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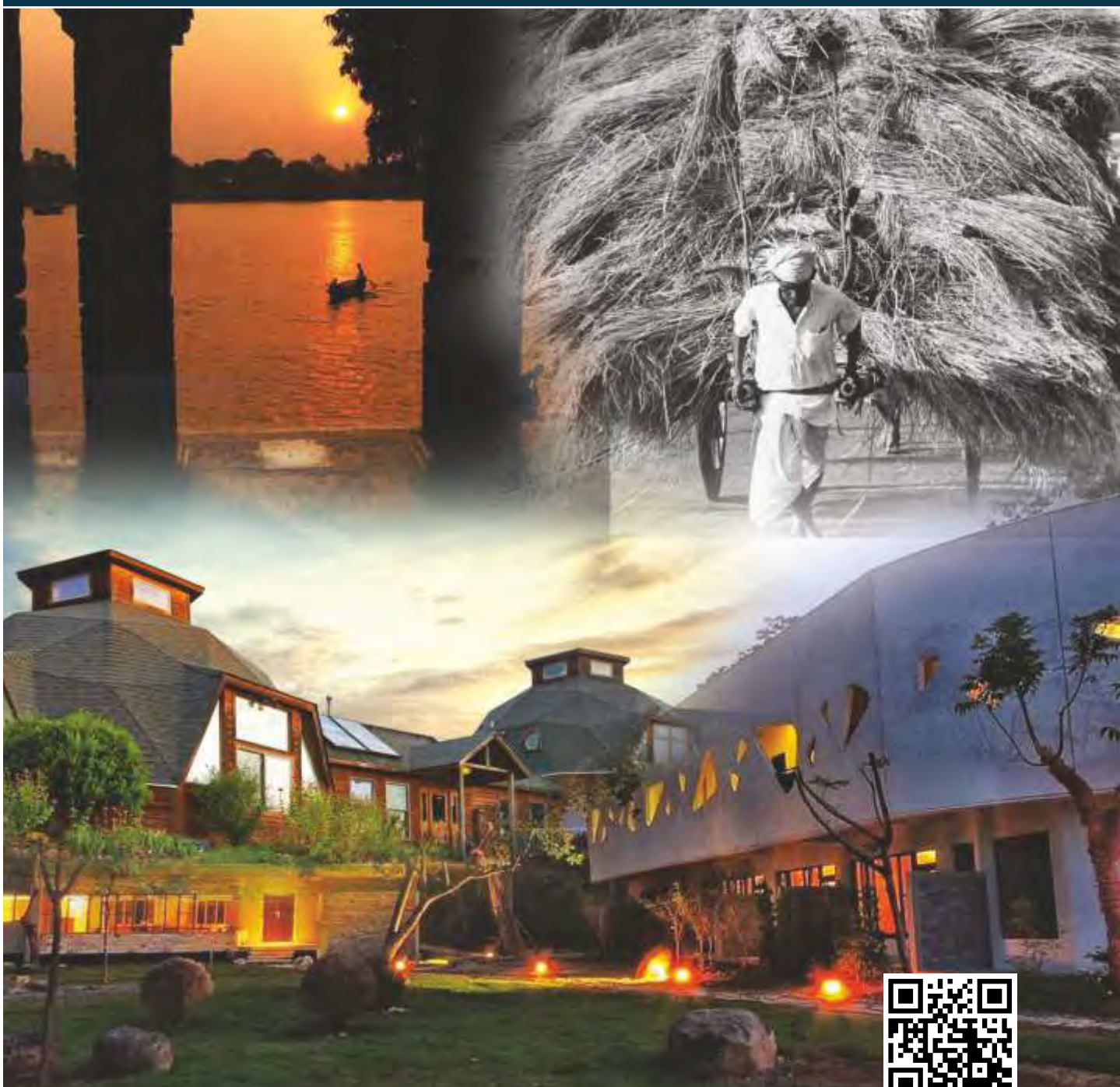

SOCIAL BOARDS

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

– Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

Fundamental Principles of PROUT

1. No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth without the clear permission or approval of the collective body
2. There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution of all mundane, supra mundane and spiritual potentialities of the universe
3. There should be maximum utilization of the physical, metaphysical and spiritual potentialities of unit and collective body of the human society.
4. There should be a proper adjustment amongst these physical, metaphysical, mundane, supra mundane and spiritual utilizations.
5. The method of utilization should vary in accordance with the changes in time, space and person and the utilization should be of progressive nature.

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Contents

VOLUME 44 | ISSUE 12 | DECEMBER 2023

SOCIAL BOARDS

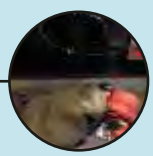
12

Feature

09 MORAL STANDARDS
The Moral Standard of Age

16 MEDICAL CRISIS
Gaza Medical Crisis

19 MENTAL HEALTH
Prout is the Need for Mental Health



23 ENDEMIC DISEASE
Tuberculosis History and Cure

27 TECHNOLOGY PITFALLS
Deepfake Technology's Dilemma

30 UN SECY GEN APPEAL
United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres Speech to the Security Council on the Middle East October 24, 2023

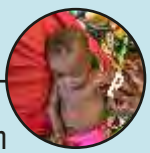
REGULARS

06 Editorial
07 Letters
08 Inspirational
45 Activities
50 Prabhat Samgiita

32 HIDDEN AGENDA
The Dangers of Outsourcing Government Planning to Global Consulting Firms

35 SCIENTIFIC ADVANCEMENTS
The Danger of Artificial Intelligence

37 MALNUTRITION MEASURES
India's Malnutrition Protocol is More 'Wait and Watch' Than Tangible Interventions



39 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
Smog isn't Just About Farmers We Breathe the Soot of Our Own Ecological Sins

The Depressed Indian Job Market

In May this year the state of Uttar Pradesh conducted a recruitment exam, 55 lakhs applied for Group D jobs such as peon, watchman, gardener, and more. Though the minimum educational qualification was high school diploma, among them were many BTech, MBA, MTech, BBA, MA, and MSc degree holders which highlight the gravity of the unemployment crisis faced by educated youth in the region.

This unexpected influx reflects the prevailing challenges faced by highly educated individuals in finding suitable employment opportunities. More and more over qualified youth, have shown a strong desire to secure these Class IV positions. The desperation of individuals with BTech, MTech, and MBA degrees resorting to applying for such jobs highlights the crisis.

In Bihar nearly 5 lakh MBA, BTech and Postgraduates applied for similar jobs, and for 14 sweeper's jobs in Tamil Nadu Assembly 4600 engineers and MBAs were among those who applied. Similar is the case for Kerala which has the highest number of job seekers registered with the Employment Exchange with 5.1 lakh of which 3.2 lakhs are women, the highest in the country. There recently, scores of qualified engineers applied for job of peons. Basic salary for a peon in Kerala is 23000 pm. For many of the BTech holders a menial job in a government office is less risky and more secure than becoming an executive in the so called start up world. Most of them feel that securing a lucrative salary has become a challenge in the depressed job market.

Further a recent study report shows that there is a large variation in the unemployment rate within the higher educated group in India. For young graduates under the age of 25, unemployment rate is high 42%. As the age of the graduates increases, the rate of unemployment falls. The unemployment rate is 4.5 per cent for graduates in the age group of 35 to 39 years and declines further to 1.6 per cent for graduates who are 40 years of age and above. "This indicates that eventually graduates do find jobs but the key questions are what kind of jobs do they find, and does it match the persons' skills and aspirations"?

The report of the State of Working India 2023 highlighted that job creation continues to be India's main challenge. The last few years witnessed the creation of more formal salaried jobs than earlier, but noted that women were compelled to enter self-employment due to distress from the pandemic and the global slowdown. However an increase in formal employment by 3 million and a loss of about 5.2 million of semi and informal regular wage employment creates further distress in the job market especially for women.

This is indeed a sad state of affairs. The solution is a Proutistic social order which follows the principle of PROUT which is for the welfare of all. Nobody is suppressed or oppressed; it supports the rule of sadvipras, who alone can guarantee the all-round welfare of all groups of people because they represent the interests of all classes in society. When that happens and Proutistic principles of balanced economy are followed together with rational distribution of wealth and ceilings on wealth, people will not seek jobs – jobs will seek people. ●

Human Society is Indivisible

It is very true that human society is one and the same and should not be divided as is being done by vested interests. Basically we all are humans internally the same despite our extraordinary external diversities. With humanity awakened with the precepts of universalism these differences will cease to matter; then and only then will humanity truly progress.

- Shikha Talwar, Pune

Reservation in Politics

Reservation of women in the Indian Parliament will hardly improve their lot. They suffer needlessly due to the patriarchal society we live in today. This has been going on since ages and only when men restore the rights that they took away from women and treat them as equal humans will things become better for them.

- Tarun Sharma, Ghaziabad

Vision and Mission for Universities

A very thought provoking, futuristic and scholarly article which hopes to promote holistic development in India. These ideas need serious consideration by the concerned authorities.

- Ankush Singh, Patna

Israel Hamas War 2023

What is happening in this new Middle East war is very tragic indeed. The consequences are very grave and it is the poor unarmed and peace loving civilians who wish nothing more than leading their lives honourably and look after their families, they are the ones who are suffering. The United Nations has been unable to stop the war and the suffering. With thousands dying and people fleeing the war zone its high time a World Government as envisaged by Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar is constituted with adequate powers to ensure that such wars do not happen in the future.

- Tracy McFarlane, Canada

Acid Attacks on Women

This is indeed a heinous crime and the greatest tragedy is that most victims are women. There should be strict laws and strict punishment for those who indulge in such crimes. And the state should completely pay for the medical treatment of the victims and also ensure that they are adequately compensated.

- Sonam Bari, Mysuru

Window Cleaners High Rise Buildings

A good article, which highlights the problems faced by those doing such risky jobs. Thank you Prout, for writing about such lesser known people.

- Sandra D'Souza, Goa

Soldiers' Pride Nation's Security

A very heartwarming article about our brave soldiers. The Army, Navy and the Air Force do not get the credit they deserve. One doesn't have to fight a war and win it to prove their existence. Just sitting on the icy heights, in dense forests or arid deserts makes them worthy of a thank you from fellow countrymen.

Ashish Kulkarni, a serving soldier from the border

Uncontrolled Sand Mining

This is indeed a sad state of affairs. It is very hazardous for the environment as events have proved. It's a pity that the authorities do not pay heed to this important aspect, even when Government officers have tried to highlight the problem.

- Sagar Mehta, Panchkula

Cruelty to Animals

Laws against cruelty to animals should be changed to deal with this problem effectively. In fact there should be laws against cruelty to plants as well. In early 1977 Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar founded PCAP 'Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Plants'. Even they have life and feel pain. One can never forget the famous words: "When we start crying for the tree being cut in our neighbourhood or in the Amazon jungles, then we are starting to become saints".

- Arun Prakash, New Delhi

Woman with a Heart of Gold

A very poignant story written by a professional banker. It has a touch of humour attached to it but has very important lessons in life. One of them is, once you put your mind to do something good, it must be started immediately and completed come what may. ●

- Bharati Gupta, Kolkata.

Turning the Tide against Ocean Pollution

According to Unesco plastic waste contributes to nearly 80% of all of marine pollution and around 8 to 10 million metric tonnes ends up in the oceans every year. Research studies forecast that by 2050 plastic would most probably outweigh all fish in the sea.

Seventeen year old boy from Pune Haaziq Kazi is determined to help cleanse the world's oceans of all of that plastic. This teen boy wonder has designed the prototype of a ship that can suck out plastic waste using centripetal force. "My prototype is a very large vacuum cleaner with tubes connected to large bags," says he.

The idea struck him while washing his hands when he noticed the water swirling down the drain. He then knew what could be done. He drew a ship with saucers attached to it and named it ERVIS. As a child he was always curious and asked questions every now and then and was very persuasive by nature. His parents Nilofer and Sarfaraz Kazi always encouraged him. He was a bright student and excelled in extracurricular activities and failure never deterred him. He started playing the piano when four and took thirteen seconds to solve the Rubik Cube!

He is presently studying in US and is researching ways to build a working prototype of the ERVIS. The principal of Indus International School, Pune, where Haaziq studied said that he always wanted to try new things. Haaziq's plan is three tiered to suck out plastic waste from the seas, to segregate and analyse it, the first steps to prevent ocean pollution. The prototype ship ERVIS will be powered by solar and renewable energy, the ship and some scientists and researchers helped fine tune the schematic design of his prototype.

The ship will have saucers that would float on the surface. They will create a whirlpool that will suck the waste towards its centre. It will then be segregated and sent via tubes to storage receptors to be recycled later, and the cleaned water would be pumped back into the sea.

He has also started a foundation to work on behavioural change by educating the youth. ERVIS foundation educates people about threats faced by the marine ecosystem, and it also provides a platform for views on the environment.

Haaziq is also concerned about algae that affect the marine ecosystem. "I am also working on an incubator of ideas and robotics based projects like building an underwater vehicle that works like a drone for research," he says. ●

THE MORAL STANDARD OF THE AGE

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

Those who tread the path of spirituality become moralists after grasping pirituality well

What was the state of morality in the Mahábhárata period? You must remember that though people were ignorant, though their intellectual standard was not high at all, even in that period they were not immoral – this was their greatest quality. There was neither spiritualism nor philosophy in support of the morality of the people of that time. They would accept the naked facts, and in that sense they were moralists. "I will say just what has happened" – this was their way of practising satya.

This very thing is quite natural. They had no intellect to ponder over the consequences of practising such satya. A crooked intellect is essential to deviate from satya, and this the people of the Mahábhárata period did not possess. Suppose a man thieves. To rescue himself, he will concoct statements in different ways with the police and in court. So cunningness is needed for any deviation from the path of satya. In the absence of cunningness, the people of the Mahábhárata period were naturally moralists.On the other hand those who tread the path of spirituality become moralists after grasping spirituality well. There is a gulf of difference between the moralists of the two types mentioned above. The people of the Mahábhárata period were supporters of the naked facts,

and in just this sense were moralists. This does not mean that they were spiritualists.

The masses were not spiritually elevated. On the contrary, the number of spiritualists in the present time is greater. But the percentage of moralists of that period was rather greater. The greatest gain in becoming a moralist is that a man has tremendous moral force. That one has not committed a wrong, is not doing so nor will do so – this very awareness generates in one a force, the moral force. A sinner (pápii) does not possess this moral force. A ruffian, though possessing a lot of physical strength, is afraid of the police, but a moralist, even if physically weak, is not. For the former is devoid of moral force and the latter is full of it.

Take for example Bhisma, a prominent character in the Mahábhárata. He was a great man,

a great hero. He accepted the food of Duryodhana, of the Kaoravas. After the time of war between the Pandavas and the Kaoravas, dharma (righteousness) was with the former and adharma (unrighteousness) with the latter. But because of the simple morality of Bhisma he could not go against Duryodhana, as he felt a sense of obligation to him for having accepted his food. Knowing quite well that the Kaoravas were unrighteous, Bhisma supported them, being guided by simple morality; the morality of the prehistoric age. He was, of course, a righteous man and even desired the victory of the righteous Pandavas, but being guided by the simple prehistoric morality, he supported the Kaoravas.

Just this simple morality was greatly appreciated in the society of that time. A man had to act up to his promise. Arjuna promised that he would slay Jayadratha before sunset or commit suicide. At the moment of sunset, the people were sure that Arjuna would now commit suicide as he had promised. (In the present age, people make so many promises in a day and break them during the day, and this is considered to be heroism. You know, before people cast their votes, so many promises are made by the candidates, but after the election is over, the elected one does not even recognize his or her electorate. Immorality has become the order of the day. So people had gathered to see the suicide of Arjuna, and Jayadratha, who had so far stayed hidden, also came to see. Lord Krsna had applied His occult power and covered the sun with dark clouds even before the actual time of sunset. He now uncovered the sun – it was still day – and seeing Jayadratha, his enemy, Arjuna killed him and fulfilled his promise.

So many examples of simple morality can be cited in the age of the Mahábhárata. It was taken to be so natural by the people. There was no question of anything written at the time of taking loans, etc. Moreover, literate people were few and far between. The sun and the moon were working as witnesses and people were free in their transactions. The value of simple morality may be less than spiritual morality, but simple morality, too, is included within human cardinal values. Therefore, Lord Krsna attached a lot of importance to simple morality also.

Spiritualistic morality was in few people as the number of spiritualists was so very small. Very few people had the opportunity to learn the hard and complicated processes of intuitional practice. The reason for this was that the people of that age were intellectually deficient, they were not intellectually developed, though they were more developed morally than the people of the present day. Bhisma was a moralist and had a great reputation in the society. Bhisma, respected Lord Krsna, but he was not his devotee. Lord Krsna respected Bhisma because he was a moralist. Krsna used to greet Bhisma; and at the time of Bhisma's death, when he lay on a bed of arrows for so many days, Lord Krsna used to sit near him and look after him with the Pandavas. Moralistic values, thus, were prominent in the life of the Mahábhárata age.

Take another small example – the character of Gandhari. Gandhari was an Afghan lady. There is a place named Kandahara, Gandhara in Sanskrit, in Afghanistan, to which Gandhari belonged. Indian people called Kandahara "Pratyanta Desha" – the extreme border area, not exactly Indian. Gandhari was not well acquainted with the greatness of Lord Krsna. Neither were the people of Kandahara very familiar with the social structure of India, of Central India, though Kandahara, i.e., Afghanistan, was then within, India. Before marriage, when Gandhari learned that her would-be husband was blind, she covered her eyes with a cloth. "If my husband is unable to see the world, then why should I?" Thinking thus she kept her eyes covered throughout her life. What a tremendous moral force she had!

She removed the cloth only twice in the whole of her life: once at the command of her husband, Dhritarastra, and secondly to see Lord Krsna. Dhritarastra told Duryodhana and his brothers to go before their mother and ask for blessings for victory in the war. He

further asked them to request her to see them, so that their bodies might become as hard as iron, as she possessed such great power. First Gandhari did not want to do this, but when Dhritarastra ordered her to first see them and then bless them for their victory, she obeyed – and for a few moments she removed the cloth from her eyes. Dhritarastra had instructed his sons to go naked before their mother, as wherever she would see, that portion of the body would become hard and nobody would be able to kill them. Since the sons were adult, they went before their mother wearing loincloths, and not nude. The portion of the body which was under the loincloth remained soft, while the rest got hardened. This fact was known to the Pandavas. So at the time of a fight with maces, Bhima had to hit below the navel, as it was not possible to kill the kaoravas by hitting above, as was the prevailing rule. The war of that period was taken as a sport, as competition, it was not for killing. One had to obey the rules. In a fight with maces, hitting below the navel was prohibited. Bhima had to go against this rule to kill the Kaoravas.

The second time Gandhari removed the cloth from her eyes was after the war of Kuruksetra when it had become a vast cremation ground. All the daughters-in-law of Gandhari had become widows and were weeping bitterly near their dead husbands. Gandhari, also, was there. The Pandavas, accompanied by Kunti, their mother, and Lord Krsna also, came there, as many people from their side had been killed and they had to console their relatives. Krsna consoled Gandhari and said, "Why do you weep? This is the way of the world – you will also depart some day. Why do you weep then?" Addressing Krsna, Gandhari said, "Krsna, why do you console me? It does not befit you." Krsna asked, "Why?" Gandhari replied, "If you had not planned it, all my sons would not have been killed." Krsna replied, "The war was inevitable for the preservation of righteousness and the destruction of papa [sin]. What could I have done, I am only an instrument." To this Gandhari said, "Krsna, you are Taraka Brahma. If you had wanted, you would have changed their minds without a fight." It was a fact. But Krsna had to put an example before the world. Papa is defeated. Let there be a fight. Let the world see and take a lesson. If it had been done without a fight, the world would not have received the lesson. Krsna did not speak, though logic was on his side. There are numerous instances in one's life where one's ideas are correct, but one has to keep quiet. Lord Krsna was put in that state. As Lord Krsna showed respect to a moralist like Bhisma and greeted him, so did He uphold the importance of Gandhari.

Then Gandhari pronounced the curse, "As the members of my family met destruction before my eyes, so be it with yours before your eyes." Lord Krsna replied, "Be it so." And so it happened. Because of the acceptance of the curse by Lord Krsna, it happened. Had Krsna not accepted the curse, it would not have happened. But Krsna accepted it because He wanted to show that moral force has value in life and that it should be accepted. Had He not done so, the Yaduvamsha (members of the Yadava clan, relatives of Lord Krsna) would not have been destroyed. Only to make Gandhari great did Krsna do so. Lord Krsna planned the fight for the victory of righteousness. He did all possible works to this end. But wherever he saw a moralist, he accepted his own defeat of his own accord, though in a number of instances the acceptance of His defeat was not just. You, too, should learn this lesson from Krsna's life. Whenever someone commits injustice, you should not succumb. Fight against immoralists, as was done by Lord Krsna, but if someone is a moralist, a noble man, you must bow to him. This will enrich and enhance your own prestige. ●

SOCIAL BOARDS

Ronald Logan

Society no longer has the support systems that existed when people lived in tribes or clans

In modern society the state has become more and more involved in social life. There are many who dislike the growing authority and reach of the state. This includes anarchists on the left and libertarians on the right, both of whom would like to do away with many government regulations and programs.

Most of the growth of government engagement in social life is for two reasons. First, more and more, people require the assistance of the state. For most people, it is no longer possible for the children to financially support their parents in old age, so government managed social security programs are needed. As a result of modern medicine, wellness practices, and improved living conditions people's life spans are much longer; they live into an age in which they have far more need for medical care, so government managed health insurance for the elderly is required. As housing becomes unaffordable for many, there is need for government-imposed rent control or government subsidizes rent payments. And as society's need for a more educated work force grows, so does the need for government support of public education.

Society no longer has in place the support systems that were present when people lived in tribes or clans or had large extended families that lived together; it no longer has a simple economy, undeveloped technology or limited ability to destroy the environment. Our complex modern society requires new approaches to meet the needs of people for care and development, as well as for the protection of community interests and environmental health. This is one reason for growing government involvement in social life.

A second reason is that the fabric of social life has weakened; family and community bonds have

dissipated, leaving many without resilient social support networks. Additionally, for many, the prevailing influence of materialism has left them dispirited and their hearts dry. They lack the vitality, resilience of mind, and compassion to work for social good. Without vibrant communities and a citizenry having hope and heart, it again falls to the state to fill in to meet social needs. However, when people turn so frequently to the government to meet society's changing needs, solve its problems, and control its excesses, then individuals and groups lose standing as agents of social development. Civil society no longer maintains its proper place is social development.

There are, of course, many groups, programs and organizations giving expression to the life of civil society — churches, sports clubs, neighborhood organizations, arts councils, fraternal orders, addiction support programs, disaster relief agencies, and so forth. But compared with the government sector, the civil sector has a lesser presence. And when political leaders align with powerful business interests, the civil sector is all the more disadvantaged.

In a PROUT society, the power balance between state, enterprise, and civil society would be altered; the involvement of the state in realms of social development would be diminished. The state would be less engaged in setting educational agendas, regulating cultural life, managing medical care, delivering social services, conducting relief efforts, etc. Functions such as these would be managed far more by institutions of the civil society.

Social Boards

How would this be done in practice? How can civil society institutions be made strong, active and empowered? PROUT proposes making use of *social boards* to develop and regulate civil society functions. There would be a social board to oversee the education system, a social board to organize disaster relief, a social board for the arts, a social board to develop medical services, and so forth. These boards would be composed of citizens having knowledge of and a history of engagement in the concerned fields, and they would be competent to mobilize and coordinate efforts to develop their arenas of community life. The relationship of social boards with the state should be one of collaboration. The boards would have independent authority in their efforts to address social needs. But the government would be responsible for authorizing the social boards and for procuring much of their funding and maintaining oversight on their activities.

In a PROUT system, most economic enterprises would be cooperatives, and all of the cooperatives in a common area of economic activity would belong to a cooperative association that promote of interests of the concerned trade or industry. So construction cooperatives would have a cooperative association, farmers their association, retail shops theirs, etc. The workers in each cooperative would select or elect someone to represent their coop in a cooperative association. Each association would, in turn, elect a representative to a local legislative assembly, a local council.

These governing councils would, among other responsibilities, assess the needs of the community and fund the social boards to meet these needs. The social boards would then develop their spheres of social and cultural life. They would have a major role in developing healthy, well-educated, productive citizens. In this system, the respective roles and influence of enterprise, government, and civil institutions will be balanced and closely aligned so that all three sectors of the society could work in a coordinated way for the all-round welfare of the people.

To decide funding for the social boards, the members of the governing council would assess the needs of their community. As all sectors of the society would have a representative on the council, all elements of the community would be represented, and with equal voice. There would not be a disproportionate influence on the part of a particular industry, profession, or social group. So, all community needs would get considered; none would be neglected. The council would reflect their community as a whole and seek the balanced development of their society, with most of this development being led through the work of the social boards.

Each of the income-producing cooperative associations of the concerned jurisdiction would collect and contribute revenue to that jurisdiction's common fund. From this fund would come the financial support for the work of the social boards – for social services, the arts, educational programs, medical care, and so forth. So, while the social boards would take on many of the present functions of the state, this would not mean that the services required by people in modern society would shrink. The same services would be provided by the social boards. Under this approach, the quality of services would be high as there would be a local sensitivity to the needs and resources of the community, and there would be ample scope for innovation and initiative.

Relationship of Social Boards to the Political System

Social boards would exist to implement the social functions of a community. The social boards will govern the development and implementation of programs which address the social needs of people. So it is best that these boards be primarily local and that they be composed of people who have a committed involvement with a given service, be they providers of that service or those who utilize it. Social boards should not be governed by people outside of the concerned area of service. The purpose of social boards is to provide services and not to engage politically for status and power. If this is allowed, then one area of service may curry political favor and gain status over other needs and services. In that were to happen, certain people would then get special treatment. Their status would be raised, and special favors given to them that are out of proportion to what is given for other social needs.

So social boards should remain politically neutral and beyond the scope of political manipulation. Their energy should be concentrated on meeting the needs of people, not on growing more influential. They should remain aloof from politics and independent in their functioning. Social boards are established to meet the needs of the society, and their functioning is to be impartial and service-oriented. In this way all segments of the society will get proper attention. Social boards will represent the people. Board members may be selected by the state or by civil groups. They may also come from direct election of the people in a local area. But primarily they will be selected by the local elected officials and government administrators. They are the "selectorates" who are chosen by the electorates.

Social boards will not be represented on legislative councils because these boards are the servants of the state. They are selected bodies which are to perform certain social functions. They are the servants of the people. They will not lobby for this cause or that cause. As a body they will not have a voice in the legislature, for they are the ones to carry forth policies and programs of the legislature and of the people. In an ideal society, there would be more of a dominance of individually and collectively initiated actions than of government programs. Government will merely set the structure and provide for a regulation of excess. But, within this framework established by

government, it will be nongovernmental programs initiated by individuals and groups that predominates. Government involvement in social affairs will not be, say, ninety percent; it would perhaps be fifty percent. The rest of the commercial and social activity would be strictly the independent efforts of the individuals and groups involved. So, the PROUT system promotes people exercising their full capacities without being thwarted. But it does not allow for excesses which will harm others. This is the fundamental approach of PROUT.

Strengthening Civil Society

The weakened status of civil society that prevails in today's world is less because of the aggressiveness of government, and more because of the weakening morale of the people and their lack of firm commitment to building the society. A society is only as healthy as the people who compose it — as healthy as their love for the society and their willingness to work to develop it. In a society that is weakened, many people acquire addictions, and many believe that their life will go nowhere and that the world is going to hell. People with a defeatist attitude cannot build a good society. In such a situation, the government is forced to take a more dominant role because the people lack the proper mental outlook to maintain a dynamic society. A healthy society is built on spiritual and moral health. If these things are not present, balance is disturbed; and if balance is disturbed, the society weakens and government becomes more influential because civil society cannot maintain.

For civil society to maintain and develop there must be a spiritual rejuvenation of the people; a sense of hope and positivity must come to the people. This does not happen in our present circumstances because people are oppressed by so many different factors. They are oppressed by the greed of multinational corporations. They are oppressed by the high cost of living and by inflationary pressures. They are oppressed by the onset of climate change. They no longer feel that their initiatives can bear fruit, and so many people become cynical and disenchanted. Much of this situation is caused by the ravages of capitalism by the influence of materialism. Capitalism and materialism are not simply an economic approach; they are also a philosophical approach that give rise to a collective mental state. With the emphasis on materialism, people's thinking has become very concrete, and their hearts have grown restless. Some have now turned to ways from the East for inner vitality; some have turned to drugs and alcohol for solace; others have turned to violence to vent their inner tensions. This is not the way of a healthy society; balance has been disturbed.

People must be given something to hang their hope upon. They need to know that there is a practical solution to social problems which is not driven by greed, which is not exploitative, and which is not oppressive. Hope is what they need most. And for this, there is need to provide a philosophy which can bring hope and give people something fulfilling to work towards. Balance cannot be restored automatically. It takes time to balance a society which has become unbalanced. The civil society sector cannot come up when the hopes and dreams of the people are thwarted, and they feel their humanity is small and fragile, and their capacity to effect good is diminished. Such frustrated people will become violent or cynical. But if hope and purpose are put on a sound footing, the spirited potential of humanity will arise organically. Balance will return.●

GAZA MEDICAL CRISIS

Doctors in Gaza face a hard choice between who are to be brought to the hospital, who may have a chance of survival, and who can't be.

Bhupendra Singh

After October 7, 2023 when Hamas militants broke through the Gaza border fence, killing nearly 1,400 people inside Israel and taking some 240 hostages. Israel imposed a complete siege on Gaza, bombarding the coastal enclave and launching a ground offensive. As of November 10, the start of writing this piece, Gaza City and the northern part came under heavy Israeli bombardment overnight that seemed to concentrate on health facilities in what appeared to be a direct message to medical teams and evacuees sheltering there that there's no safe place – not even inside a hospital. In the late hour of last night, the al-Shifa Hospital was attacked by tanks shells and air strikes that targeted its yard where there were parked cars and evacuees sheltering under tents. Six people were reported killed and there were also multiple injuries, adding pressure on a hospital that is really suffering due to the lack of medical supplies and room for the patients and wounded. The misery continues, the catastrophe continues. Thousands of people are cut off from food, water and medical supplies. No one knows what the next hours will bring, things look very bleak.

In the centre of Gaza, the al-Nasr and al-Rantisi hospitals were also the target of Israeli attacks. Israeli armoured vehicles and tanks have been pushing deeper, encircling these two hospitals and targeting them directly with tank shells. Those two hospitals sustained a great deal of damage. Meanwhile, the Indonesian Hospital, where thousands of residents from Gaza's north have evacuated, came under attack once again, with the bombardment destroying infrastructure and the roads leading to its gate.

As Israel's bombardment shows no signs of abating, humanitarian organisations warn of an imminent and total collapse of Gaza's healthcare system. One

might wonder how a small country like Israel seems to have an inexhaustible supply of munitions. Israel's Ministry of Defense reported that a cargo ship carrying approximately 2,500 tons of equipment for Israel Defence Forces (IDF) use was received in Israel on the 9th. 123 cargo planes and 7 ships carrying more than 7,000 tons of military equipment arrived in Israel since the beginning of the war in Gaza. This has been made possible due to help from the West mainly the Americans.

Today more than 10,000 Palestinians mostly civilians, including over 4,000 children, have been killed and more than 25,000 injured. The suffering in Gaza has been immense, with entire city blocks leveled and bodies in white shrouds piling up outside hospitals where surgeons have had to operate on bloodied floors by the light of their phones. The carnage of incessant suffering, bloodshed, destruction, outrage and despair continues unabated. Pro-Palestinian and anti-Israel protests have been held around the world, with demonstrators voicing revulsion at the spiraling human suffering in Gaza. In one of the latest demonstrations, hundreds of US Jewish activists peacefully occupied New York's Statue of Liberty to demand a ceasefire.

The medical crisis is intense. Of Gaza's 35 hospitals 16 have been destroyed and a number of those that remain — particularly in the north, which has borne the brunt of Israel's attacks — say they can last days more at best. Smaller practices are in dire shape as well, with about 70% of primary care clinics reportedly forced to shut their doors. Before the war, around 20,000 patients per year sought permits from Israel to leave the Gaza Strip for healthcare, many of them requiring repeat trips across the border. Almost a third are children. Israel approved around 63% of these medical exit applications in 2022, according to the WHO. Gaza's own healthcare facilities have been stretched under a 16-year Israeli-led blockade and repeated rounds of fighting. In previous wars, the crossing would close for a day or two, but then the patients were able to return. This time it has stretched to over a month deepening the crisis. Longer the wait, the worse it would be for some patients. Many people would die merely because they have no access to treatment. The concern is not just about the most complex cases.

There are 350,000 patients with chronic conditions in Gaza, including cancer and diabetes, as well as 50,000 pregnant women, according to data from United Nations organizations. Previously, the majority could get medical care in Gaza, but now the U.N. says the territory's fragile health system is close to collapse, battered by airstrikes, with a surge in the number of trauma patients, and rapidly diminishing supplies of medicines and fuel. A trickle of aid has been allowed in, while about 80 patients were allowed out. “We always talk about trauma and rightly so,” said Dr Richard Peeperkorn, WHO representative for Gaza and the West Bank, in a recent press conference last month. “But we have to think about the 350,000 patients”. Some needs are particularly acute. About 1,000 patients in Gaza need kidney dialysis to stay alive, but 80% of the machines are in local hospitals under evacuation orders, the WHO said. Gaza's only cancer hospital is no longer functioning. Multiple hospitals have closed due to airstrikes and lack of fuel. Others are struggling to stay open. If the airstrikes continue, there'll be these dual forces of bombing, all of the trauma injuries that come from that. And then just as the health system deteriorates, people who need other types of care would be neglected. The need for quality medical care in Gaza has only increased following devastating Israeli airstrikes and full siege on Gaza, hospitals are not just running out of fuel, food, and water, they're also suffering damage from ongoing bombardment. Existing patients, including pregnant women, babies, and people with chronic illnesses, can't get treatment and are more likely to die

as a result. As a doctor in southern Gaza told the New York Times, "The hospital doors are open, but the care we are able to give — it is negligible".

Hospitals have been targets of near repeated airstrikes. These are in breach of the Geneva Conventions and other International Laws. According to the WHO and the Palestinian Health Ministry, there have been 218 air strikes on healthcare related facilities in the Palestinian territories, and at least 135 healthcare personnel are among the casualties. "We're running out of words to describe the horrors unfolding in Gaza," World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a news briefing on November 9, "Hospitals crammed with the injured lying in corridors. Morgues are overflowing, doctors performing surgery without anesthesia, thousands of people seeking shelter from the bombardment. Families crammed into overcrowded schools desperate for food and water. Toilets are overflowing and the risk of disease outbreak spreading. And everywhere, fear, death, destruction, loss".

Due to both dwindling fuel and damage from airstrikes, Gaza's only cancer hospital, the Turkish-Palestinian Friendship Hospital, ceased operations last week, according to Palestinian health officials. The Indonesian Hospital, a major provider of medical care in northern Gaza, also saw its main generator go out last week, severely limiting its ability to provide key services, including oxygen and ventilators. And on Friday, al-Shifa hospital, the largest hospital in Gaza, said it was running so short on fuel that it only had enough energy to power neonatal intensive care unit. The UN has been able to keep some services at hospitals in the south afloat by sharing its fuel reserves, but the organization hasn't been able to get any fuel to the north, where all three of the aforementioned hospitals are.

Without fuel, these hospitals aren't able to ensure that they can keep their power or life-saving machines on. Beyond these struggles, Gaza's hospitals are also short of key medical supplies including everything from gauze to IV bags to antiseptic. These shortages have forced physicians to ration their existing supplies, and to perform procedures — including surgeries — with little or no anesthesia. Even the most basic of supplies have run out, e.g. dressings, intravenous fluids and blade sutures. As their supplies dwindle, hospitals are also becoming more crowded with an influx of patients as well as other civilians seeking shelter after they've been displaced from their homes, for whom there is no space in the hospital, because the hospital has over 2,000 wounded patients that has a bed capacity of around 600. "In terms of the patient load of hospitals, it's indescribable," says Tanya Haj-Hassan, a physician with Doctors Without Borders who is based in Jordan, but in regular communication with doctors in Gaza. "They're having to resuscitate patients on the floor, to do surgical procedures on the floor because there's no room anywhere else". Doctors, too, are completely overwhelmed by the degree of need they are seeing as well as having to make impossible decisions about who is able to receive care and use supplies. The hospitals are at the point where they're so full that when patients arrive, sometimes doctors have to choose between who are to be brought to the hospital, who may have a chance of survival, and who can't be.

The WHO and Doctors Without Borders are calling for a ceasefire, the ability to provide humanitarian aid to hospitals, and security for health care providers in light of these conditions. In her description of doctors' experiences in Gaza, Haj-Hassan read a text message she received on Friday from a pediatric intensive care physician based there. "Unfortunately, we are on our way to collapsing from the horror of the scenes we see despite our strength," it reads. "And the world is watching as if we were in a movie theater showing a horror movie and the viewers are silent." ●

Prout is the Need for MENTAL HEALTH

Ganesh Bhat

People with mental disorders are at higher risk of descending into poverty than others

People with social concerns and the well-being of humanity are worried about the alarming deterioration in the mental health of people during the past four decades. This is not confined to any single country, but is a global phenomenon. Generally, people equate mental health and mental illness, though the latter is one of the causes of the former.

Mental health

Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being, and is more than the absence of mental illnesses that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in, it includes mental wealth. Mental health is a basic human right, and it is crucial to personal, community, and socio-economic development.

Mental Disorder or Illness

The term 'mental disorder' is used to denote a range of mental, and behavioural disorders and psychosocial disabilities. They are generally characterised by a combination of abnormal thoughts, perceptions, emotions, behaviour, and relationships with others. Mental Disorders **include** depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and other psychoses, dementia, and developmental disorders including autism. Mental illness is an amalgamation of biological, social, psychological, hereditary, and environmental stressors. Mental have now been among the top leading causes of health burden worldwide since 1990.

Socio-Economic Impact of Mental Health

People with mental disorders are at much higher risk of descending into poverty than other people. Mental disorders have diverse and

far-reaching social impacts, including homelessness, higher rates of imprisonment, poor educational opportunities and outcomes, lack of employment, and limited income-generating opportunities. They may not be able to work because of their illness. If employed, their illness may result in more sick days or reduced productivity, reducing income, promotion chances, entitlements to employment-related pensions, or health insurance coverage. Mental health issues cost employers because of absenteeism, lower productivity, and attrition. Moreover, the stigma, myths, and misconceptions surrounding mental illness are the root cause of much of the discrimination and human rights violations experienced by people with mental disabilities on a daily basis. The concept of mental illness is often used to cover the political nature of some social activities, and divert the attention of the people from the failings of the economic system which boasts economic growth at the cost of social recession'.

The Causes

The World Health Organisation (WHO) states that the determinants of mental health and mental disorders include not only individual attributes such as the ability to manage one's thoughts, emotions, behaviours, and interactions with others, but also social, cultural, economic, political and environmental factors such as **national policies, social protection, standards of living, working conditions, and, community support.** Thus, social factors and institutions, like gender, race and ethnicity, are responsible for mental health conditions.

Social factors affect mental health

Mental health problems are not

equivalent to physical or medical conditions, but to be viewed as problems of communities or societies. Population mental health and many common mental disorders are shaped to a great extent by social, economic and environmental factors. A clear link exists between **social and economic inequality** and poor mental health; higher levels of income inequality are linked to higher prevalence of mental illness. Socioeconomic inequality is 'the enemy between us', increasing status competition, undermining the quality of social relations, increasing stress, and impacting health, mental health, and well-being. Gender is also important; mental disorders are more common in women.

Socioeconomic disadvantage is a risk factor for many diseases. Mental health problems are particularly prominent amongst marginalised groups experiencing social exclusion, discrimination, and trauma, leading to compound vulnerability. Economic recessions have had devastating impacts on population's mental health. Studies have proved the effect of socioeconomic status, and education levels on the health status of the elderly. Children and adolescents with low socioeconomic status (SES) suffer from mental health problems more often than their peers with high SES. Social connections are influenced by socioeconomic conditions, and have considerable impact on mental health. Professionals consider workplace-related stress as the biggest factor affecting their mental health, followed by financial challenges. Mental health among low-income employees is a global issue; their socioeconomic status is found to play a major role in determining positive or negative mental health status.

According to PROUT: "Due to a defective social order, some people have to live like slaves in the society and thus suffer from a strong inferiority complex – their heads remain forever bowed – while others inherit vast wealth as well as family pride from their ancestors and keep their heads held high. Such an inferiority complex contracts their minds and retards their progress in physical, psychological, and spiritual spheres."

The impact of capitalism on mental health

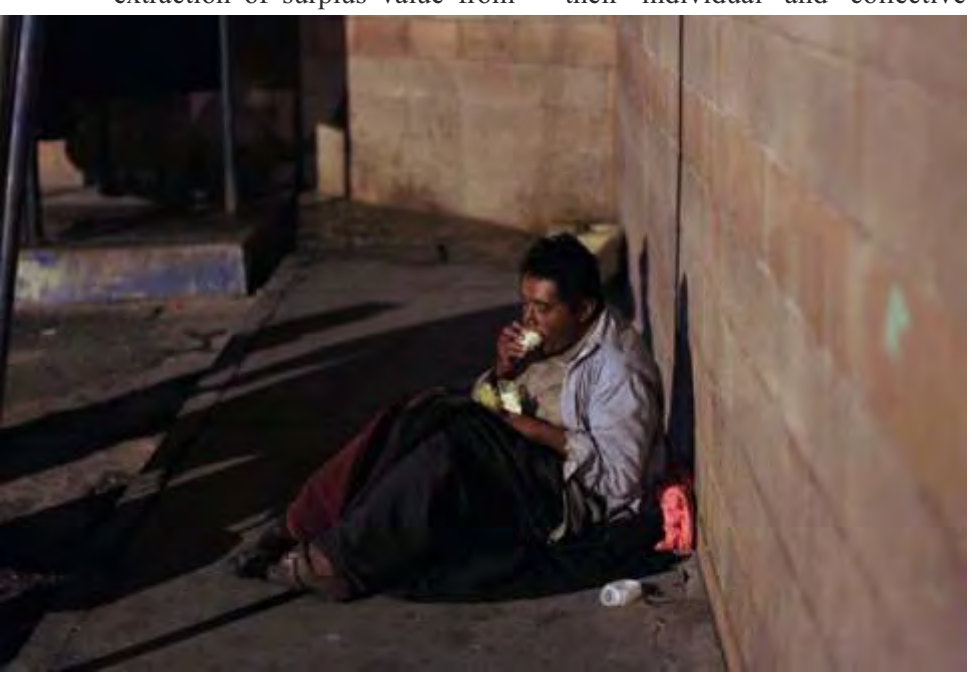
Capitalism is an economic system based on private ownership of the means of production and the pursuit of profit. The culture of competition, consumerism, and individualism inherent in capitalism creates a hostile and alienating environment that harms people's mental well-being. Research shows that higher levels of inequality, poverty, and social isolation are associated with worse mental health outcomes. Capitalism is a major determinant of mental illness because it creates a mad world that is incompatible with human nature. Capitalism generates stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental disorders by forcing people to compete for scarce resources, conform to rigid norms, consume mindlessly, and isolate themselves from the community.

Capitalism harms workers' mental health and aggravates inequities through three mechanisms: alienation, exploitation, and domination. Alienation is the loss of connection between workers and their products, exploitation is the extraction of surplus value from workers by capitalists, and domination is the control of workers by capitalists through coercion or pseudo-ideology. It is a form of oppression that makes people feel guilty when they rest, undervalue their achievements, and prioritize work over well-being.

Capitalism contributes to the global mental health crisis by creating precarious working conditions, unemployment, inequality, and environmental degradation. In advanced capitalism, mental health disorders are the leading cause of life expectancy decline behind cardiovascular disease and cancer. Capitalism is as much an inequality-generating system as it is a mental-illness producing system.

Inferiority complex and defeatist psychology

PROUT observes, "The capitalist exploiters select a weak community which inhabits a region rich in natural resources. The fascists socially and culturally uproot the victimized community by imposing a foreign language and culture on them. Because the local people cannot easily express their individual and collective feelings and sentiments in a foreign language, they develop a defeatist psychology and inferiority complex for the exploiters. This defeatist psychology destroys the natural spiritedness and will to fight of the local people. The primary interest of the fascist exploiters is to gradually suck the vitality of the local community so that they can pillage and plunder their natural resources, but if necessary they will even obliterate the local community from the face of the earth." From 1970 onwards within the neoliberal policy framework, medical, psychiatric, and psychological perspectives have dominated mental health research, and policy, deliberately neglecting the impact of socioeconomic factors.



Suggestions to address the issue

WHO report says, “Taking action to improve the conditions of daily life from before birth, during early childhood, at school age, during family building and working ages, and at older ages provides opportunities both to improve population mental health and reduce the risk of those mental disorders that are associated with social inequalities. While comprehensive action across the life course is needed, the scientific consensus is considerable that giving every child the best possible start will generate the greatest societal and mental health benefits”.

Some suggest raising awareness and mobilizing efforts in support of mental health to address the situation. Mental health promotion involves creating an environment, which promotes healthy living and encourages people to adopt healthy lifestyles. Many argue for a concerted focus on societal justice, which requires a shift from addressing individuals' psychological states to a focus on

social justice and broader economic conditions. Social thinkers call for a radical transformation of the economic system to prioritize human needs and well-being over profit; since certain social structures are more advantageous to the emergence of mental well-being than others.

The general opinion is that there is a need to build an economic system that tackles socioeconomic inequalities to ensure mental health. Neither Capitalism which is based on self-centred philosophy nor Communism which is nothing but state capitalism and inhuman, can address the issues causing the deterioration of mental health.

PROUT has the Solution

The defective social order injects an inferiority complex in the mind which often persists even when people enter the spiritual field. Even those who have the potential to become good spiritualists may not progress. They may be like a flower that dies before it blossoms. Shri Prabha't Ranjan Sarka'r, the propounder of PROUT said," I cannot allow this to happen. For this reason, the theory of Prout has been given so that every person can progress speedily in the field of spirituality without any complex."

PROUT believes that "Nobody is unimportant, nobody is insignificant. Each and every existence is valuable. So no one should develop the psychology of helplessness or hopelessness or defeatist complex or fear complex. Psychic diseases hinder one's ability to progress in individual life and are crippling in collective life. So mental complexes should be addressed and eradicated at all costs. This can be achieved through both auto-suggestion, i.e. sadhana, (meditation) and outer suggestion, cultivating a proper mental outlook". That is why PROUT propagates the scientific method of the Ananda Marga meditation system.

PROUT insists on imposing a rational ceiling on the accumulation of physical wealth. This will reduce social inequality, one of the major causes of mental ill health. PROUT guarantees minimum essentialities of life to everyone by providing adequate purchasing capacity. This will naturally create a feeling of security among the masses; avoid unnecessary anxiety and tension, which are also the causes of poor mental health. PROUT proposes a reduction in working hours. Block-level planning and industrial policy of PROUT not only ensure100% employment but also create employment opportunities near the place of residence, so that people are not forced to live away from their familiar environment.

PROUT's concept of forming socio-economic units and the eoconomico-socio-cultural movement, called 'Samaj' movement which is based on the recognition, protection, and encouragement of local culture is the panacea to cure the inferiority complex among the masses, and stop the exploitation by outsiders. One of the economic principles of PROUT is that the local people should have the right over the local resources. This principle not only ensures the proper, progressive utilization of natural resources but also creates the feeling of oneness among the masses with economic development, as against the feeling of exclusion in the present socio-economic systems. A major share of the economic activities in the Proutistic setup will be through cooperatives. Cooperatives develop feelings of oneness in the community; and avoid alienation and helplessness in people.

Neo-humanistic Education system of PROUT broadens the mental arena of students, helps them to rise above the feeling of caste, creed, and religion, and encourages them to recognise the existential value of all the created beings by realising the link between them. For proper mental health and welfare of humanity implementing the principles of PROUT is the only way. ●

TUBERCULOSIS
HISTORY AND CURE

Ending the TB epidemic by 2030 is among the health targets of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Arun Prakash

Tuberculosis (TB) is a dreaded disease carried down to us from our cavemen ancestors. Renowned philosopher Shrii PR Sarkar writing in 'Yogic Treatments and Natural Remedies' explains: “The bacteria is present in almost all human bodies in greater or lesser numbers. So long as the strength of the blood and vitality of the human body remain normal, tuberculosis germs cannot do any harm or cause any disease. If, however, the strength and purity of the blood breaks down for any specific reason, then the TB germs get a chance to settle in different glands and joints and start multiplying. Persons with pure blood usually have sound lungs – that is why it is not possible for TBs germs to attack them. But when the strength of the lungs declines due to weakening of the blood, the germs succeed in establishing a foothold in them”.

Today about a quarter of the global population is estimated to have been infected with TB bacteria. About 5–10% of people infected with TB will eventually get symptoms and develop TB disease. In certain countries, the Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine is given to babies or small children to prevent TB. The vaccine prevents TB outside of the lungs but not in the lungs. In 2022 worldwide 10.6 million people — 5.8 million men, 3.5 million women and 1.3 million children fell sick due to TB, a disease present in all countries and age groups. The largest number of new TB cases occurred in South-East Asian Region (46%), followed by the African Region (23%) and the Western Pacific (18%). Around 87% of new TB cases occurred in the 30 high TB burden countries, with more than two-thirds of the global total in Bangladesh, China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines. Multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) remains a public health crisis and a health security threat. Only about 2 in 5 people with drug resistant TB accessed treatment in 2022. Global efforts to combat TB

have saved an estimated 75 million lives since the year 2000. Ending the TB epidemic by 2030 is one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

A short glimpse at history of this disease reveals; early 18th century TB was considered a highly contagious disease. Hospitals began to exclude TB patients and many were ostracised from communities and even from their own families. Due to an escalated fear of contagion, sanatoriums met the basic psychological need of community to check the spread of infection by isolating its sick and also satisfied society's efforts to cure the disease. Sanatoriums served a dual function, they not only aided the healing process by providing good rest, good nutrition, well-regulated life and a healthy environment, but they also served to remove the sick and diseased from the general population and thereby reduced risk to others. Almost everyone in the early 1920s had family members or friends who were sick with TB.

Most 18th and 19th century physicians looked upon TB as a hopeless disease, and argued that there was no measure available to prevent or resist the disease. As faith in medicine declined in finding a speedy cure for TB, many 19th century physicians stressed the importance of hygiene, change of climate, sunshine, mental tranquility, exercise, fresh air, avoidance of excessive passions, and proper diet in the prevention and treatment of TB. In the middle of the 19th century, the primary therapy for TB was prolonged bed rest, nutritious food; fresh air and change of climate, and such therapies were practiced usually in the setting of special institutions called "sanatoria". Today the sanatorium is a forgotten institution that no longer exists in its original form, but any meaningful understanding of the history of TB cannot ignore this vital past. In the 19th century and till antibiotics were discovered in the 1940s, it was the sanatorium that provided the backbone of treatment for TB. The sanatorium was not just a hospital; it was also a social world where patients were forced to live together in isolation for long periods, as treatment for TB stretched over months.

In 1836, a medical practitioner George Bodington from UK, for the first time, proposed isolation of TB patients in a separate house for providing therapy. He believed that diet, physical exercise and fresh air were essential for treatment of TB. However, his suggestions failed due to lack of support. Hermann Brehmer, a botanical student from Silesia, Germany, who himself had the disease, was advised by his doctor to seek a healthy climate. Brehmer travelled to the Himalayas and returned home cured, studied medicine and in 1854 presented his doctoral dissertation on 'TB Primis in Stadiis Semper Curabilis' (TB is a Curable Disease). He argued that it was important to bring the consumptives to an immune place, away from the crowded urban centres, where the disease would heal by itself. In 1859, Brehmer, built a sanatorium in Gorbersdorf, Germany, in the middle of a pine forest. This was the first sanatorium opened for the treatment of patients with pulmonary TB, and it became a blueprint for all sanatoriums across the world as far as site selection and building layout was concerned.

Roc-et-Friz Sanatorium, France

In the following years, many sanatoriums came up in different parts of Europe, America and other countries. Some of the more famous ones were Badenweiler, Lausanne and Davos in Europe and the Trudeau Sanatorium in Saranac Lake, Blueridge and Catabwa in the US. It was the terror of infection, the high fatality rate and the desperate search for cure that saw the first sanatoriums come up in Europe. The setting up of the sanatoriums in sparsely populated rural areas was to avoid the crowded towns and cities that were seen as unhealthy, the sources of infection and epidemics. The preferred locations for the sanatoriums were t he hills as they provided open spaces, fresh air, sunshine and available land for cultivation of crops and dairy farming, all seen as essential components in the healing process of the disease. The sanatorium line of treatment was based on the dictum of "fresh air sunshine rest high protein diet mild exercise". The hope that these early sanatoriums generated, resulted in this regimen of institutionalized treatment becoming popular and spreading to the US and other parts of the world. Before the advent of antibiotics in the 1940s, sanatoriums dominated the treatment of TB.

The 20th century saw the increased popularity of sanatoriums in different parts of the world including India. Christian missionaries working in India played a pivotal role in establishing the first few sanatoriums in India. The first sanatorium in India was started in 1906 in Tilaunia, Rajasthan, intended primarily for treating girls from mission schools and orphanages connected with this mission. This was followed by one in Almora in the Himalayas in 1908 and another for women and girls in Pendra Road, Central Provinces in Madhya Pradesh. In

1915, the Union Mission TB Sanatorium (UMTS) was established in Madanapalle, Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh. The first sanatorium outside the influence of Christian missionary organisations was opened in 1909 at Dharampore (near Shimla) in 1909, and was called Hardinge Sanatorium. Bombay-based philanthropists, mainly Parsees, generously contributed for the construction of this sanatorium. The first sanatorium under government control was opened in 1912 in Bhowali in Uttar Pradesh, and was named King Edward Sanatorium to commemorate the reign of King Edward VII.

Unfortunately the history of the sanatoriums shows the class, gender, race divides that prevailed in society at that time. Many of the sanatoriums were elite privately owned institutions meant only for the wealthy. While the classy sanatoriums of Europe provided an option for the rich, the poor who were the worst victims of TB could not exercise this choice and continued to suffer and die and be blamed for causing the TB epidemics. In the US, sanatoriums reflected racial segregation, with the first sanatoriums meant for whites only and later separate sanatoriums opened for the blacks. In Virginia, in 1909, the Catawba sanatorium and in 1919 the Blue Ridge sanatorium opened for white TB patients, while in 1917 the Piedmont sanatorium was opened for blacks. One observes that in the US most of the sanatoriums were built by the state and were not exclusively for the rich, unlike the Swiss and German ones, as most of the latter were privately owned. In the case of India, the fact that the early sanatoriums were set up by missionaries and later by the state, meant treatment was free or minimally priced and helped to blunt an elitist slant to the inpatient profiles in these institutions. But, within the sanatorium there were special wards with separate kitchens, for the Anglo Indian, British and richer patients. For the really poor in India, the sanatorium was often inaccessible, not because they could not afford it, but probably because they were unaware of its existence and also there were so few of them in the country. Moreover, the stigma associated with TB prevented many patients from seeking treatment. India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's wife Kamala was diagnosed with TB in 1924 and spent the rest of her years, in and out of sanatoriums till she died in 1936.

By the second decade of the 20th century, it was apparent that the sanatorium was not the

solution to the cure of TB. Although patients recovered surprisingly well during the sanatorium treatment, the long term results were fairly depressing. American statistics show that over 60 per cent of the patients discharged from sanatoriums died of the disease within six years" For many poor patients it was difficult to sustain the high level of nutritious diet and rest that the sanatorium provided once they were discharged. For those who did not have severe forms of TB and were richer, the sanatorium offered better chances for cure.

Treatment of TB changed with the discovery of antibiotic streptomycin in 1944. Soon after, the anti TB drugs like pamino-salicyclic acid in 1946 and isoniazid in 1952 were introduced. The discovery of these three drugs marked the beginning of the "chemotherapeutic era" in the fight against TB. Other common drugs are: rifampin, rifampin, pyrazinamide and ethambutol. To be effective, these medications need to be taken daily for 4–6 months. It is dangerous to stop the medications early or without medical advice. This can allow TB that is still alive to become resistant to the drugs. TB that doesn't respond to standard drugs is called drug-resistant TB and requires more toxic treatment with different medicines.

The findings of the "home-sanatorium study" conducted by the TB Research Centre, Madras (Chennai) in the late 1950s showed that TB patients can be treated effectively on an outpatient basis and did not require admission in a sanatorium. The global impact of the findings of this study is now well recognised and domiciliary treatment for TB became the therapeutic policy for developing countries. It is interesting to observe that many of the strategies which are now globally

The sanatorium Madanapalle, Andhra Pradesh

recommended as the DOTS (directly observed treatment, short course strategy) were experimented and validated in India. These developments triggered the disappearance of hundreds of open-air health resorts that until then had been the dominant mode of treatment.

The sanatorium was central to TB treatment in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The long-drawn nature of treatment and the highly infectious nature of the disease made the sanatorium regimen effective and popular before antibiotics entered the scene. The sanatorium was not just a hospital, it was a social world – isolated from the rest of society it created its own definition of "community". It was seen as a space of hope by TB patients across the country. Now it has faded from public memory.

The recent rise in TB incidence in India pushes us to rethink the sanatorium as a relic of the past. Not much has changed in India since independence: high poverty, poor healthcare, low education, poor nutrition and lack of proper public healthcare continue to haunt most Indians. For a long drawn, slow curing disease like TB, t he sanatorium with a modified treatment regimen of rest-diet-exercise-drugs may provide a more effective cure to combat TB, especially for the poor. The current excessive dependence on drugs under conditions of malnutrition will not be able to control the incidence of TB. Food insecurity is a growing concern for a large number of Indians and the one thing that the sanatoriums never compromised on was a rich diet. Today in India it may be appropriate to resurrect the sanatoriums to life in the hope of better controlling the twin concerns of rising incidence of TB and poor nutrition. ●

DEEPFAKE
Technology's Dilemma
When seeing is no longer believing

Karunakshim Vatsalam

Can we really believe what we see especially on social media? This is the question that the machine-learning fueled phenomenon of "deepfakes" requires to be considered more seriously than ever before. What is a deepfake and why does it matter? A deepfake is an artificial image or video (a series of images) generated by a special kind of *machine learning* called "deep" learning (hence the name), which is similar to any kind of machine learning, where an algorithm is fed examples and learns to produce output that resembles the examples it learned from.

Deep learning is a special kind of machine learning that involves "*hidden layers*." Typically, deep learning is executed by a special class of algorithm called a neural network, which is designed to replicate the way a human brain learns information. A hidden layer is a series of nodes within the network that performs mathematical transformations to convert input signals to output signals (in the case of deepfakes, to convert real images to really good fake images). The more hidden layers a neural network has, the "deeper" the network is. Neural networks, and particularly recursive neural networks (RNNs), are known for performing quite well on image recognition tasks, and so applying them to creating deepfakes is relatively simple. .

Deepfake is different from photoshop or faceswap, in which fake or doctored images show up all over the internet these days, and are often harmless. One may have heard of the amusing effects of "face swapping" on snapchat or other photo apps, where one can put someone else's face on one's own or the other way round. Or perhaps participated in the "age yourself" trend, and ran your face through a fake aging app that showed you what you might look like in your ripe old age. These harmless photo-altering technology is for amusement, as it's easy to tell that the images are fake and don't actually reflect reality. That's precisely what makes deepfakes dangerous -- the application of deep learning to make false image production creates a world where humans often can't tell that images or videos are fake at all.

Today most people get their information about the world and formulate opinions based on internet content. Here is where the danger lies. Anyone with the capability to create deepfakes can release misinformation and

influence the masses to behave in a way that will advance the personal agenda of the faker. Such misinformation could wreak havoc on a micro and macro scale. On a small scale, however, deepfakers can, for example, create personalized videos that appear to show a relative asking for a large sum of money to help them out of an emergency and send them to unsuspecting victims, thereby scamming innocents at an unprecedented level. But on a large scale, fake videos of important world leaders stating made-up claims could incite violence and even war.

Many Deepfakes are unfortunately pornographic a technology being weaponised against women. The AI firm Deeptrace found 15,000 deepfake videos online in September 2019, a near doubling over nine months. Since long university researchers and special effects studios have pushed the boundaries of what's possible with video and image manipulation. But deepfakes first started in 2017 when a Reddit user of the same name posted doctored porn clips on the site. The videos swapped the faces of celebrities – Gal Gadot, Taylor Swift, Scarlett Johansson and others – on to porn performers. A staggering 96% were pornographic and 99% of those mapped faces from female celebrities on to porn stars. As new techniques allow unskilled people to make deepfakes with a handful of photos, fake videos are likely to spread beyond the celebrity world to fuel revenge porn, and or blackmail.

It takes just a few steps to make a face-swap video. First, thousands of face shots of the two people are run through an AI algorithm called an encoder. The encoder finds and learns similarities between the two faces, and reduces them to their shared common features, compressing the images in the process. A second AI algorithm called a decoder is then taught to recover the faces from the compressed images. Because the faces are different, you train one decoder to recover the first person's face, and another decoder to recover the second person's face. To perform the face swap, you simply feed encoded images into the "wrong" decoder. For example, a compressed image of person A's face is fed into the decoder trained on person B. The decoder then reconstructs the face of person B with the expressions and orientation of face A. For a convincing video, this has to be done on every frame.

Another way to make deepfakes uses what's called a generative adversarial network, or Gan. A Gan pits two artificial intelligence algorithms against each other. The first algorithm, known as the generator, is fed random noise and turns it into an image. This synthetic image is then added to a stream of real images – of celebrities, say – that are fed into the second algorithm, known as the discriminator. At first, the synthetic images will look nothing like faces. But repeat the process countless times, with feedback on performance, and the discriminator and generator both improve. Given enough cycles and feedback, the generator will start producing very realistic faces of completely nonexistent celebrities.

It is difficult to make a good deepfake on a standard computer. Most are created on high-end desktops with powerful graphics cards or better still with great computing power. This reduces the processing time from days and weeks to hours. But it takes expertise, too, not least to touch up completed videos to reduce flicker and other visual defects. That said, plenty of tools are now available to help people make deepfakes. Several companies will make them for you and do all the processing in the cloud. There's even a mobile phone app, Zao, that lets users add their faces to a list of TV and movie characters on which the system has trained.

Not all deepfakes are malicious. Many are entertaining and some are helpful. Voice-cloning deepfakes can restore people's **voices** when they lose them to disease. Deepfake videos can enliven galleries and museums. In Florida, the Dalí museum has a deepfake of the surrealist painter who introduces his art and takes selfies with visitors. For the entertainment industry, technology can be used

to improve the dubbing on foreign-language films, and more controversially, resurrect dead actors. For example, the late James Dean is due to star in Finding Jack, a Vietnam **War** movie.

Governments, universities and tech firms are all funding research to detect deepfakes. Backed by Microsoft, Facebook and Amazon in December 2019, the first Deepfake Detection Challenge started. It included research teams around the globe competing for supremacy in the deepfake detection game. Early January 2020 Facebook banned deepfake videos likely to mislead viewers into thinking someone "said words that they did not actually say", in the run-up to the 2020 US election. The more insidious impact of deepfakes, along with other synthetic media and fake news, is to create a zero-trust society, where people cannot, or no longer bother to, distinguish truth from falsehood. And when trust is eroded, it is easier to raise doubts about specific events. This phenomena is of course not new. It happened in the past too in the print media. One recent example is how Ananda Marga and its founder Shrii Shrii Anandamurti were unjustly maligned by vested interests which had media in their control.

Lets see how it surfaced in India recently. Actress Rashmika Mandanna was "deepfaked" — her face was used on the body of a British Indian Zara Patel's body much to the shock of both who knew nothing about it, created a furore and new fears about artificial intelligence. This has resulted in urban Indian women feeling more insecure online than ever before. In India the vulnerability of a person being deepfaked will not be uniform, given how deeply unequal Indian society is. With its patriarchal value systems, this will affect people especially women from the marginalised sections even perhaps in rural areas. Political parties, politicians and public officials are easy targets in this disinformation and misinformation war. Good honest investigative journalists who reveal the abuse of power and corruption, are easy targets too because their hard work can be falsely labeled as deepfakes. Deepfakes might even lead to manipulation of elections, widening social divisions and lowering trust in institutions.

As the technology becomes more accessible, deepfakes could compromise the courts, particularly in child custody battles and employment tribunals, where faked events could be entered as evidence. But they also pose a personal security risk: deepfakes can mimic biometric data, and can potentially trick systems that rely on face, voice, vein or gait recognition. The potential for scams is clear. Phone someone out of the blue and they are unlikely to transfer money to an unknown bank account. But what if your "mother" or "sister" sets up a video call on WhatsApp and makes the same request?

There are strategic issue too as the US Pentagon would have us believe, to be concerned about. Advances in artificial intelligence could soon make creating convincing fake audio and video relatively easy. Making a person appear to say or do something they did not has the potential to take the war of disinformation to a whole new level. So what does one do? Though presently deepfakes aren't a huge problem, but may increase over the next few years both in quality and numbers That doesn't mean one can't trust any image or video, but one should train oneself to become more aware of fake images and videos, especially when the videos are asking you to send money or personal information, or making outrageous claims that seem unusual for the person who appears to be making them. Interestingly, Artificial Intelligence (AI) which is used to create this phenomena may be used to help detecting deep fakes. Models can be trained to recognize fake images on dimensions that the human eye can't detect. Keep a watchful eye on the development of the deepfake phenomenon over the next couple of years, and, as always, remain vigilant.

Deepfakes and other similar use of artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies also bring to the fore foundational challenges to a democratic society such as surveillance, exclusion and disinformation. Addressing all these issues require us to be more imaginative than Artificial Intelligence. As the quote that has gone viral on social media says: "Before we perfect Artificial Intelligence can we work on natural stupidity?" ●

United Nations Secretary-General
ANTONIO GUTERRES SPEECH
to the Security Council on the Middle East October 24, 2023

Even in this moment of grave and immediate danger, we cannot lose sight of the only realistic foundation for a true peace and stability: a two-State solution. Israelis must see their legitimate needs for security materialized, and Palestinians must see their legitimate aspirations for an independent State realized. Finally, we must be clear on the principle of upholding human dignity. Polarization and dehumanization are being fueled by a tsunami of disinformation. We must stand up to the forces of antisemitism, anti-Muslim bigotry and all forms of hate.

Mr. President, with your permission, I will make a small introduction and then ask my colleagues to brief the Security Council on the situation on the ground.

Excellencies,

The situation in the Middle East is growing more dire by the hour. The war in Gaza is raging and risks spiralling throughout the region. Divisions are splintering societies. Tensions threaten to boil over. At a crucial moment like this, it is vital to be clear on principles -- starting with the fundamental principle of respecting and protecting civilians.

I have condemned unequivocally the horrifying and unprecedented 7 October acts of terror by Hamas in Israel. Nothing can justify the deliberate killing, injuring and kidnapping of civilians – or the launching of rockets against civilian targets. All hostages must be treated humanely and released immediately and without conditions. I respectfully

note the presence among us of members of their families.

Excellencies, it is important to also recognize the attacks by Hamas did not happen in a vacuum. The Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation. They have seen their land steadily devoured by settlements and plagued by violence; their economy stifled; their people displaced and their homes demolished. Their hopes for a political solution to their plight have been vanishing. But the grievances of the Palestinian people cannot justify the appalling attacks by Hamas. And those appalling attacks cannot justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.

Excellencies, even war has rules. We must demand that all parties uphold and respect their obligations under international humanitarian law; take constant care in the conduct of military operations to spare civilians; and respect and protect hospitals and respect the inviolability of UN facilities which today are sheltering more than 600,000 Palestinians. The relentless bombardment of Gaza by Israeli forces, the level of civilian casualties, and the wholesale destruction of neighborhoods continue to mount and are deeply alarming.

I mourn and honour the dozens of UN colleagues working for UNRWA – sadly, at least 35 and counting – killed in the bombardment of Gaza over the last two weeks. I owe to their families my condemnation of these and many other similar killings. The protection of civilians is paramount in any armed conflict. Protecting civilians can never mean using them as human shields. Protecting civilians does not mean ordering more than one million people to evacuate to the south, where there is no shelter, no food, no water, no medicine and no fuel, and then continuing to bomb the south itself.

I am deeply concerned about the clear violations of international humanitarian law that we are witnessing in Gaza. Let me be clear: No party to an armed conflict is above international humanitarian law.

Excellencies, thankfully, some humanitarian relief is finally getting into Gaza. But it is a drop of aid in an ocean of need. In addition, our UN fuel supplies in Gaza will run out in a matter of days. That would be another disaster. Without fuel, aid cannot be delivered, hospitals will not have power, and drinking water cannot be purified or even pumped. The people of Gaza need continuous aid delivery at a level that corresponds to the enormous needs. That aid must be delivered without restrictions.

I salute our UN colleagues and humanitarian partners in Gaza working under hazardous conditions and risking their lives to provide aid to those in need. They are an inspiration. To ease epic suffering, make the delivery of aid easier and safer, and facilitate the release of hostages, I reiterate my appeal for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire.

Excellencies, even in this moment of grave and immediate danger, we cannot lose sight of the only realistic foundation for a true peace and stability: a two-State solution. Israelis must see their legitimate needs for security materialized, and Palestinians must see their legitimate aspirations for an independent State realized, in line with United Nations resolutions, international law and previous agreements.

Finally, we must be clear on the principle of upholding human dignity. Polarization and dehumanization are being fueled by a tsunami of disinformation. We must stand up to the forces of antisemitism, anti-Muslim bigotry and all forms of hate.

Mr. President, Excellencies, today is United Nations Day, marking 78 years since the UN Charter entered into force. That Charter reflects our shared commitment to advance peace, sustainable development and human rights. On this UN Day, at this critical hour, I appeal to all to pull back from the brink before the violence claims even more lives and spreads even farther. ●

Thank you very much.

Many major wars have been fought in the history of the world. Millions of unintelligent shu´dras and thousands of unintelligent but brave ks´atriyas have lost their lives, but the laurels of victory have always gone to the vipra ministers who have never so much as glanced at a battlefield from a distance.

- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

The Dangers of Outsourcing Government Planning to GLOBAL CONSULTING FIRMS

Gopi Karunakaran

In light of the Union government's engagement of Boston Consulting Group to finalise 'Vision 2047' for India, this article sounds a cautionary note.

In the last week of October 2023, the print media reported that the government of India has hired the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) to help prepare 'Vision 2047' for India. It is a document that will set India's medium-term goals and priorities for becoming a developed economy in the next quarter of a century. Among other things, it will look at improving governance systems and access to public goods. BCG is a well-known global consulting firm that, according to its website, claims to partner with leaders in business and society to tackle their most important challenges. BCG is a part of the 'Big Three' which includes McKinsey and Bain & Company.

While advising corporates on strategy, management and execution of projects, sometimes in capacities such as information technology (IT) or financial planning is a standard process, advising governments and organisations from civil societies seems to be a stretch. The history of such advisory services to governments by global consulting firms is riddled with failures, bad advice, influence peddling and collapse of government special skills and knowledge built over the years.

The history of advisory services to governments by global consulting firms is riddled with failures, bad advice, influence peddling and collapse of government special skills and knowledge built over the years. This article aims to prove that the experience and history of consulting firms and their interventions in countries that have sought their help have been met with unmitigated disasters. It also sets out reasons why involving such firms is detrimental to the country and prejudicial to national interests. The foremost question is this: Do strategy firms truly produce the best outcomes? Many scholars in business, academia, and journalism have long argued that the real value of consulting is difficult to ascertain and, hence, consulting firms are mainly concerned with creating the impression of value.

How do global strategy firms work?

Global strategy firms first start working in target countries with the branch or country offices of corporates and organisations with whose head offices they have

worked. Having entered the country, they approach government agencies and departments to do work for free. This *pro bono* work is a future investment.

One, they understand the workings of the government, which makes it difficult to stay outside, and two, they build contact with senior officers. Senior officers facilitate their entry in the hope that these firms would offer them post-retirement sinecures for the effort they put in to get the firms into the system. Offers are made subtly and in a manner that conveys that an offer is on the table. The officer's fraternity is, of course, an old boys' network.

The next step is to indicate that the department's ability and competence do not match the capability to resolve the issue and that there is a need to infuse new thinking and new blood into the department. They would then recommend recruiting this new blood and often they would be their own recruitments and on their payroll. They are called 'associates'. Once they make their way in, they become a permanent fixture and bill at US dollar market rates. Of course, the government will foot the bill, which is often much higher than what they would be paying cadre officers who continue to be on the government's payroll with meagre work. Demoralisation sets in and the in-house knowledge built over years is lost.

One may believe that these consulting firms have great techniques and strategies to offer, but the reality is pleasantly surprising. They usually import operating models used in industries that may not necessarily have worked and they have a set of sophisticated systems of collating and distributing information about previous contracts known as 'project histories'. Global strategy firms first start working in target countries with the branch or

country offices of corporates and organisations with whose head offices they have worked. Having entered the country, they approach government agencies and departments to do work for free. This pro bono work is a future investment.

Their work with previous clients is recorded internally and stored digitally which other consultants can access and then passed off as original work for a new contract. These 'project histories' are recycled when these firms bid for new contracts and projects that they have solutions to existing problems faced by organisations. With the marketing skills available to them and a plethora of PowerPoint presentations, they overwhelm their clients with enough data to never doubt their assessment and solutions. Questioning them comes across as uninitiated and foolish.

These global strategy firms operate on both sides of the street. Having dealt a blow to the government's in-house capabilities of knowledge and expertise, they suggest out-sourcing these capabilities. While advising the government, word is sent out about possibilities of government out-sourcing. The word, of course, goes out to companies with which the firm deals. The word, yes, you guessed right, does not go out free. Ultimately, if the project fails, they will then blame the inadequacy of government intervention, lack of spending and unavailability of suitable people to execute. It is never them and their flights of fantasy.

Now let me list some of the major actions suggested by the consultancies that were disastrous to countries which the Big Three have advised. Once global strategy firms make their way in, they become a permanent fixture and bill at US dollar market rates.

Outsourcing

In the twentieth century, government initiatives led to digitalisation. Government reforms entailed managing and servicing much of their IT infrastructure in-house and there was a gradual shift to outsourcing. The Netherlands, Japan and Scandinavian countries retained extensive capabilities in-house until these firms recommended outsourcing. Denmark had an excellent IT systems management and development enterprise managed by the government until it was privatised.

Today, these in-house capabilities have been destroyed or lost to these countries. The argument for privatisation was public sector incompetence. Government employment, because of low compensation, does not attract talent, it was said. In the private sector, innovations proliferate, productivity is much higher, etc. Global strategy firms operate on both sides of the street. Having dealt a blow to the government's in-house capabilities of knowledge and expertise, they suggest out-sourcing these capabilities.

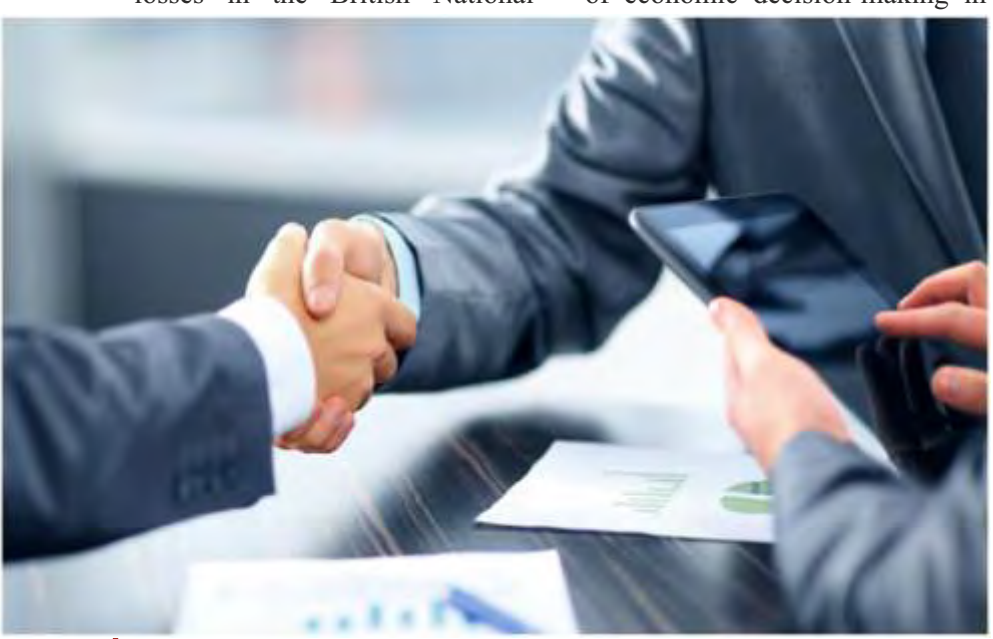
Value-based reforms aka downsizing

One of the attractive propositions that these firms forward is downsizing to save costs to the government in the name of 'value-based reforms'. With pressure on the governments to reduce fiscal deficits, such a recommendation by a well-known strategy firm is a good excuse. Downsizing gravely damages the learning capacity of an organisation. Another proposition is deskilling— the loss of skill and knowledge acquired over the years. It harms the learning capacity and such downsizing has led to capability losses in the British National Health Service, the Swedish public hospital Nya Karolinska Solna (NKS) and Puerto Rico.

Instead of cost-cutting, as envisaged by the firms, these enterprises have become money-leaking institutes. The Swedes call NKS, which once provided the best medical facility at cheaper rates, the "*most expensive hospital in the world*". Cost-cutting is the main component of value-based reforms which is achieved by reducing salaries and wages of those at the lower end of the hierarchy with the least bargaining power. In the US, downsizing is popular, but the costs avoided by retrenching workers are a burden on the federal government which has to foot the social security bill over time.

Potential conflict of interest and national security

Contracting strategy firms to advise governments entails a potential conflict of interest. As consultancies work with governments, systemic conflicts of interest arise because consultancies want to secure future contracts from clients in the private sector. The private sector remains a far bigger market than government business. Having a seat at the table of economic decision-making in government is a potential source of influence and information for future clients whom these firms advise. Further, the consulting firms consist of people from different countries. The knowledge pool that they keep in the 'depository' for use by associates for other projects is a source of concern. Non-disclosure agreements cannot stem the leak.



Danger to democracy

The consulting industry is often at odds with democratic rules that exist to protect the public. The opacity of the consulting industry is nothing new. The influence these consultancies have in government decision-making happens without public knowledge, which lacks transparency. The effects of the policies of consulting companies in Angola and Cote d'Ivoire are a case in point. Contracting strategy firms to advise governments entails a potential conflict of interest. As consultancies work with governments, systemic conflicts of interest arise because consultancies want to secure future contracts from clients in the private sector.

Conclusion

The consulting industry has benefited greatly from government consulting projects. The huge rents accrued match neither the value of its overall contribution nor the distribution of the risks. The consulting companies prevent the government from evolving the capabilities needed to transform economies for the common good. Consulting firms have captured public sector organisations, losing out not only on capabilities but also on a sense of public purpose and direction. Consultants are often appointed by governments to avoid blame for failures. However, the financial costs for failures remain the responsibility of the government. ●

THE DANGER OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

When Henry Ford talked about the motor car, there were those who said that it was an impossible technology, because the human being could not endure going faster than a horse. When Alfred Nobel realized the negative potential of dynamite, he left much of his fortune for the benefit of humanity. When Edison demonstrated the use of the phonograph, the academic Jean Bouillaud grabbed the operator by the neck while he declared that it was a farce. When atomic energy was developed, many scientists and academics spoke out against it due to its negative potential.

It is not correct to say that Artificial Intelligence is the greatest current danger for humanity

Leopoldo Alberto Cook Antonorsi

Technology has always been attacked. The new is scary. And our knowledge of the selfish nature of human beings makes us doubt our creations. But humanity's desire to improve leads us to create more and more technological developments, in our desire to improve the quality of life. It's exponential growth.

The use of technology has brought great pleasures and great suffering to humanity. But it is not the technology that is responsible, but rather the use to which it is put. The development of communications makes it possible to increase awareness, or manipulate the population. Aerospace development makes it possible to unite people, or create deadly missiles. Atomic energy can give us energy or death. New psychological and neuroscience

discoveries allow us to lead a healthy and more complete life, or to manipulation.

The same happens with Artificial Intelligence. Therefore, it is not correct to say that Artificial Intelligence is the greatest current danger for humanity. The danger would be, as with all technology, in the use to which it is given. It is the human being who will define the parameters under which the AI will operate.

The greatest current danger to humanity is Neoliberalism. Because of it, as heir to capitalism, in the short term, and modernism, in the long term, we have the world war system, the climate crisis, migrations, poverty and so many other global systemic dangers.

Under Neoliberalism, Artificial Intelligence, and any technology that is appropriated by elites, will be negative for humanity. That is the dangerous hand, the hand of Neoliberalism.

Let us change the system of modernity for a World Government under the World Constitution, and all these dangers will be overcome. Artificial Intelligence, under this paradigm shift, will be a blessing for humanity. A kind hand will bring prosperity to humanity.

But system change is required. It is an illusion to try to solve our world problems with technology, while keeping the system unchanged. It is the mistake of transhumanists, of many postmodernists. They aim to bring happiness to humanity by lengthening telomeres to make human beings immortal; create super brains and attach them to humans to make us more intelligent; create screens in the atmosphere that filter solar rays to mitigate climate change.

It is what Ken Wilber calls the right-hand vision, betting on tangible changes, without the holistic integration of other social aspects (such as the structure of the world government, and the global economic financial system) and cultural aspects. They seek to change the effects through technologies, without changing the causes. Thus, we would be more intelligent, we would live longer, to continue destroying Nature and attacking each other, in a more intelligent way and for longer.

The World Constitution for the Federation of the Earth is a holistic answer. A paradigm shift establishes a Parliament with binding decisions, democratic, federated, without vetoes. It delegates those global aspects to the World Government, while the nations maintain their autonomy in the rest. Forces the abandonment of weapons of mass destruction. Establishes a global socioeconomic-financial system that promotes equity, full employment, and market control.

This last point is very instructive. Nowadays, everything is globalized. Transnational companies operate globally, but they are registered in a certain country, sometimes in small "tax havens." Nations are prevented from exercising any control, and global "governance" bodies, such as the UN, lack governability, since they are nothing more than a pact of sovereign nations that are not committed to recognizing the agreements, because they do not recognize any power. above them.

A World Government, under the World Constitution for the Federation of the Earth, has the mechanisms to exercise global control over transnational corporations, or globalize them if they get in the way. Artificial Intelligence, as a technology, if controlled by transnationals under the current system, will be a danger. But if she is released under the World Constitution, it will be a blessing. ●

The author is Vice President for Latin America of the World Constitution and Parliament Association

India's Malnutrition Protocol Is More 'Wait and Watch' Than Tangible Interventions

Sylvia Karpagam

A new protocol for management of malnutrition in children released by union minister Smriti Irani on October 11, 2023, acknowledges that nutrition plays a key role in health and development and is 'one of the most important challenges facing contemporary India'. Most of the strategies presented in the protocol seem to suggest a wait and watch approach till after malnutrition has set in. Unfortunately, as the protocol itself mentions, malnutrition can often have irreversible long and short-term consequences, even with interventions.

What is a holistic approach as promised by the Poshan Abhiyan?

The protocol mentions several determinants of undernutrition such as low income, large family size, gender bias, changing crop patterns, lack of knowledge, poor health etc. which lead to dietary imbalance, reduced access to food, loss of traditional food habits etc. Many of these determinants end up being attributed to communities and families, especially mothers. If the 'holistic approach' of the Poshan Abhiyan is to be realised in spirit and practice and in the interest of evidence based nutrition, all barriers to good nutrition – economic, social, political, cultural and religious should be objectively documented and addressed.

The protocol states that diet diversity should be followed when constructing diets for malnourished children and it is good that nutrient dense foods such as egg and whole milk have been included. Eggs, which contain important nutrients should ideally be given on all days of the week to all children and not to just to those identified with malnutrition. Those with religious, caste or health restrictions on eggs should be given an additional glass of milk or a bowl of yoghurt.

Although (on paper), people are encouraged to eat their 'traditional foods', very often these are made inaccessible to them because of economic, political or social reasons. Erasing and criminalising animal source foods consumed by many communities

institutionalises caste and communal prejudices. This is not desirable in India.

For example, organisations such as Akshaya Patra, which have bagged mid-day meal contracts in several states in India, take a belligerent, anti-meat, anti-egg stance which is a serious impediment, often intergenerational, to addressing malnutrition in the country. The government's 'multi-pronged strategies' of criminalising and/or erasing nutrient dense foods creates impediments in this regard.

Preventing rather than treating malnutrition should be the primary goal of any nutritional intervention programme. Children with stunting and undernutrition are likely to have a host of other nutritional deficiencies which make them susceptible to anemia, night blindness, cognitive deficiency, skin disease, respiratory, gastro-intestinal disease, etc. Viewed in that context, the rapid push for fortification by the government stands out as woefully inappropriate and unholistic. In a country with alarming hunger and multiple nutritional deficiencies, fortifying the nutrient-poor and over consumed cereals with one or two 'micro-nutrients' is neither economic nor a solution.

The Poshan tracker focuses inordinately on the Aadhaar card in spite of several concerns about it, pushing those most in need of social security to fall through the gaps. Aadhaar-verified beneficiaries are 9,55,73,667 (9.6 crore) out of 10,10,89,751 (10 crore) eligible beneficiaries, which means that only 94% are verified and 55,16,084 (0.55 lakhs) have been left out. Even in aspirational districts and in the northeast region, of a total of 22,71,111 adolescent girls, only 18,71,228 (82%) are Aadhaar verified. Of these 3,22,807 have received take home rations. What is 'holistic' about leaving out vast sections of people, especially those most in need of social security?

On the other hand children need regular screening checks to pick out common diseases so that they can receive timely care and this is non-negotiable. Saddling the Anganwadi teacher with the responsibility is not the solution. The government thus seems to have a wishful desire (on paper) for an 'overarching scheme for holistic nourishment' through the Poshan Abhiyan, but in reality it is not adequately nourishing. ●

SMOG ISN'T JUST ABOUT FARMERS

WE BREATHE THE SOOT OF OUR OWN ECOLOGICAL SINS

Stubble burning is an agrarian problem which can be easily solved with right policy decisions

Indra Shekhar Singh

It's not only our lungs but perhaps our brains that have become fogged. We have failed to see that historically, stubble burning contributes only 6% to the pollution, yet the public is quick to make the farmers the scapegoats, and not the policymakers.

As the sun rises, the grey lingering smog comes alive in north India. Over the past few days (and decades), Delhi has become a toxic gas chamber signalling that all our tax rupees spent to clean the air have been wasted. AQI gauges are malfunctioning as air quality plummets beyond 500. But it's not only our lungs but perhaps our brains that have become fogged. We have failed to see that historically, stubble burning contributes only 6% to the pollution, yet the public is quick to make the farmers the scapegoats, and not the policymakers.

One shouldn't be too harsh on the public, as public experts and mainstream media are busy in political mudslinging and making the Punjabi paddy farmer India's Public Enemy Number One. Without providing any real solutions, policymakers are keeping mum and deflecting the issue to the courts. Across state borders, the issue is highly politicised. So, it is time to examine the facts for ourselves.

The first practical consideration is — air doesn't respect political boundaries. Whether the factory or car is polluting in Gurugram or Noida or Bahadurgarh, people living in the NCR region have to breathe the same air. To get a shot at solving the problem, we have to consider the NCR region as one. Shifting factories from Delhi to the NCR regions of Haryana or UP is equally bad, if not worse.

Medical experts and researchers say that

TheQuint.com

vehicular pollution is the main source of the toxic PM2.5 pollution. Industries come next, followed by construction-related activities which raise dust. Burning of coal and other biomass also contributes to bad air. Mumbai, which is right on the sea, saw very bad air days without the benefit of any stubble smoke. Vehicles and industries are the major source of air pollution, not farmers.

Stubble burning is episodic, occuring in a short window of time between the kharif harvest and rabi sowing among industrial paddy farmers, and contributes about 6% to air pollution. Stubble smoke is denser and visible to the naked eye, while vapours and NO2 and carbon monoxide emitted from cars and industries are not. Although these non-farm sources produce deadlier smoke, the non-visibility helps them evade public attention.

If we look closely, we find that every year, long after the stubble burning period is over, the air quality in the NCR region remains poor, if not severe. What causes the air to remain bad? When we compare the pollution data not just for Delhi but the entire NCR region, it is clear as rain that it produces the major chunk of the pollution it breathes. In the summer and monsoon months, due to favourable winds and weather, pollutants are removed from our skies, but when winter comes, all the pollutants condense over north India. The retreating monsoon winds also bring with them the pollution and smoke from all over the northern Indian subcontinent, not just India.

So, it is very wrong to vilify farmers for air pollution. Having shown that stubble smoke is responsible for 6% of the air quality problem, we must try and find solutions for it. The stubble problem is new. Punjab and Haryana hardly grew paddy,

because the local cuisine includes very little rice. Most rural households use wheat or corn as the staple cereal.

Paddy farming began in Punjab after the Green Revolution and the development of irrigation systems. Farmers were forced to shift from native landraces and crops to Green Revolution paddy seeds. These new varieties were bred for higher uptake of agri-chemicals like urea, potash, etc and focused on producing more grains. The collateral damage was cattle, the Indian farmer's best friend. The newer seeds had edible grains, but the straw was no good for fodder.

Since it has no economic value and cannot be used as cattle feed, the government encouraged farmers to burn the paddy stubble. Over time, this post-harvest problem has picked up. If it's the government that started this problem, it has the moral duty to find a solution for it, too. Especially because a large chunk of the budget of the national clean air programmes go unused.

The simple and efficient solution is to give farmers price support of Rs 2,500 per acre to

clear the stubble in an ecologically safe manner. An entire supply of stubble or *parali*-based raw material can be generated from paddy fields. If stubble or *parali* becomes economically valuable for farmers, no one would burn the fields. Through a combined multi-state action plan, the government can have dedicated mandis for stubble paddy straw trading. Like paddy, its straw can also have an MSP-like programme. Now, you may be thinking this is a subsidy, but it isn't.

Paddy straw or stubble has multiple uses and the government only needs to regulate the market by offering a floor price. From the biochar industry (carbonised biomass) to mushroom cultivation and sustainable packaging, state governments can take the initiative to help organise this sector and turn paddy straw from waste into raw material for various industries. Taking an ecological step further, the government may have a special MSP for ecologically produced paddy. This would ensure that farmers are rewarded for growing basmati and other native landraces.

The straw from these fields could help fill the national fodder deficit, which is 10-15% every year.

The stubble problem is an agrarian problem which can be easily fixed with the right policy decisions. The question is, will our policymakers actually listen and help make 2024 stubble burning free? It's not just about the farmers. Every year, we breathe the soot of our own ecological sins. ●

The author is an independent agri-policy analyst and writer..

PROUT NEWS REPORT

"MGNREGS REPORTS A 7.5% DECREASE IN ACTIVE WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION"

MGNREGS workforce declined by 7.5%, job demand increased by 9% in April-September 2023. State disparities highlight sustainability concerns, prompting the need for analysis and revitalization efforts.

A recent data analysis by **LibTech India,** a consortium of academics and activists, has revealed significant changes in the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)** for the period from April to September 2023. The data, sourced from the **Union Rural Development Ministry,** shows a **7.5%** reduction in the number of active **MGNREGS** workers compared to the previous fiscal year.

In addition to this workforce contraction, there is an increased demand for employment opportunities under the scheme. This analysis raises concerns about the program's sustainability and the need for strategies to revitalize its participation.

Workforce Contraction

- **MGNREGS** workforce reduced by **7.5%, from 15.49 crore** workers in the previous fiscal year to **14.33 crore** in **April-September 2023.**
- A net deletion of **80 lakh workers** in the ongoing financial year, adding to the workforce decline.

Increased Demand for MGNREGS Jobs

- A **9%** increase in person-days, indicating a rise in the demand for work under **MGNREGS.**
- In **2022-23, 172.24 crore** person-days were generated from April to September, while in the ongoing fiscal year, **188 crore** person-days were generated.

State-Level Variations

- **14 States** reported an increase in employment trends, indicating the effectiveness of the program in those regions.
- **Six States** experienced a decline, with **West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh** showing notable drops.
- **West Bengal** saw a **99.5%** decline due to the suspension of the scheme by the Union government over corruption allegations.
- **Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Tamil Nadu** witnessed the highest increases in employment opportunities under **MGNREGS.**

The Need for Comprehensive Analysis and Strategies

- The statistics emphasize the necessity for a thorough analysis to identify the factors contributing to the workforce decline.
- Strategies are required to revitalize **MGNREGS** participation, considering the persistently high and growing demand for employment opportunities under the program. ●

Courtesy - Piyush Current Affairs

PROUT NEWS REPORT

RETIREMENT AGE OF JUDGES

Recently there was a news item in a leading national English daily that a Delhi High Court Judge on the eve of her retirement pronounced 65 judgments. What is commendable is that she did so when the courts were on vacation. Supreme Court judges retire at the age of 65 and judges of the High Court at 62. Though this is indeed a commendable effort, it begs the question — if this has been possible why can't this speed be maintained as part of normal judicial functioning?

As of today, matters pending in the Supreme Court are over 68000, while in the 25 High Courts it is over 59 lakh cases. The Supreme Court has a sanctioned strength 33 judges including the Chief Justice and the High Courts have 1108. These figures give an idea of how skewed the system is, especially when we see that with 22,667 judges in subordinate courts all over India there's a backlog of 4.3 crores cases. These actually affect the common man who approaches the courts with their problems.

The problem in higher judiciary is no doubt compounded by flawed investigations, shoddy prosecution and bad lower court rulings, which add to the huge pendency. There is another problem that of judges' vacancies that are not filled up. Till January this year, the High Courts functioned with 778 judges — 20% short.

This brings to spotlight the retirement age of judges in India. The US Supreme Court appoints judges for life. While in the UK the retirement age of judges is proposed to be increased from 70 to 75. The Justice Department in December last year told a Parliamentary Panel that increasing Judges retirement age may have cascading effect, with government offices demanding the same.

While this may to some extent be true but with changing times and life spans and productivity increasing due to better health care, such an argument is perhaps not well founded. In fact what is the harm? It is society's loss that senior citizens retire who have a lot of productive years left in them are forced into retirement and languish away in sedentary pursuits. These in turn lead to health issues, and consequent medical expenses which the government bears. This can be saved.

People should be allowed to continue working. As to the problem of young people not getting a chance, this can be easily solved by reducing daily working hours by half, which will double the employment. Then people will be able to not only work but also pursue their other interests and remain both physically healthy and mentally active and have their all round development for the benefit of society at large. ●

The Delhi High Court

HUMAN EXPRESSIONS - II

- Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti

Now there are so many human expressions in the physical stratum. We do so many things, and for these human expressions in the physical stratum we have got a physical body. A human body is the most complicated biological structure. There are so many propensities in the human mind, and for expression of many propensities in the psychic stratum there are so many nerve cells, so many centres of activity, so many nuclei in the realm of the mind. And for outer expression and for reception of waves from outer worlds, human bodies have got so many nerve fibres – a human body is the most complicated biological structure.

And humans have been blessed with certain excellent structures. There is a heaven-and-hell difference between an animal body and a human body. The most developed animal bodies – those of apes of certain groups – are very developed, but there is a heaven-and-hell difference between their bodies and a human body, and it is [not] very difficult to find the difference between the most developed animal and the most undeveloped human being. So the human body is not only physical but is an excellent medium of higher psychic expressions.

And the third human expression which is lacking in other animals is the spiritual expression. A person who has high taste in the aesthetic sphere may forget eating and drinking, and a person who has developed deep love for the Supreme Being forgets all his psychic pursuits even. If you insult a dog, and the next moment call the dog to take food, it will accept that food from your hands. But if you insult a person and ask that person to take food, even a very delicious food, he or she, in order to maintain prestige, or save himself or herself from humiliation, will not accept. Human beings even commit suicide due to psychic pressure.

Animals, low-grade animals, also sometimes commit suicide. Certain aquatic animals commit suicide. But that is not due to psychic pressure, it is due to inborn instinct. Whales of certain groups and mice of certain groups do commit suicide, collective suicide.

Now human expressions are trifarious – physical expression, psychic expression and spiritual expression. The spiritual expression is the highest and subtlest expression of human existence. And here lies the speciality of humans. In the physical stratum each and every human being is a species. Nobody is just like others. Even in a small family, brothers and sisters vary from one another. No two face-cuttings are the same. On the psychic level humans are divided into several kinds of ideologies, and they fight amongst themselves, just for ideology, and ideology remains in some sphere of abstraction, and they quarrel amongst themselves. They quarrel regarding religion, regarding different isms with different views, regarding sports. One person will say, "My team will win," while another will say, "But my team [can] fight" – in football or any other sport. And there was one very important play in Spain, toros or something like that – "bullfighting". People were very much interested in it, and they [the fans] used to fight amongst themselves, and it is not a physical fight, it is a psychic fight. But in the realm of spirituality there cannot be any fight, because the Supreme Goal is one, a singular entity.

So spiritualism, rather spirituality, is not only the highest and noblest human speciality, but is the only unifying point, the only unifying platform, for the entire human society. There may be so many human races Negroid, Austric, Mongoloid, Caucasian. Amongst Mongolians there are so many Malays, Japano- and Sino- [blendings], Tibeto-Indians, so many of those. Amongst Caucasians there are Nordics, Scandinavians; Alpines in middle Europe; Mediterraneans in Italy, south France, Spain and Portugal. But human society is a singular entity – humans belong to the same society. So here the Supreme Noumenal Entity is the spiritual nave. Now humans of this last portion of the twentieth century should strengthen that nave, should strengthen that Supreme Noumenal Entity, and on the basis of this Supreme Noumenal Entity lies their universal fraternity – they are children of the same Supreme Father. The Supreme Progenitor is one; His children are many in number. If the children quarrel amongst themselves on petty affairs, this will certainly not satisfy the Supreme Father. He has given humans, that is, the human body, a developed cranium, a developed brain, developed nerve cells and nerve fibres. Humans should utilize them properly. There should be maximum utilization of all your assets, and by utilizing your assets, you, in your individual and collective capacities, will be assets to human society. ●

Relief Work by AMURT in Siliguri and Kolkata

On October 31, a mass feeding programme was organized by Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team (AMURT) as part of relief work in Durgapur and Sukhna tea gardens in Siliguri.

Earlier on October 22, uncooked grains, oil etc. were distributed to about 100 families by AMURT under the leadership of Acharya Uditananda Avadhuta in the rural areas of Kolkata.

RAWA Holds Seminar and Cultural Evening in Science City

On 27 October, Renaissance Artists and Writers Association (RAWA), the cultural wing of Ananda Marga Pracharak Sangh, organized a symposium and cultural evening based on Prabhat Sangeet in the main auditorium of Science City, Kolkata. The program started with Kuchipudi dance based on Prabhat Sangeet, which was presented by Kalamadhuri dance group. Chairman of the program Acharya Bhaveshanand Avadhuta inaugurated the program by lighting the lamp, along with all the guests sitting on the stage.

On this occasion, Professor Gopal Chandra Mishra, former Vice Chancellor of Gour Banga University and eminent educationist, was honored for his contribution to education. Acharya Bhaveshananda Avadhuta, Professor BN Bhattacharya (Director, Vedic School of Studies, Rabindra Bharati University), Acharya Sutirthananda Avadhuta and Acharya Divyachetanananda Avadhuta (Central RAWA Secretary) expressed their views on the contribution of Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar to literature, and discussed its relevance in detail. At the end of the program, Dr. Vishwajit Bhowmik gave the vote of thanks. The program was conducted by Urmila Bhowmik.

PBI Holds Empowering Training Program in Gorakhpur

Gorakhpur, 19th November: In a dynamic initiative, Proutist Bloc, India (PBI) organized in Bagchi Nursing Home a one-day training program for local Proutists, drawing the participation of approximately 100 enthusiasts. Led by the party's national convenor, Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta, along with Proutist Nidhi Sati as trainers, the event aimed to delve into the fundamental principles of the socio-economic theory 'Prout.'

The training session focused on the 'Progressive Utilization Principle,' conceptualized by the eminent philosopher Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, addressing solutions to diverse national challenges. Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta emphasized the prevalent issues of despair, hunger, fear, injustice, and tension in contemporary society. He asserted that ethical leaders inspired by Prout's philosophy could contribute to the welfare of the nation, emphasizing PBI's commitment to nurturing such leadership in the political arena.

Nidhi Sati delivered an enlightening PowerPoint presentation titled 'PBI - New Sunrise in Politics,' elucidating the distinctions that set PBI apart from other political entities. She emphasized PBI's mission to unite people on the grounds of universalism and anti-aircraft sentiment, challenging the divisive tactics employed by existing political parties based on factors like caste, language, sect, and religion.

Furthermore, Sati presented an illustrated PowerPoint discussion on 'Amiri Rekha,' based on Prout's philosophy, highlighting how economic inequality not only fosters poverty

but also triggers issues such as unemployment, recession, inflation, and corruption.

Professor R.P. Singh underscored PBI's objective to work towards 'Sarvajan Hitaya, Sarvajan Sukhaay' (Welfare and Happiness for All) through systemic change. He critiqued the political landscape of the past 75 years, stating that despite various parties holding power, none demonstrated the intention, courage, or vision to alter the prevailing capitalist structure.

The event maintained a vibrant atmosphere throughout the day, with Proutist Ram Prasad Nirala and Shashwat Shivam uplifting spirits by leading the participants in a series of Prout songs, reinforcing the commitment to Prout's philosophy and its potential impact on the nation and society.

Dr. Ranjana Bagchi was unanimously elected District President by the assembled Proutists along with following office bearers : Vice-President-Krishnanandaji, General Secretary-Prof R P Singh, Secretary - Sudhir Kumar, Finance Secretary-Ashok Singh; Sanjay Tiwari as PRS Organising Secretary-Avinashji, Advocate; Public Relations Secretary-Media Secretary-Udayan Mukherjee; Office Secretary-Vivekji; Women's Department Secretary Shrimati Madhu Shrivastava as WD. Dr. Bagchi then addressed the participants and emphasised the need to work for making PBI as the political alternative. ●

Veteran Proutist Leader Dies

In a poignant development, the proutist community mourns the loss of proutist leader Ganga Ram Chandraanshi, who peacefully departed on November 5, 2023.

A distinguished and active member of the Proutist Bloc India (PBI), Ganga Ram Ji made significant contributions to the proutist cause. Notably, he contested in the 2020 assembly elections, representing Uttam Nagar constituency.

PBI Participates in Madhya Pradesh Polls

In the Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections held on November 17, Proutist Bloc, India's representative Basant Kumar Bopche, entered the electoral race for the Lanji Kirnapur assembly seat (No-109).

Known for his amiable personality and positive social standing, the Proutist leader, Basant Kumar, campaigned under the symbol of a 'Bat.' With a history of dedicated service to the local community and a commitment to the promotion of PROUT, Bopche presented himself as a formidable contender in the electoral arena.

PBI Holds Sit-in and Vibrant March in Vidarbha

In a notable event on November 20, 2023, Proutist Bloc, India (PBI), organized a sit-in and agitation in Pandharkavada, Vidarbha, for the following issues:

Call for Statehood

The heart of the agitation echoed with calls for the creation of a separate Vidarbha state. Madhukar Nistane, the Vidarbha region convenor for PBI, spearheaded the demonstration, emphasizing the historical discrimination faced by Vidarbha, resulting in economic disparities. Nistane stated, "Vidarbha has always been discriminated against, which has made this region economically backward compared to the rest of the state. So we demand statehood for Vidarbha."

Lease Distribution to Farmers

In addition to the call for statehood, the agitators pressed for the fair distribution of leases to farmers cultivating on encroached lands. This demand aimed at providing legal support and clarity to farmers facing land-related challenges.

CBI Inquiry in Student's Death

Furthermore, the protestors demanded a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry into the suspected death of a local school student. Simultaneously, they called for the immediate dismissal of officers deemed responsible for the unfortunate incident, emphasizing accountability.

Memorandum to SDO

Following the sit-in and agitation, a memorandum outlining the protestors' demands was handed over to the Sub-Divisional Officer. This memorandum is slated to be sent to the Chief Minister, signifying a formal communication channel to address the grievances and demands put forth by Proutist Bloc, India, in their quest for socio-political change in Vidarbha.

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

"DON'T GO O BANDHU"

JEONÁ JEONÁ OGO BANDHU
TOMÁ LÁGI JEGE ÁCHI DIVÁ NISHII
TUMI ÁCHO TÁI ÁCHE JAGATA VÁSI
TOMÁKE SAKALE MORÁ BHÁLOBÁSI
EI ÁLO EI CHÁYÁ EI JE VÁTÁS
NIILETE CUMKI GÁNTHÁ OI JE ÁKÁSH
TAVA SURE TAVA TÁLE SABÁI NÁCE
TAVA RÁG ANURÁG SABÁI JÁCE

Don't go, O 'Bandhu' don't go,
For thee I'm awake day and night.
You exist as do all beings
Of the universe exist,
All of us love thee.
This light, this shadow
O this air, the blue yonder
O that star spangled sky,
In thy melody in thy rhythm
All of them dance away
Thy colours thy love all crave.

BHULONÁ BHULONÁ O GO BANDHU
KÁCHE ESE HESE JÁO MADHUR HÁSI

Do not forsake me O 'Bandhu'
Come close and sweetly smile.

EI HÁSI EI GÁN EI JE ÁLOK
BHÁVER MÁDHURII BHARÁ EI JE DYULOK
TAVA NÁME ERÁ SABE CHANDE MÁTE
MANER KATHÁTÍ KAYE TOMÁRI SÁTHE
CHINŔO NÁ CHINŔO NÁ O GO BANDHU
PRÁŃER PARASH PÁVÁ PUŚPA RÁSHI

This smile, this song, O this light,
In sweetness of dawn O this heaven,
In thy name they all
Are enraptured in verse
They reveal their hearts' secrets to You.
Do not pluck do not pluck, O 'Bandhu'
These multitudes of flowers
That give a touch of life.

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