these states and reduce gender discrimination, but there is no triangulation evidence for this.

However, demographically there is a possible explanation. These states have a low overall mortality rate and IMR, so the number of deaths that get counted is very few and hence inadequate

to make a population estimate, perhaps leading to a larger sample error (see Table 1).

Why must this data be taken with a pinch of salt

Since SRS only provides confidence intervals for some of these statistics in their statistical bulletin and not in their detailed report, it becomes difficult to interpret these results. Hence, when you further disaggregate for gender or rural/urban or age, the number of deaths gets further reduced and may lead to an inappropriate sample size. For instance, in Kerala, the SRS covers a population of 3.66 lakhs, which translates into 2,562 deaths across the state per the crude death rate of 7 per 1,000. The total share of infant deaths comes to a mere 31 deaths, and this is too small a number to not only estimate IMR but gets further distorted when we disaggregate for rural and urban or by gender. Similarly, for other small states which show low IMR, there could be such sampling error issues, and this raises the question of whether the low IMR of these states and union territories is accurate. To conclude, it is clear that India's IMR and U5MR are not showing any significant decline. Hence, India's rank for IMR/U5MR performance globally continues to remain in the bottom quarter of all countries despite our robust economic growth rates. The only way we can remedy this is to invest much more in primary healthcare, ICDS, mid-day meals and MGNREGA to secure the health and nutrition of its citizens, especially children.

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The proposed amendment to the Wildlife Protection Act facilitates the commercialisation and transfer of captive elephants – starkly contradicts the very purpose of the legislation.



The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2022

is a regressive step in our policy towards captive elephants

Deeksha Viswanathan

The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill 2022 was passed in the Lok Sabha on August 2. This Amendment was primarily enacted to give effect to India's obligations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora ('CITES'). Among several changes, the Amendment proposes to amend Section 43(2)

of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 ('WPA').

For some context, Section 43 regulates the transfer of an animal. Sub-clause (1), inserted by the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2002, imposes a blanket prohibition on all "transfers" of a commercial nature. Sub-clause (2) necessitates the permission of the Chief Wildlife Warden for any "transport" or "transfer" of an animal across state

boundaries. "Transfer" in this subsection entails non-commercial transactions, like gift deeds. Today, elephant transfers primarily occur within this framework of non-commercial transactions, facilitated mainly by invalid or illegal gift deeds. Authorities halted it in 2015 when the Supreme Court imposed a moratorium on all transfer permissions.

In essence, the new proviso

creates a legal pathway to encourage the further commercialisation and transfer of elephants through the vague wording of “religious or any other purpose.” It goes against the fundamental object and purpose of the WPA.

The 2022 Amendment proposes to insert a proviso to Section 43(2) whereby “*the transfer or transport of a captive elephant for a religious or any other purpose by a person having a valid certificate of ownership shall be subject to such terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the Central Government.*” (Emphasis supplied) An earlier version proposed the creation of an overt exception for 'live elephants' from the commercial transfer.

While the present avatar of the Amendment is a shade better, it continues to be worrisome for a plethora of reasons. In essence, the new proviso creates a legal pathway to encourage the further commercialisation and transfer of elephants through the vague wording of “religious or any other purpose.” It goes against the fundamental object and purpose of the WPA.

From its inception, the WPA

was meant to protect and preserve animals, birds and plants in their natural habitats. In the initial 1972 version of the Act, the elephant was a Schedule II animal and expressly included within the category of “cattle” in Section 2(6). At this time, elephants were considered “domestic” creatures, an understanding which has since been done away with. In 1977, Authorities included the Indian elephant in Schedule I, which accords the highest degree of protection to wild animals.

Subsequently, through the 1991 Amendment, section 2(6) was repealed, and the idea of elephants as “domestic” creatures was no longer statutorily justifiable. However, while this understanding was ousted from the letter of the law, it continues to operate in the mindset of legislators and enforcers alike. The seeming 'domesticity' of captive elephants was one of the primary arguments put forth by legislators to justify the creation of the impugned exception.

The 2002 Amendment brought in seminal changes. On the one hand, the amendment to section 43 imposed a complete restriction on the commercial

trading of elephants. Before this, any owner with the requisite permissions from the forest department could sell their elephants. Commercial trade in elephants was widespread and legally simplified.

On the other hand, Section 40 of the WPA was amended to make elephants the only wild animals that a private individual could legally own. The 2003 Amendment inserted sub-clauses (2A) and (2B), which prohibit any person without a valid ownership certificate from acquiring, receiving, or keeping in one's custody or possession, any animal specified in Schedule I and Part II of Schedule II. The only valid form of such acquisition is through the mode of inheritance.

Although this change is seemingly desirable, this amendment also included a specific proviso to these clauses, under which these protections are inapplicable to live elephants.

Authorities implemented the provisions for issuing ownership certificates and prohibiting selling private elephants to bring the unregulated captive elephant trade market within the law's ambit. They were never meant to



facilitate further private ownership, commodification and trade of elephants. However, unwittingly, these provisions have created a legal opening for the acquisition and transfer of elephants through modes other than inheritance. This opening, combined with section 43(2), which sanctions transfers in a roundabout manner, solidified the legal identity of elephants as a tradeable commodity.

Despite the unique legal position occupied by elephants, private ownership was always intended to be phased out in favour of a more protectionist paradigm in which elephants can freely exist in their natural wild environment.

Post-2003, the elephant trade primarily occurred through gift deeds, which are non-commercial by definition but commercial in operation. Despite its core intentions, in practice, the 2003 Amendment merely shifted the paper trail for the elephant trade, whereby money was transferred unofficially. In addition, it created considerable confusion for forest officials, who were unsure whether to accept gift deeds without specific permission. It changed in 2015 after the Supreme Court's intervention.

While elephants continue to exist in a legal grey area, the law's intent has always been to protect and preserve them. These developments in the WPA must be juxtaposed against significant developments in the framework of the Constitution. The object and purpose of the WPA – to protect animals in their natural environment – was lent credence in the 42nd Constitutional Amendment in 1976, which added the fundamental duty to "*protect and improve ... wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures*" in Article 51A(g). This Amendment also inserted Article 48A in the Directive Principles of



State Policy, which outlined the protection and safeguarding of wildlife as an ideal to be followed in the country's governance.

Despite the unique legal position occupied by elephants, private ownership was always intended to be phased out in favour of a more protectionist paradigm in which elephants can freely exist in their natural wild environment. As a result, elephants continue to be the only wild animals occupying a dual position of absolute protection under Schedule I and commercialisation under sections 40 and 43.

The 2022 Amendment, which is more or less sure to pass, will inevitably create new and legal passages for the transfer and trade of elephants. Even with an explicit prohibition of the commercial transfer of elephants, until 2015,

elephant trade continued through back channels. Despite progressive judgments and judicial measures, unchecked and uninhibited capture and trade of elephants has become widespread, with an ever-growing population of thousands of elephants currently living in captivity. In Kerala alone, captive elephants' suffering and the death toll are staggering.

Provision of an explicit departure for "religious and other purposes" in the latest 2022 Amendment effectively deviates from the protectionist roots of the WPA, providing a legal environment that will only bolster the commodification and exploitation of elephants. ●

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THE REALITY OF THINGS

- Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti

The reality of things has to be understood—the jiiva experiences three types of suffering – ádhibhaotika, ádhidaevika, and ádhyátmika. Ádhibhaotika suffering is mundane; that is, it derives from shortages of food, clothing, medicine, education, shelter, etc. So if we change the structure of society, it will end this misery. So we must do this; we should do this.

Regarding ádhidaevika suffering – if we prepare our minds through sádhaná, all the mental cares and worries resulting from a defective mental structure will end. And the ádhyátmika or spiritual suffering is that Hari or Krśńa, who is my own and my dearest, is far off, far away from me. He is in the sahasrára cakra, the pineal gland. And the sleeping jivashakti is in the lowest cakra, the múládhára cakra. So this feeling of separation is ádhyátmika suffering. This can be eliminated by spiritual sádhaná, that is, by dhyána, dháráná, práñáyáma, pratyáhára, etc.

In Vaishnavite philosophy, the controlling point of the sahasrára cakra is known as “Krśńa”. This Krśńa is not only the nucleus of the universe; He is the nucleus of each and every unit, so all Krśńas are one and the same. However we try to explain Him, we will arrive at the same point. Three thousand five hundred years ago in Dvápára Yuga, there was another Krśńa. You may say, “Puruśottama, Parama Puruśa, Shiva and Krśńa – on the spiritual level, all Krśńa's are one and the same. Is the historical Krśńa different from these?” No, He is not.

I raise this topic because I want to emphasize that human society moves ahead through clash and cohesion. It moves ahead through ideological unity and disunity, through the ideological clash. It has moved ahead, it is moving ahead, and it will move ahead. To stop this movement means destruction, great destruction – hence we must advance with great speed. When the speed of this advancement gets slowed down, people will face trouble at every step.

But if the time does come when the advancement becomes too slow, someone who can give society a hard hammering will be needed. Whether people like this person or not, love him or not – whether they feel love, devotion, respect or fear – under his fast-tempoed hammering, society will move ahead. People basically want to feel the blow that will move them ahead. The blow will be painful, and people fear it, but in their minds, they want it because only under this hammering will they decide to move forward. It is a strange condition – “I feel afraid, yet at the same time this is what I want. Or, no, I don't want to move ahead – I'll go a little later” – but then one is forcibly pulled ahead. The feet do not want to move ahead, they tremble, but the minds wish to move ahead. The need for this kind of treatment arises when people collectively are not able to advance towards the goal under their own internal power. ●



PBI (Vidarbha) Asserts Farmers' Rights



Pandharkavda: For the last 30 years in Yavatmal, a large number of farmers have been farming on the encroached government E-class land, but it is not being recorded by the patwari and revenue department.

Therefore, despite the law that entitles them to obtaining leases, the beneficiaries have been deprived of their rights. Their claims are rejected for the lack of the required evidences, and the forest department officials frequently take action to remove the encroachment of these poor encroaching farmers

To protest against the injustice, an agitation was organized on Nov 11, 2022 under the leadership of Proutist Bloc, India's Vidarbha convener Madhukar Nistane. PBI demands that the crop sowing by these farmers be registered regularly in the government records, and the farmers be given the lease of cultivation.

The march, which was taken out from the local taluka sports complex, Pandharkavda, was led by Vidarbha convener of PBI Madhukar Nistane, Atul Atram (UPSF president, Vidarbha region), taluka president Krishna Tekam. Along with Madhukar Nistane, Vivekji Dehankar, Dilip Umre, Mohan Pawar, Arun Kapile, Ravi Kuthe, Marotrao Yewle, Manoj Meshram, Rajubhau Ade, Santosh Atram, Janrao Tekam, Prakash Surpam and Subhash Chavan addressed the hundreds of farmers, who had come from different villages to participate in the agitation.

The protesting farmers submitted a memorandum of their demands to Chief Minister Eknath Shinde through Tehsildar, Kelapur.





PBI-Supported Candidates to Contest MCD Elections



A PBI activist and a service-minded lady, an MA in Economics, Madhusmita Das is contesting MCD elections from ward no. 172 (Chirag Delhi). Her nomination has been cleared, and she has been granted 'Flute' as the election symbol.

In this MCD (Municipal Corporation of Delhi) elections, Proutist Bloc, India-supported another candidate Jalandhar Pandit is also contesting from ward no.127 (Najafgarh constituency). His nomination has been cleared, and he has been allocated 'Flute' as the election symbol.

AMURT Helping the Flood Victims in Odisha

For the past several days, AMURT (Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team) has been doing extensive relief work in various flood-affected areas of Uttar Pradesh..

As a part of this ongoing relief work, It organized relief for a large number of people devastated by the recent floods in Shrawasti district of Uttar Pradesh.

AMURT volunteers distributed rice, pulse, vegetable and other eatables among about 10,000 flood victims in and around the said district. The district administration provided full cooperation to AMURT's volunteers.



RAWA Casts Spell on Kolkata

To mark the 40th anniversary of Prabhat Samgiita, Renaissance Artists & Writers Association (RAWA) organized a lively cultural evening based on Prabhat Samgiita in a devotional atmosphere at VIP Nagar, Tiljala, Kolkata on 27th October.

Speaking on this occasion, Prof. Gopal Chandra Misra from Ravindra Bharati University spoke on the vastness of Prabhat Samgiita. He said, "Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar was a universal poet, who wanted to establish a universal society. Prabhat Samgiita is based on spirituality & optimism."

Acharya Sutiprathanananda Avadhuta told the audience: Prabhat Samgiita is the collection of 5018 songs composed and tuned by Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, the great seer and philosopher of the 20th century. The songs are in Bangla, Hindi, Maithali, Bhojpuri, Urdu, Sanskrit, English etc. The songs were composed between September 14th September 1982 and October 20th 1990. The songs are devotional in nature and express different feelings of a devotee about his/her Lord. According to Shrii Shrii Anandamurtiji, "Prabhāta Samgiita is the feeling and the expression of the heart, and it has been written with the ink of the heart." It includes a variety of tunes ranging from classical to folk music of varied forms and styles with elements. These songs are an expression of supra-aesthetic science, encouraging the aspirant to transcend the boundaries of mundane life and become ensconced in the beauty of spiritual bliss.

Dr. Dhruva Roy Choudhary, Assistant Professor, Department of Music, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata and Saikat Chattopadhyay, eminent classical singer sang three Prabhat Samgiita songs each. Avadhutika Ananda Arundhati Acharya, Unmesha Ghosh, RAWA Singers and others also presented a number of songs, entralling the audience with their melodious voices.

Kankana Bhattacharya, renowned Kathak danseuse performed two dances based on Prabhat Samgiita. The director of Dhruva Institute of Dance Sayani Chakroborty and her students -- Puja Das, Sayani Pakhira, Mohua Singha, Sangita Banerjee, Mayuri Shom, Atasi Karmakar, Subhangi Das, Debanwita Das, Soumashree Mukherjee, Deepmala Singh and Sraddhasree Brambho -- performed a group dance based on Prabhat Samgiita. The girls of Ananda Marga Children Home, Narendrapur, Kolkata also performed a group dance based on Prabhat Samgiita. Smt. Abira from Mumbai compered the entire program, while Acharya Bhaveshananda Avadhuta presided over the function.





UPLF and PBI Hold a Joint Meeting



On 6 November, National Committee of PBI and UPLF held a joint meeting at Prout Bhavan, Malviya Nagar, Delhi. About 30 proutists including the office-bearers of both the organisation attended the meeting, and held a threadbare discussion on various strategies that need to be adopted to strengthen UPLF and make it a force to reckon with in the country.



Speaking on this occasion, Prakash Kahar, who's been appointed Secretary General after the demise of YV Singh, said that although the void created in the organization due to the demise of Mr. Singh can never be filled, we can minimize the loss by following sincerely the ideals and principles he stood throughout his life. Secondly, we need to add maximum number of serious, thoughtful, and ethical people to the organization at every level. Thirdly, every member of the organization should make the organization financially strong. He informed the participants UPLF will soon have a full-fledged website.

Proutist Bloc, India's national convener Acharya Santosanand Avadhuta also addressed the participants. He said UPLF also needs to take up and highlight the major problems of the labourers, particularly, in the unorganised sector, who comprise 90% of workforce in India, besides the issues of the organised labourers.

He said UPLF will have to work not only to solve the immediate problems of individual labours but also try and raise their socio-politico-economic consciousness to bring about a change in their collective psychology so that they can save themselves from all sorts of exploitation, and also work to establish PROUT in society.

Delhi state committee president Amitabh Verma underlined the need of seminars and training classes for the UPLF cadres and general public.

Others participants also gave their inputs for the further expansion of the organization. Besides, it was unanimously decided that the national committee of UPLF would hold a meeting on the first Sunday of every month.

Water from Plastic Bottles Not Safe to Drink: Dr. PC Jain

On 11 November, Udaipur's water-hero Dr. PC Jain checked the quality of the water brought by the students with his TDS meter and PH meter at Gandhi English Medium Government School located in Sundarwas. The demonstration was a part of his drinking water awareness campaign.

The children were very curious to know how pure the water they are drinking is. 52 students had brought water samples from home in their own bottles, which were checked.

City Supply – Its TDS was found to be 240 to 250, which is just right and drinkable. Tubewell water measured 900, which is high.

Market water – Its TDS was only 7 mg per liter, which is called low TDS water and is not good for health.

Use of chalk – The students put chalk in a beaker of water, which was tested. Its TDS was 746 milligrams per liter, which had shot up from 242 due to the dissolution of the chalk.

Dr. Jain told the students that when water is filled in a plastic bottle, its chemicals get dissolved in the water, which harms the health. Metal bottle is suitable to store drinking water, he said.

He asked the students to repeat after him the slogans like, “sabse bolo, nal kam kholo” (Speak to everyone, turn on the tap less and less).

Teachers Sandeep Sanaganeriya, Deepika Panwar, Asha Sualka, Sonulohar, Gopal Lohar, Ramesh Kumari, Ranjit Singh Ranawat, Indira Kunwar, Deepika Sen and Yogita Pancholi assisted Dr. Jain in conducting this demonstration.



Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar



MAY ALL DESERTS TURN GREEN

ÁJKERA EI SHISHU TARU
PHALE PHULE PATRAPUNJE
DHEKE DEVE TAPTA MARU

JAL SINCANE MAMATÁR DÁKE
ÁMRÁ SABÁI BÁNCÁBO TOMÁKE
JALE JHAÑE ROGE SAB UPASARGE
TAVA SÁTHE MORÁ ÁCHI TARU

ÚŚAR DHUSAR DHÁKÁ PAÑE JÁK
MARU TRIŚIKÁ LIIN HOYE JÁK
SHYÁMALE KOMALE CHEYE JÁK SAB
VISHVER JATA ÁCHE MARU

This tender plant of today
Will one day cover the arid desert
With fruits, flowers and leaves.

With a loving sprinkle of water
We all shall save You.
In floods, storms and all natural calamities
We are there for You, O plant.

Let the dawn be enveloped in grey
And turn the desert evergreen
Let all the deserts of this universe
Be filled with verdant beauty.



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