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# PROUT

A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis



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## UNITED BENGAL

### A Future Reality



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08

THE SOIL OF RA R H CAN PRODUCE BUMPER  
HARVESTS IF IT IS PROPERLY IRRIGATED.

28

ONLY PUBLIC PRESSURE  
CAN BRING POLICE REFORMS NOW.

▲ 1907 Map of Bengal



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# PROUT

PROGRESSIVE UTILISATION THEORY

Propounded by - Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

**PROUT - Cry of the Suffering Humanity**

## What is PROUT :

PROUT is an acronym for the Progressive Utilization Theory. Conceptualized in 1959 by Indian Philosopher Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, PROUT is a viable alternative to the outmoded capitalist and communist socio-economic paradigms. Neither of these approaches has adequately met the physical, mental and spiritual needs of humanity. PROUT seeks a harmonious balance between economic growth, social development and cultural expression.

Combining the wisdom of spirituality, the struggle for self-reliance, and the spirit of economic democracy, Proutist intellectuals and activists are attempting to create a new civilizational discourse. PROUT newsmagazine aims at conveying comprehensive and visionary goals of PROUT Philosophy.

PROUT magazine invites scientists, economists, politicians, artists, intellectuals and others to join us in the creation of a new, spiritually bonded society by propagating and popularising unambiguous elevating thoughts. Through Proutistic views and Neo Humanistic analysis, it strives to serve as beacon for the benighted civilization of our times.

## Main principles of PROUT and Neo-Humanism



**Neo-humanism :** Neo-humanism expands the humanistic love for all human beings to include love and respect for all creation - plants, animals and even inanimate objects. Neo-humanism provides a philosophical basis for creating a new era of ecological balance, planetary citizenship and cosmic kinship.



**Basic Necessities Guaranteed To All :** People can not strive toward their highest human aspirations if they are lacking the basic requirements of life. PROUT believes that access to food, shelter, clothing, education and medical care are fundamental human rights which must be guaranteed to all.



**Balanced Economy :** Prout advocates regional self-reliance, cooperatively owned and managed businesses, local control of large scale key industries, and limits on the individual accumulation of excessive wealth.



**Women's Right:** PROUT encourages the struggle against all forms of violence and exploitation used to suppress women. PROUT's goal is coordinated cooperation, with equal rights between men and women.



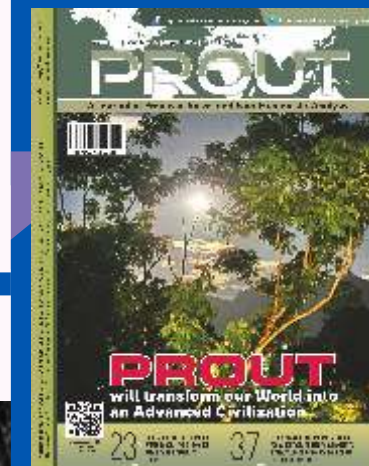
**Cultural Diversity:** In the spirit of universal fellowship PROUT encourages the protection and cultivation of local culture, language, history and tradition.



**World Government:** PROUT supports the creation of world government with a global constitution and a common penal code.

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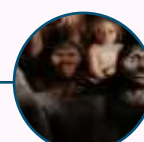
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“Differences such as between Hindus and Muslims based on religion are despicable. Humans belong to one species; they are all children of God.”

– 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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Ācārya Santosānanda Avadhūta

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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION SHOULD WIDEN ITS SCOPE

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar Prout's founder, while discoursing on 'Different forms of Government', observed: "According to the Indian constitution, the Federal State of India is a collection of a number of unitary states or provinces under the unified rule of the federal government. It should be borne in mind that the two terms 'unitary' and 'unitarian' are not synonymous. Neither are these two terms synonymous with the term totalitarian. It is also noteworthy that the series of amendments to the constitution have not enhanced the powers and privileges of the state governments. Rather, their power has been progressively curtailed".

Currently, there have been 105 amendments; the first was in 1951.

In 1950, in its first year, the Supreme Court passed two landmark judgments that paved the way for freedom of the press under Article 19 (1) (a). First, it ruled in favour of the magazines Cross Roads and Organiser. The former, published by Romesh Thapar from Bombay, had run a series of articles condemning the Congress and the Madras government over the 'cold blooded' shooting of 200 jailed communist prisoners in Salem Central Jail. The prisoners wanted to be treated as political detainees rather than criminals, but when they protested violently, the police locked them up in a room and opened fire. Twenty-two were killed and over 100 injured. The state government banned the magazine under the Madras Maintenance of Public Order Act. It was also banned in Bombay (though the Court order was later stayed).

Meanwhile, communal riots had gripped West Bengal, and the Organiser wrote scathing articles holding Prime Minister Nehru and Pakistani Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan responsible for the blood bath. It demanded, through a series of articles, that the property of Muslim evacuees be given to the Hindu refugees. Leaders such as Syama Prasad Mookerjee, still in Congress, and Mahant Digvijaynath (of the Gorakhpur math), general secretary of Hindu Mahasabha, supported the Organiser and demanded reunification of India and Pakistan and the formation of 'Akhand Bharat' (unified India).

This media coverage rattled Pakistan when Nehru and Liaquat negotiated a peace pact. The government decided to take action. In a huge setback, on 26 May 1950, the Supreme Court quashed the order to ban Cross Roads in Madras on the ground that they neither undermined the state's security nor was the state overthrown. It called the Madras Maintenance of Public Order Act and East Punjab Public Safety Act "ultra vires" and hence void. In the Organiser's case, the court dismissed the pre-censorship order and declared certain sections of the Act void.

Similar incidents were unfolding in other parts of India. In Bihar, Shaila Bala Devi, owner of Bharathi Press, published a pamphlet calling for a revolution. The Pamphlet, said the Patna High Court, does not undermine the state's security. While these cases were refining the understanding and interpretations of the right to freedom of speech and expression and the liberties enjoyed by the press, the government was growing restive.

These developments were troubling the government. Public safety acts, which the governments used to detain dissenters and crush the rebellion, were declared by the courts void. In Punjab, the high court had freed Master Tara Singh, an Akali Dal leader and a staunch critic of Nehru, who was imprisoned in the Karnal jail for sedition and spreading enmity between communities — sections 124A and 153A of the Indian Penal Code, respectively. Noted the judge, "A law of sedition thought necessary during a period of foreign rule has become inappropriate by the very nature of the change which has come about". But Nehru grew all the more adamant about the need for free speech restrictions. Nehru felt that the free run the courts gave the press was against him. Nehru, an authoritarian politician, wanted to win elections and did not tolerate criticism. All other powerful leaders who stood in the way of his agenda were sidelined. Support from the Congress party leaders was also waning; HV Kamath, Syamnanadan Sahay and Deshbandhu Gupta started opposing him. At a Congress Parliamentary Party meet on 25 May 1951, Gupta argued against the proposed amendments to Article 19.

In the backdrop of these events, Nehru introduced the amendment in Parliament with these words: "A Constitution which is unchanging and static, it does not matter how good it is, how perfect it is, is a Constitution that has past its use. It is in its old age already and gradually approaching its death. A Constitution to be living must be growing; must be adaptable; must be flexible; must be changeable". Questioned Naziruddin Ahmad, "The PM says that the Constitution must grow... But to grow in what direction, in the way of enlarging fundamental rights or curtailing them?" USA's first constitutional amendment of 1791 guaranteed the individual's right to protest. India's first amendment, enacted one hundred and sixty years later, did just the opposite!

What transpired on the floor of Parliament for sixteen days in 1951 has deep roots in society today. The media is being hounded if they criticize the government and men in power. People are being arrested left, right and centre under the sedition laws.

The Indian Constitution does not provide for the Press, the fourth pillar of democracy, as an individual fundamental right. Dr Ambedkar, the father of the Indian Constitution, had in 1949 advised that there should be a specific mention of the Freedom of Press in our Constitution. He was optimistic that in the future, Members of Parliament would consider and not hesitate to insert a suitable amendment so that our Press gets its deserved status in our Constitution. Sadly, this hasn't happened so far when the nation is celebrating the 75th year of independence.

India's first Prime Minister was right about one thing: the Constitution must be living and growing. In this light, one should see that amendments to the Constitution have not enhanced the powers of the state governments but progressively curtailed them. Now in the 75th year of independence, it is time to strengthen the power of the states to let them decide their political fate remaining avowedly under the Union of India. ●



## Bengal's Economic Self Sufficiency

Like the last time, this also was a thorough learning process. However, when implemented by the leaders of society, these points would tremendously improve the lot of the commoners in Bengal, especially the farmers.

*-Tarapada Sen, New Jalpaiguri*

## Vision and Goal of Prout

Thank you very much for this remarkable Prout Magazine August 2022. Today, let us consider all that is happening in the world:

1. The US and its territories and what the US did in Viet Nam/Iraq/Afghanistan.
2. India and its domination by BJP and RSS.
3. Russia wants to rebuild the Soviet Union.
4. China and its economic colonization.
5. Israel and its apartheid attitude to Palestinians and the US policy in the Middle East.
6. African countries are recovering from Europe's domination and stealing of their resources.

The root cause of all human suffering is the Political Party based Governance and countries' leaders. So we are in big need of the Prout system of Democratic Governance. How to bring this about is my big concern, and I hope we can make it happen together.

*- Acarya Dhanjoo Ghista, USA*

## Bengal Famine 1940

The 1770 famine was horrifying but more ominous was the one in 1943, when the world had advanced

considerably, and the government was better equipped to tackle such a catastrophe. The pictures and sketch tell their own story. The author has brought out very clearly where things went wrong and what all could and should have been done to save countless lives, and Administrators could have avoided this black death.

*- Bhagyashree Talukdar, Medinipur*

## Microvita in the Cosmic Cycle

The second instalment of the article most interestingly provides details of a scientific experiment for testing, which predicts that microvita released from radioactive atoms will create viruses and living cells in a laboratory setup, which in turn would support the microvita hypothesis. The note by Dr Surendra Verma of SMRIM is very encouraging for prospective researchers.

*- Arun Prakash, New Delhi*

## New Recruitment for the Armed Forces

The author, who appears to be from a military background, has explained in simple language the pros and cons of the Agnipath scheme. Political parties should not oppose for the sake of opposing and inciting people to resort to violence. It is a new and revolutionary scheme and deserves a fair trial.

*- Hav. Ram Singh (Retd), Rhotak*

## Prout Pension Policy

An engaging and thought-provoking article by Dr RP Singh. The suggestions made seem correct and should be considered.

*- Aryajan Narayanan, Kurnool*

## Evolution of Morality

A very timely article. Today the world faces a crisis caused mainly by those in power who have little or no sense of morality and ethics. The historical evolution presented goes a long way in understanding the issue.

I am looking forward to the second part.

*- Trevor Keeler, Sussex, UK*

## Horrific Honour Killings

How very true. There is no honour in killing. And who is at the receiving end? Mostly young women and in some cases men also. It is shocking in the present day and age. People should be made to change their mindset if necessary by force.

*- Shanta Karve, Pune*

## Hazardous Wastes Disposal

Hazardous wastes are not only a threat to living beings but also the whole world and everything in it. The pictures also highlight this naked truth. Therefore, there can be absolutely no reason why India should not ratify the international convention.

*- Jeanne Pichon, Marseilles, France*

## Hungry Nation's Impossible Choice.

Where is the choice when people are going hungry? Rich nations should waive off these debts of developing countries in the name of humanity so that people do not face death due to starvation, as happens during famines. Everyone knows how Sri Lanka suffered, mainly because of their bad leaders. It is a worldwide phenomenon, and for this very reason, a World Government is essential. It can look to the planet as a whole and not at individual nations or giant corporations whose sole motive is profit.

*- Remy Suarez, Goa*

## Water Management

Rivers are like the life-giving veins of Mother Earth. Water is very precious. At the same time, populations increase, and rivers and the water they give do not. So this precious resource must be appropriately managed so that not a drop of water is wasted. People also need to be educated in this regard.

*- Kali Banerjee, Hooghly*



## THE ONE RUPEE DOCTOR

**S**ushovan Banerjee, Bengal's renowned "Ek Takar Doktor" (the one Rupee doctor), spent around 50 years serving the rural people of Birbhum, especially Bolpur and Santiniketan. Although he used to stay in Bolpur, hundreds from south Bengal districts, including East Burdwan and Murshidabad, would turn up at his chamber every morning.

Sushovan da charged only one Rupee from his patients. Throughout these fifty years, he never hiked his fee. Asked why, he'd reply that there were many people for whom even one rupee mattered, and they deserved proper medical attention.

Suffering from kidney-related disease for the past few years, Sushovan Banerjee passed away at 84 on August 2 in a Kolkata private hospital. Thousands of people expressed their grief on social media. Among them were Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. "He is the epitome of the greatness of human spirit and will be remembered as a kind and

generous doctor who cured many people. I am saddened by his demise," tweeted Modi, and Mamata didi: "Sad to know of the demise of benevolent doctor. The famed one-rupee-doctor of Birbhum was known for his public-spirited philanthropy, and I express my sincerest condolences".

His was a very chequered life. After completing his studies in Calcutta and London, Banerjee joined the Pearson Memorial Hospital of Visva-Bharati as a doctor and served for around 18 years. He was a member of Visva-Bharati's executive council as the President's nominee for over two decades. He was also a prominent Congress leader and was elected to the Assembly from Bolpur in 1984.

Kishore Bhattacharya, a Visva-Bharati Patha Bhavana teacher, was close to the doctor: "Sushovan da can't be defined in words. He treated countless patients in his 50-year-long career. During the pandemic, he was the one who used to rush to the homes of patients caring little for the fear of contracting the infection. He was a true humanitarian".

In 2020, Dr Sushovan Banerjee was awarded the Padmashri by the President of India for his contributions to society as a doctor. He will be remembered as a humanitarian and a healer, the likes of whom are an inspiration for all times. ●



# Economic Self-Sufficiency for Bengal-III

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

(Continued from the previous issue)



*The soil of Rárh can produce bumper harvests if it is properly irrigated.*

**T**he soil of Rárh is sticky, so it retains water; hence there are more ponds and tanks in Rárh than in other parts of Bengal. In the Burdwan district, there are over 25,000 ponds, and in the Purulia district, over 10,000 ponds, so the soil of Rárh is very congenial for the cultivation of aman paddy. When it is time for the aman paddy to flower, seedlings of áus should be grown on comparatively high land. As soon as aman is harvested, farmers should plough the vacant field and

the áus seedlings transplanted. This crop will be winter áus. By winter, áus is harvested, and farmers should separately plant boro seedlings on the same land. As aman occupies the land for four months, it can take up to six weeks to prepare the seedlings, so the paddy will grow in the field for only two and a half months.

Boro requires three times more water than wheat; hence, growing wheat in Nadia and Murshidabad districts is more profitable than boro. Where deep tube wells are available, boro can

also be grown. In the boro fields, pisciculture may also be developed. As there is plenty of water in aman and boro paddy land, people can profitably grow the nayata, khyara, kunti and kharshota varieties of fry, which lay their eggs in ponds. The people of Rárh do not relish dried fish, but dried fish can be prepared in Rárh and exported to other regions. Therefore, they should cultivate fry, not big fish such as bata, pabda and carp.

The soil of Rárh can produce bumper harvests if it is properly



irrigated. Burdwan, Hooghly and Howrah districts produce abundant boro. The straw of the aman paddy can be used for thatching houses, as cattle fodder, and in the paper industry. The straw of boro paddy is not very healthy, and even cows refuse to eat it, nor can it be used for thatching, but we can use it for producing good quality paper and fibres. We can also use it to grow mushrooms. When boro straw decomposes, it produces high-quality mushrooms.

In northern India, áus is called “autumn paddy”, aman is “winter paddy”, and boro is “summer paddy”. We can use the outer skin of the aman paddy to produce the best quality cement. In Nadia district, three to four cement industries can profitably run from the winter paddy crop. In the adjacent district of 24 Parganas, lime made from small snails and shellfish shells can be manufactured and supplied to the Nadia district. So in 24 Parganas, we can develop the lime industry to supply the Nadia district; thus, the two districts can develop their

industrial potential.

Before the partition of Bengal, boro was widely cultivated in Bangladesh, particularly in the Kishanganj subdivision of Maymansingh district and the Habiganj subdivision of Sylhet district.

These days even Ráfh is growing a lot of boro. Pulses do not require much water, but wheat needs to be irrigated three times during its growing cycle. Boro needs three times more water than wheat. Hence in sandy and sticky sandy soil, one should not cultivate boro because water does not accumulate at the root of the plant. But boro is profitable, so if farmers get the scope to cultivate it, they do not grow wheat.

Wheat requires cold weather as it matures but is adversely affected by extreme cold. In foggy weather, potato is also infected with diseases. So let the farmers grow boro on most of their land, wheat in smaller areas, and áus in the barren, dry land.

Aman bran can be utilized to manufacture bran oil, while we can use straw in the paper industry. As

a general rule, it is always more profitable to establish an industry in the local area where there is a ready supply of raw materials than to transport the raw materials to some distant place. While cultivating áus in Ráfh, the farmers should pay more attention to transplanted áus than to sown áus because transplanted áus are more productive.

Flour can be made from the outer skins of aman and used to manufacture good quality bread, which will have a large market. Madras (Tamil Nadu) has already established factories to produce biscuits from aman flour. Bengal can do the same.

China produces more rice than any other country, followed by Burma, India and Thailand. However, since China and India have to feed huge populations, they cannot export rice to other countries. In contrast, Burma and Thailand can export rice because their populations are much smaller. The Philippines, Taiwan and Japan are self-sufficient in rice production. In Bengal, most rice is produced in Burdwan, Birbhum



*Terrace rice fields in China*

and West Dinajpur, followed by Midnapore, Bankura and Coochbehar. Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Murshidabad and Nadia are deficit districts.

The soil of North Bengal, Bangladesh and Assam are very good for growing sesame. Sesame is of three varieties – the red variety, which grows in winter; the white variety, which grows in summer; and the black variety, which grows in the rainy season. Sesame does not grow well in a damp climate. The skin of sesame can be used as good-quality manure. We can also use it to make oil cake, which is good cattle fodder and manure.

Sesame can also be used as flour to produce bread, pudding and porridge. It is easy to remove the skin of sesame. Soak the seeds in water overnight, put them in a hessian cloth and rub them. The skin will automatically drop off. Skinless sesame is used to prepare delicacies like til sandesh, the famous sweet of Burdwan, and tilkut, the most delicious sweet of the Gaya district of Bihar.

Sesame is a three-month crop. The land should be ploughed three times and irrigated twice. Black sesame is the best variety. Its oil is good medicine for those who get

angry quickly. We can use white and red sesame to make edible oil. Sesame oil can be utilized as a scented oil because it has a tremendous capacity to absorb different fragrances. Coconut oil has the least capacity to absorb fragrances, but it is the best hair oil. White sesame looks good. Some of the delicacies produced in Lucknow are prepared with white sesame.

Because much of the land in North Bengal and Bangladesh remains under water or contains much flowing water in certain periods of the year, it is difficult to develop pisciculture, so we cannot develop the dried fish industry. However, there are many canals in West Bengal, which is why much fish is produced there, which can be easily exported to Burma, Thailand and Japan.

Land which cannot be ploughed and is not suitable for paddy can be utilized for “pigeon crops”. For example, on the boundaries of the aman paddy land, Bengal gram can be grown in abundance. On the same land, paddy, fry and gram can be cultivated; hence people can produce rice, fish and pulse simultaneously.

We should add liquid manure

to the paddy field after the weeds have been pulled out; otherwise, the weeds will absorb the manure from the soil. Similarly, before sowing “pigeon crops”, we should add manure to the soil; otherwise, the “pigeon crops” will absorb the nutrients intended to fertilize the paddy. The “pigeon crops” should be sown after the paddy flowers. If they are sown earlier, the small fish in the paddy fields will not be able to move freely, restricting both their growth and the growth of the paddy.

Cashew nut processing plants may be established in Midnapore, particularly in the Ramnagar, Satahata and Nandigram blocks. We should not separate cashew nut flowers from the fruit. We can gather floral nectar from the flowers, which we can also use to prepare alcohol through fermentation for the pharmaceutical industry. We can gather seaweed from the coastal areas of Bengal to manufacture iodine. We can develop the tobacco processing industry in Coochbehar and Bankura. Silk spinning mills can be established at Malda, Sujagang, the Jangipur and Lalbag subdivisions of Murshidabad, Vaso Vishnupur in Birbhum district and the Visnupur subdivision of Bankura district. ●





# UNITED BENGAL

## Dream or Reality

■ ■  
Arun Prakash

*United Bengal is  
not a dream but a  
distinct possibility  
within the greater  
Indian federation.*

On

January 3, 1989, Prout's founder Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, gave a vision of Bangalistan – United Bengal. He said : It consists of West Bengal, Tripura, the Bengali speaking areas of Assam, Bihar, Orissa and parts of Nepal, and Bangladesh. How will you unite the fragments and fractures of Bengal? Throughout this area there is socio-economic disparity. In Bangladesh the people suffer from suffocation and natural calamities because there are no development schemes. For example, in many places there is only one crop a year and the rest of the time the land is vacant. There should be development schemes in Bangladesh to raise the standard of living of the Bangladesh people. The economic standard of India should also be raised but Bangladesh should be raised more rapidly. Only when there is economic parity amongst Tripura, Bengal and Bangladesh, should India and Bangladesh become united”.

On June 20, 1947, the legislators of the Hindu-majority and Muslim-majority areas of Bengal decided to partition the province on the lines of religion by a majority vote. A 'Boundary Commission' was established by Governor-General Mountbatten on June 30, 1947. British lawyer Cyril Radcliffe was appointed as the Chairman of the Commission. Also, for Bengal, four jurists were appointed, viz. Bijan Kumar Mukherjee, CC Biswas, Abu Saleh Mohamed Akram and SA Rahman. The former two were nominated by Congress, while the latter two were by the Muslim League.

It is interesting to note here that there were two Hindus and two Muslims in the Commission. It was obvious that taking into consideration the prevailing political circumstances of that time, the Muslim members were to decide on demarcation in favour of Pakistan and vice versa for the

Hindu members concerning India. It meant that the final verdict rested in the hands of Radcliffe, through his casting vote to determine a boundary of 2500 miles within a few days! So East Bengal became East Pakistan. On December 16, 1971, Bangladesh became an independent sovereign nation.

The underlying sentiment behind this piece is to highlight historical facts and events in the turbulent pre-independence period of India. How we could have avoided them; and whether in the present day political scenario, howsoever unlikely it may seem, the two Bengals East and West could be united as one socio-economic, geographical entity as envisaged by Shrii Sarkar, who advocated the setting up of samajas based on the same principle for all of India.

### Sinister Division

On January 17, 1904, Curzon wrote to Brodrick, Secretary of State for India. "The Bengalees consider themselves a separate nation and indulge in dreams of driving away the British, and putting a Bengali Babu in the Government House as Governor General. The partition of Bengal would undermine their sense of superiority and destroy their

dreams and that is why they are agitating against it".

To create a great divide between the Bengali Muslim and Bengali Hindu, this sinister move to curb the influence of the anti-British Hindu elite of Bengal came into effect on October 16, 1905. As a result, Bengal was split into two, East with a majority Muslim and West with a majority Hindu population. The Muslims supported the partition, and Hindus agitated against it. The former viewed the agitation as an attempt to deny them an opportunity to have a Muslim majority province and felt it was an attempt at continued Hindu dominance.

### Historical Background

We must go back in time to understand the reasons for this divide among the same people. Islam came to Bengal in the 12th century but spread rapidly during the next three centuries, so much so that Muslims considered Bengal a Muslim-dominated area. Ironically, Delhi, Agra and surrounding areas which were the centre of Muslim rule in the subcontinent, never lost their predominantly Hindu character. Still, the far eastern Bengal province became a Muslim majority area. It happened when

the Muslim ruling elite came in close contact with the common people; the Imams helped Bengalees assimilate Islam into their lives, inculcating amongst people the essential precept of universal brotherhood and direct communion with God together with reverence for a whole range of local deities and customs. It was welcomed by the common folk, especially lower castes oppressed by a caste-ridden society. They embraced Islam as the only way to escape the suffocating concentration camp-type existence inflicted upon them by the Hindu community. The conversion process was facilitated by cruel practices, such as closing doors to anyone who had taken food or water from a Muslim or any woman abducted by force and wished to return to her home and faith.

But there were occasions when Bengali people came together. In 1779 the British planters forced Bengali peasants to cultivate indigo in their paddy fields because there was a great demand in the European market. The problem was that once indigo was planted, it took two to three years to mature, and during this time, we could cultivate no other crops. The Hindu and Muslim peasants refused to cultivate indigo instead of paddy, and consequently, they were subjected to inhuman torture and oppression. It continued for eighty years, then the people of Bengal revolted, and the cultivation of indigo stopped.

### Roots of Separation

The roots of Muslim separation in Bengal lay in the wholesale political, social and economic downgrading that Muslims suffered with the advent of British rule. The Muslims lost political power and patronage, and the 1793 Permanent Settlement of Bengal drastically reduced the number of Muslim Zamindars and



*Muslim League Rally Direct Action Day 16.8.1946 Calcutta, in the riots that followed nearly 4000 were killed*



other large landholders. For both the aristocracy and professionals, their existence became precarious. It was not so for Muslims in other provinces and not even in Bihar. Nowhere else were the Muslims as badly off as in Bengal, and few other communities benefited from British rule as the Bengali *bhadralok* class. However, in 1870, the British policy of encouraging Hindus and ignoring Muslims turned 180°, and at the same time, a change of attitude was underway among Bengali Muslims. They became conscious of their numerical strength and began asserting their legitimate political rights.

There was a deep rooted social cause also. Socially the Bengali Hindu *bhadralok* looked down upon their Muslim neighbours. They were in most respects untouchables to the Hindus, an extension of the same treatment meted out to lower castes. All food was thrown away as unclean if a Muslim entered the room; naturally they resented this unequal social treatment. Inevitably there was a backlash when more and more Muslims joined the ranks of the educated and got the political upper hand.

There was yet another reason, an important one. Hindus dominated the new Zamindar class created by Cornwallis in Bengal. Muslim Zamindars were few, but the overwhelming number among the downtrodden peasantry were Muslim. The 1881 census showed that 62.8% of peasants were Muslims and 49.2 were Hindus; hence the Zamindar-Ryot issue inevitably took a communal turn. It was an underlying class basis behind early Muslim separation, and they were conscious that the Hindus were far more advanced than themselves in every sphere of life. Hence, they felt it was unwise for them to join hands politically with them.



*Scenes 1946 riots Calcutta*

### Silver Lining

However, among the dark clouds of Hindu-Muslim relationships, there was a silver lining in the second decade of the twentieth century. Following the reunion of the Bengals in 1911, there was new acceptance – what was good for Muslims was good for India. The differing interests narrowed. The shining star behind this was Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, who brought in the high noon of Hindu Muslim camaraderie in Bengal. He was a political leader acceptable to both Muslims and

Hindus. It followed a period of unprecedented Hindu-Muslim togetherness in Bengal, which lasted for ten years. However, some East Bengali Muslims felt aggrieved by the annulment of the partition and the resultant loss of Dhaka's importance. From a provincial capital, it became only a district town. The Muslims also became vociferous about the fact that the major part of the total income of the Bengal government was collected from East Bengal but spent in West Bengal. It added to their feelings of hurt.

## Bengal Pact 1923

In 1923 came the historic Bengal Pact, drafted by CR Das. It was a masterstroke determined effort to join the communal divide and win back the general support of Bengal Muslims. It was a shining example of an instrument that could bring the Muslims and Hindus of Bengal together. It had many provisions, important ones being:

1. Their respective strengths would decide the number of members of the two communities, and the two communities would vote separately to elect their members.
2. Muslims would have 60% Hindus and 40% seats in local self-government institutions.
3. A committee with an equal number of Muslims and Hindus would be appointed in every subdivision to supervise the implementation of these terms.

It was, however, rejected by Congress the same year. But defying central leadership was endorsed by the Bengal Provincial Conference of 1924, who preferred to go along with CR Das (whose charismatic leadership was a serious challenge to MK Gandhi), and they felt it to be in Bengal's long-term interests.

In the Faridpur session of the Bengal Provincial Congress held on May 2, 1925, CR Das offered a compromise to the British Raj if they announced an amnesty for political prisoners. These were mainly terms for India's freedom:

1. The government should commit to completing swaraj for India within the British Empire, which should be sacrosanct.
2. Pending a grant of independence, the administrative machinery should be moulded as the

foundation for complete independence.

3. The nature of such moulding would be determined by mutual discussion.
4. Seditious movements would not be encouraged.

Chittaranjan Das's gesture coincided with a significant change in British attitude.

Sadly within six weeks, Chittaranjan breathed his last. His daughter's words in her biography are prophetically apt: "If the country had advanced along the path indicated by my father at Faridpur with leaders forsaking the illusion of leadership and their vanity, we would have obtained complete independence long ago and would not have to partition the country for gaining independence".

The unexpected and untimely passing away of CR Das, a giant among men, created a vacuum in both India and Bengal politics. It not only stopped a possible political settlement with the British government but also prevented the emergence of a joint Hindu-Muslim front in Bengal. He was the only national leader whom both the Hindus and Muslims trusted. His death was not only mourned by tall leaders of society but even common people everywhere, Muslim and Hindu alike. A comment in 'Muhammadi' (Journal) was typical that described Chittaranjan's death as "God's extreme punishment to our countrymen".

## Perceived Differences

Unfortunately, Muslim leaders felt that Hindu Muslim differences were of such a radical character that the influence of one single man, however strong, could provide only a temporary diversion from the natural course of history. But it would not lead to a different destiny without some social upheaval uprooting the causes that divided the people. No such social upheaval occurred

then, nor was generosity the one quality of the Hindu bhadralok towards the downtrodden Muslims shown. On the contrary, it fomented bitterness amongst the Muslims. After Das died in 1925, a great blow to the development of Bengali nationalism, the Kushinagar session of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee (1926) rejected the Bengal Pact. The Muslims felt betrayed and deserted the Congress as CR Das wasn't around anymore. Unfortunately, one Bengali politician could have changed the general orientation, viz. Subash Chandra Bose was kept away during long periods of incarceration at home and abroad (Mandalay) or 'externment' in Europe.

Muslim separatism started asserting itself and staking claims to political power. In 1926 from April 3-5 and July 11-25, Calcutta exploded into communal violence on a scale unknown before. Poet Nazrul Islam wrote an inspiring song asking Hindus and Muslims to unite. But, by and large, his message went unheeded. According to official reports, between 1922 and 1923, there were 112 riots in which 450 died, and 5000 were injured. During the riots, the true meaning of the slogan "Allahu Akbar" (God is great) and Vande Mataram (Homage to the Motherland) was forgotten, making them war cries underpinning the mutual separation of the two communities.

## Confrontationist 1930 & 1940s

As the decade of the 1930s were on, even separatist politics became confrontationist increasingly. The politically dominant Hindus had ridden roughshod over the genuine Muslim desire for an acceptable communal adjustment in the 1920s. It was now the turn of the Muslims to do the same to the



Hindus in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

The Muslims were now fully conscious of their newly acquired political power due to a series of constitutional changes; the growing confrontation turned the 1940s into a period of the great communal divide from which there was no turning back. However, one must not forget that before the 1940s, Pakistan was never considered a serious model by the Bengal Muslims.

### Economic of Alienation

The Muslims were predominant among the peasantry, and these leaders took it as their mission to improve the lot of the poverty-stricken peasantry by enacting new tenancy laws. It clashed with the economic interests of the Hindu Zamindars and other landlords who dominated. A class basis arose to the divide. Another cause was that for at least two decades, Bengal had been subjected to a system where the overwhelming number of recruits in the executive services of the provincial government, like the Bengal Civil Service, were Muslims, and the Hindu candidates, despite their educational superiority, were taken into the subordinate services. Educated Hindu opinion remained sullen and resentful; this, for some, was invidious discrimination. This attitude of mind played no small part in their unwillingness to stay with a Muslim majority in a United Bengal and their decision to opt for Partition.

### Sovereign Bengal Last Attempt

Sarat Chandra Bose, who had left the Congress in 1939 and formed the Forward Bloc, was in detention till 1945 and, on his release, rejoined the Congress. He was elected to the Central Assembly but was distrusted by the British and ignored by the



*The final division – the Radcliffe line.*

Congress's high command. In 1947, he joined with Suhrawardy to pursue the concept of a sovereign, united Bengal and continued his efforts till the very end. They tried very hard but were rebuffed. There was another notable Bengal Congress leader Kiran Shankar Roy who for a while supported the proposal, but the high command overruled him. So he stayed on in Pakistan as leader of the Congress party in the East Bengal Assembly. But, he returned to India in 1948 to become the Home Minister of West Bengal under Chief Minister Bidhan Chandra Roy. He, too, was opposed to the partition and kept himself aloof from all its negotiations.

### The Vision – Practical Aspects

As Shrii Sarkar in 1960 said that Bengalees “did not demand an independent Bengalistan on the basis of the Bengali language; no, they did not even like to introduce themselves as Bengali nationals. The common people did not attach any importance to the Suhrawardy-Sarat Bose formula of Bengalistan (United Socialist Bengal). To solve this problem and other pressing socio-economic problems, popular movements based on anti-exploitation and universal sentiments should be launched throughout the world.

Such movements should oppose all forms of economic, psychic, cultural and psycho-economic exploitation. In addition they should undertake appropriate practical programs to enhance the all-round welfare of the people”.

To encourage the re-unification sentiment among the Bengalees, the most sensible approach would be to work for the economic upliftment of the people of Bangladesh, which has economic disparity. It would ensure their long-term socio-economic progress. Therefore, constructive socio-economic movements should be against all kinds of exploitation in Bangladesh. It should include technical education, agricultural development and activities which guide the people away from dogma. The same goes for Tripura.

In today's political scenario, it may seem unlikely, but history, as many examples show, that this is possible. For instance, Poland could unite after three Partitions; Germany could unite, partitioned after Second World War. More recently, the two Vietnams could; why not Bengal, with shared history, geographical contiguity, commonality of culture and socio-economic interests?

One could go even further — aim for a confederation of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka as the United States of South Asia (USSA), which would create one of the robust entities in the comity of nations of the world. History, after all, goes ahead, not astern. Therefore one hopes with optimism for the best. United Bengal is not a dream but a distinct possibility as a culturally homogenous socio-economic unit to politically thrive within the greater Indian federation. But for that, the majority or not less than 50% of the electorate of both Bengals need to be educated and be politically conscious with a universalistic outlook. ●

## Part One: What is at Stake and What is Possible

We are living at a critical juncture, a moment of great danger. In the direction we are currently going, we face the very real prospect that Earth, our home, will become unlivable for humans and countless other living beings. But there are other directions we could go, other horizons we could cross. Therefore, if we want to avert the worst and restore conditions for a future worth living – indeed if we're going to create a world in which humans and other living beings can thrive – we must mobilize to survive our worsening situation; organize to overcome the capitalist system that has created and perpetuates crisis, and cooperate to shift course and make a world that nurtures and serves life. We must build a movement for a new era.

### What is at stake

Let us be very clear: We do not live in a civilization that values the inherent dignity of living beings, promotes the integrity and health of ecological communities, and prioritizes the pursuit of well-being and fulfilment for all people. Instead, we live in a civilization constructed by capitalism that values living beings primarily as commodities, promotes the property and wealth of capitalist corporations, and prioritizes the pursuit of profit and wealth accumulation for the elite who control most of the wealth. In 2020 alone, for instance, billionaires increased their wealth by \$3.9 trillion, while workers lost \$ 3.7 trillion in earnings across the planet.

The problem, though, is not simply the actions of a few capitalist elites. However much I agree that oligarchy is a problem.

# Building a Movement for a NEW ERA

Jason Schreiner



To be sure, some capitalists are greedy, some capitalist firms at times abuse their power for the sake of profit, and some capitalist industries are more responsible than others for contributing to our present crisis. But not all capitalists are bad apples, nor is every firm corrupt or every industry destructive. The problem is the *capitalist system*.

The problem with the capitalist system is that it separates the vast majority of us from the means of life and places ownership and control of production and distribution in the hands of a few. It

forces us to sell our labour to live and compels us to rely on markets to meet our needs. Moreover, it subjects us to market forces outside our control, including the whims and shenanigans of speculators interested in the market to make profits.

Indeed, the capitalist system compels capitalists to increase profits, and many maximize as much profit as possible, regardless of the costs. While some do this through speculation, most do so by keeping wages as low as possible and expanding production as much as possible. As a result, it



creates pressure on us to work more and work harder to make ends meet, which exhausts our vitality over time and causes many to fall through the cracks.

In addition, to expand production, capitalists have to colonize and commodify as many resources as possible – land, water, minerals, living beings, etc. – extracting as much as possible from these resources to fuel production, which results in degradation and destruction. It means the market is full of bad things for people and the Earth, yet our dependence on the market

“natural” group differences like “race,” “gender,” “caste,” etc., or declare them the inevitable results of “human nature” or “cultural differences” or an all-powerful “invisible hand.” Such fictional divisions keep us from working together to oppose capitalist predation or organize ways to take control of our economic lives.

Finally, capitalists prey on our anxieties by manufacturing desires through advertising that seduce our senses and induce us to consume what we don't need or what doesn't serve us well, such as poor-quality goods or addictive

for the majority, nor ultimately for anyone.

Such a civilization undermines its conditions of existence. The evidence for this stark claim has become clear: Capitalist civilization exceeds planetary boundaries for maintaining life. The planet is teetering past climactic tipping points. Earth's living systems are declining. Myriad species we depend on are confronting extinction. Greater numbers of people are experiencing increasing suffering.

It is, therefore, not that capitalism is in crisis; capitalism is the crisis. We already know what this means: a mega-crisis juggernaut of escalating social divisions, psychic disorders, political discord, economic inequality, military conflicts, resource depletion, environmental degradation, climate destabilization – the list of upheavals in our daily news goes on and on. The brute fact is that capitalism is wrecking life, propelling humanity and other living beings deeper into a vortex of degeneration and careening ever closer to an abyss of dead endings.

As historian Howard Zinn reminded us, you can't be neutral on a moving train. For its part, the ruling class seems content to keep pursuing neoliberalism, supporting corporate pillage, hiding the danger's true extent and trying to smooth things over with “blah, blah, blah,” as Greta Thunberg puts it concerning climate action.

What about the rest of us? What will our part be – to keep riding capitalist civilization to our collective doom or try to descend from this train wreck and birth a new era? With so much at stake, the need for action is now.

### Imagining What is Possible

There are those of us who think that a different world is necessary,



gives us little choice to consume otherwise.

Moreover, by putting us in competition for jobs, wages, benefits and access to necessary goods and services, the capitalist system propels us to undermine each other's dignity and well-being in a competitive and often antagonistic struggle. It creates social divisions and reproduces structural hierarchies characterized by unequal distributions of wealth, power, status, benefits, and harms. Apologists for capitalism construe elaborate fictions to depict them as consequences of supposedly

entertainments. These also prevent us from working towards change.

One could say much more about the organization and workings of the capitalist system. But the key point is that for all its glitz and glamour and allure, capitalist civilization is made possible only by a vast underside of exploitation, antagonism, suffering, and destruction. *No human civilization based on severed relationships, compulsory exploitation, extractive taking, enforced divides, unnatural hierarchies, and vast inequalities can sustain a life worth living* – not

recognize that its emergence will require building a new system beyond capitalism, believe this to be possible, and are ready to work for it.

One must organize such a system to serve and regenerate life, prioritize genuine social equality and the common good, and promote all-round development and balanced fulfilment for everyone. These shouldn't be lofty ideals but the very foundations for human societies, the basic conditions for everyone to enjoy a balanced, quality life.

For instance, we can build a system that guarantees all the basic necessities of life and the capacity to obtain the means for a well-rounded life. That is, we can ensure that people have opportunities for meaningful work that furnishes them with the ability to get essential goods and services and enriching amenities and also ensure that these are available to everyone.

We can build a system that democratizes economic power, placing control of economic production and distribution in workers' hands, not corporate elites. Moreover, we can organize these based on the collective necessity to meet social needs, not

based on wealth accumulation for a few.

We can build a system that primarily uses regional resources to meet local needs and make precious resources. Public goods are to be shared equitably and ensure regeneration of economies and living systems, rather than allowing outsiders or local elites to extract resources above what is sustainable or produce surpluses for private gain.

And these are only a few cornerstones of economic democracy, or progressive socialism, to name the new system. We can build a system that does much else as well.

The truth is, we do not lack ideas for how to imagine remaking our world with post-capitalist, egalitarian, regenerative systems. On the contrary, diverse voices from different contexts and perspectives are already acting or proposing proposals for what can be done. A few representative examples of this upwelling include “another future is possible,” “blessed unrest,” “democratic socialist green new deal,” “ecological civilization,” “ecological revolution from below,” “eco-socialist green new deal,” “freedom dreams,” “great transition initiative,”

“the great turning,” “just transition,” “manifesto for a planet on fire,” “peoples green new deal,” “plan to save the planet,” “regeneration,” “third reconstruction,” and “21st Century Economic Bill of Rights.” One can cite many more.

Some of these proposals overlap significantly in their aims Movement for a and methods. Although many also vary and, in some cases, are strongly opposed in their approaches. Yet they all indicate a stirring of imagination, a rising pulse of freedom, and a growing sense of determination to engage in fundamental social transformation.

They also share a basic commitment to serving life and regeneration, fostering love and solidarity, and promoting liberation and fulfilment. In short, we already have so many useful pieces for solving the puzzle of what is to be done. Put another way; we have the progressive ideas needed to envision a new system for a new era. ●

*(To be continued)*

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# RE-IMAGINING DEMOCRACY

■ Ganesh Bhat Sirsi

At this juncture of proud celebration of 75th Independence Day, it is time for we Indians to introspect our claim of being the largest democracy in the world. Democracy is considered a better system of administration evolved by human society and is the most preferred system of government worldwide. Still, democracy is not an ideal system because it is full of loopholes.

Are not our voters and politicians being influenced by coercion, propaganda, bribery, or clever manipulation of the media? Can we call it a democracy, especially when politicians are bought, jump from party to party, corporate media leave voters poorly educated regarding the issues, and votes are bought and sold openly? Corruption has become the rule rather than the exception.

Loftily defined as “government of the people, for the people, and by the people,” political

democracy is the rule of the most voted (even by a single vote) and a handful of bosses operating behind a Party apparatus.

A candidate's qualifications, personal integrity, and the spirit of social service play secondary roles in party status and seniority. As candidates are dependent upon campaign contributions from the wealthy, in most instances, they end up catering to the demands of those influential sections of society. As a result, political leaders are forced to serve powerful corporate interest groups, even immoral hypocrites, with tremendous financial influence.

Where money, muscle power, and cheap sentiments of caste, tribe, and religion influence voter decisions, democracy can be converted into “demonocracy” at any moment. Democracy today is nothing but “mobocracy” and “foolocracy”. But unless an alternative, better, and more agreeable theory or system is

evolved, we will have to accept democracy in preference to other systems and use it for the time being. Hence, PROUT suggests certain reforms in the existing system.

The motivation and purpose behind PROUT's political system are basically to administer in such a manner that economic institutions can materialize the principles and policies of a progressive economy and that the society progresses ahead with the sublime motto: for the good and happiness of all. Political institutions are not an end, but a means to achieve economic well-being and social progress.

## **Voting right to people having socio-political-economic consciousness:**

According to PROUT, for the success of real democracy, the polity must be socially conscious, educated, possess basic morality, and the minimum requirements of

life of all citizens are guaranteed. PROUT opines that the right of people to vote only upon acquiring a certain age is fundamentally defective. The majority cannot judge the qualities of a candidate unless the majority has achieved a reasonable level of consciousness. Shrewd and cunning politicians may misguide even educated people if they are not sufficiently conversant with social, economic, and political issues.

Now a question may arise, "If in a nation or country every person enjoys human rights, why should a particular person have voting rights while others do not?" After all, this world is the common inheritance of all, and every human being has the right to enjoy and utilize all mundane, supramundane, and spiritual resources. But just because everybody has the individual right to enjoy everything, it does not follow that everybody has the personal freedom to run the administration of a country. Because all do neither have the same psychic or intellectual development nor are all bestowed with similar characteristics, everyone should not be allowed

the right of governance until and unless they have attained a particular level to be judged intelligently and effectively.

Since 'voting' is the lowest step on the governance ladder, this right will have to be given NOT based on age but on morality and socio-politico-economic consciousness.

PROUT stipulates that every person should be given opportunities to become an eligible voter. Therefore, Samaj should establish institutions to provide moral and social education to people, qualifying them as voters. Such institutions should be free from political influence; an independent body should administer them like the Election Commission or the Public Service Commission. Their curriculum should be carefully designed by experts—educationalists, sociologists, philanthropists, and spiritualists. Those who pass the tests of such institutions should alone be members of the Electoral College.

### **Electoral College:**

In PROUT's system, the role of the Electoral College is not over even

after it has elected members of various political bodies. It will continue to remain in touch with the people and apprise them of the points and counterpoints of various socio-economic issues. Constant vigil is required to ensure that all the arms of government function efficiently and honestly, and this vigil will have to be exercised by the ever-watchful Electoral College.

### **Qualifications of a candidate to be higher than that of a voter:**

Samaj governance must fix the qualification of a candidate contesting an election much higher than that of a voter according to the House's requirements to which the election is sought. For instance, an election to a municipal council may require lower educational qualifications or general awareness. At the same time, the Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha, the Houses that deal with complex national and international issues, security-defence, budget implications, emergencies or a similar host of important issues) requires men of calibre, higher awareness of socio-politico-economic issues and a much higher standard of integrity, morality, and dedication.

### **Candidate Must Contest:**

No candidate should be declared elected without a contest. Even if there is only one candidate, Voters should vote for or against them. If the candidate secures more than 50% of the votes, they should be declared elected.

### **Secure more than 50% of votes:**

No candidate should be declared elected during elections unless they secure more than 50% of the votes polled. In case of less percentage, second preference be added to the first and only then one





who secures majority votes, i.e. 50% plus, should be elected. Second preference marking will have to be made compulsory for this purpose. Alternatively, the candidate securing the highest votes can be referred back to confirm the confidence of more than 50% of voters and declared elected; in case of failure, a fresh election should be conducted.

### **Right of 'Recall / Impeach' of Representatives:**

Each candidate seeking election to any House should affidavit his socio-economic objectives, policy frames and administrative measures for the perusal of the electorate for an informed decision in exercising their vote. Failure to implement such programs could result in termination from office to prevent politicians from making empty promises for the sake of an election.

The voters (members of the electoral college) should have the right to impeach (in a Judicial Court) the dishonest turn-coats proven corrupt or irresponsible or incompetent representatives. It can be affected by more than 50% of the constituency's voters expressing their desire to recall with valid reasons or approaching the appropriate authority or court.

### **Party less Democracy:**

Party politics tries to pulverize the psychic wealth of human beings under the bulldozer of Party interests. They, overtly or covertly, encourage abuse of geo-socio sentiments of communalism, provincialism, casteism, etc., to distract attention from their failures to continue to hold on to power.

An elected legislature member represents lakhs of people and must be made to owe their loyalty first to the electorate, their conscience, and then a party or group. As such, they must be free to agree or disagree on any issue

based on free conscience and NOT on borrowed one from the barons of the party in the form of the 'party whip'.

The question may arise; in the absence of party politics, will honest individuals succeed on their own in forming governments or in serving the state? Is there any necessity for the organized endeavour? The answer to this question is that honest people who want to promote human welfare must possess the spirit of cooperation. Honest and benevolent individuals should carefully steer clear of party politics and associate to work together out of common interest. A party-less system is of paramount importance for minimizing corruption.

### **Presidential form of Government:**

Legislative heads, i.e. presidents of all elected bodies, chief ministers, prime ministers and president of the country, should get elected directly by the voters.

### **Separation of Political and Economic Power:**

Presently, both political and economic powers are concentrated in the hands of a single institution, office, or person, which is also a major cause of corruption. Instead of being the vanguards and referees of the economic system, the people's representatives become the players. The mad rush to become people's representatives is due to the economic power they get and wield.

Developmental planning, in most cases, is not based on the needs and potentiality of the area but on the whims and fancies of the politicians or the party in power, which is again based on the likely benefit to be derived in terms of money or popularity.

The powers of local institutions are restricted to implement the schemes planned

and sanctioned by the state or central governments (with ample corruption opportunities) without any right or authority to plan and decide the mode and purpose of the uses of the natural resources in their area. The states are demanding more economic powers, which the central government is unwilling to part with because of the fear of losing their power and importance. The reality is that both political and economic decisions are taken by the ruling party's high command, which consists of a few persons who generally represent vested interests and are not directly answerable to the voters.

Decentralized economic system resolves this defect that empowers the local people with rights to local resources by stripping the politicians of economic control and ring-fencing them to role-play in policy planning and political decisions. It is the only way out.

### **Election Expenditures to be borne by Government:**

When the voters are socio-economico-politically conscious, the present mode of canvassing will undergo dramatic change, and Samaj will drastically reduce related expenditure. Therefore, the government should bear the entire cost of the election, including the cost of canvassing by the candidates.

### **Who has to bell the cat?**

We can not expect the political class to come forward to implement the above changes voluntarily. Therefore, it is the duty of the intellectuals and citizens who aspire welfare of the society to create circumstantial pressure on the decision-makers. Those refraining from involving in this pious fight lose their moral right to complain against the system. ●

It is the 80th year of the August Kranti when the Quit India Movement was launched on 9th August 1942, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. It is an opportunity to reaffirm and reinforce our Proutist determination for the universal samaj movement on this occasion.

In this context, let us go through a story based on the literature of Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar: Once upon a time, there were two states along the two banks of a river - one was large and the other one small. Considering the smaller state was weak, the larger state planned to attack the smaller state. The king of the larger state gathered his large army on his bank of the river, preparing to attack the next day. On the same day in the evening, the spies of the small kingdom informed their king that a large army had gathered on

# Materializing PROUT

Prof. R. P. Singh

the other side of the river, which could attack us anytime. The king of the small kingdom was quite wise. He thought diligently. He got mixed jamalgota (croton) powder in the dinner of the enemy's soldiers. Most soldiers had a bad stomach in the middle of the night. Each soldier was forced to defecate on the riverbank 8-10 times throughout the night. The spies of the great king kept close watch throughout the night on the activities of the army of the small kingdom. They saw a continuous

movement of soldiers within the small state. Their constant movement is not stopping. The kingdom is small in size, but its army is huge. It may have also gathered troops from neighbouring states. The king of the large state was surprised to know the reports of his spies mixed with fear and felt that his perception regarding the neighbouring state may be wrong and that the war could go against us. So the bigger king changed the plan of war with the small





kingdom, and the smaller state breathed relief.

But the story doesn't end there. There were some further developments.

Later, the king of the smaller state came to know that the army of the big kingdom was big, of course, but there was a lot of corruption and nepotism in the army and the government there. One can easily purchase the officials there. So, after a few months of preparation, that small state launched a scathing attack on the big kingdom, wiped out the large empire, and merged as a new progressive society.

This society felt further that crimes such as murder, adultery, theft and dacoity affect one or a few persons. Still, corruption and nepotism hollow out the entire system. One cannot take corruption and nepotism lightly. Therefore, there should be a provision for the harshest punishment for these offences.

Based on the literature of Shrii P R Sarkar, the story provides a great message that scarce resources are not an obstacle.

Create psychology among the masses that people follow the policies and ideology of Prout for the welfare of all. Else individually and collectively, we all will suffer the corrupt, casteist and dogmatic system that spreads misery.

The Establishment of the day appears strong, but in reality, it



suffers from inherent, profound contradictions. From the masses, leadership will emerge from the disgruntled ksatran and vipran minded as the vanguard and the tasks undertaken to revolutionize society.

Dogmatic tendencies are becoming more visible these days as they are soon to be crushed and removed. It is just like the lamp that flickers more before it goes out. Prout is a socio-economic philosophy but has high implications for polity and governance. Emphasis is on socio-economic groupification of the whole world beyond the national and political boundaries. Indeed, the dominating political and nationalist mindset can't easily digest it. Clash is bound to happen; the recent history has given sufficient indications. But

such clashes should be taken as an opportunity to strengthen the movement.

Combined with a world governance structure and neo-humanism, such a strategy will also help garner worldwide support. Towards these goals, apparently divided and inherently united action is needed, just like force is sometimes distributed and sometimes teamed up by a good commander, as per strategy.

Political power is crucial to handling society's transition to progressive governance effectively.

To educate and ensure mass support for materializing Prout Ideology, units at the local level are essential for mobilizing men and women of intellect and fighting spirit. ●



“Poverty is relatively cheap to address and incredibly expensive to ignore”

– Clint Borgen

# Judicial Accountability

Karunakshim Vatsalam

**J**udges are different from politicians; they must uphold the people's sovereign will, as represented in the Constitution and laws, and not satisfy the popular choice. So, one must ensure that those selected to serve as judges possess integrity, experience, professional competence, judicial temperament, and a demonstrated commitment to justice for all. And, most notably, better ensure those selected have the spirit of judicial independence. That begs the question. What is judicial independence, and why does it matter? Judicial independence means a judiciary free from partisanship, political pressure, special interests, popular will, and, most importantly, a judiciary guided by the sovereign will of the people embodied in the Constitution of India and its Amendments.

The first canon of the American Model Code on Judicial Conduct provides: "Deference to the judgments and rulings of courts depends upon public confidence in the integrity and independence of judges, which hangs in turn upon their acting without fear or favour. In the US, where judges are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate, the judiciary has enormous power. In a civilized society, citizens must trust judges with their liberty and promise to follow the law; if charged with breaking the law, between one's freedom and the prison door, is a judge. So one prays and hopes the judge is not biased by a political party, popular will, pressure to solve the







crime or a partisan lens that is tough on crime. One dreams of an independent judge who will listen to your arguments and alibi and apply the law, with its presumptions of innocence, to one's case. Judicial independence is vital because when it is one's day in court, one looks at the judge to protect one's rights and not merely enforce the representations of the state.

Say you will seek justice when the son of a governor or the son of a wealthy campaign contributor assaults your son or your daughter. You will find a judge at the gates of justice, and you trust the judge to apply the same law to the Governor's son as the judge would apply to your son. And if the judge fails, society fails because you, as a reasonable victim, will seek justice by your hand rather than by the law. Thus, from the trial - where the judge decides restraints on individual liberty-to appellate judges who in stealth opinions affect the rights and responsibilities of citizens far beyond the actual litigants-the decisions of the judiciary have a cumulative effect of disavowing or creating equal justice under the law. It is the American scenario.

With a Supreme Court in Delhi, 25 High Courts in the states and numerous District and Subordinate courts all over India having nearly 23000 judges, with overworked magistrates and judges, there's a pendency of over 40 million cases. In India, judges select the judges and appoint them. This hallowed structure called a Collegium is manned by judges alone. From 1947 till 1981, the Executive, viz. the Government, appointed judges. But after that, the judges supposedly took this task upon themselves to be insulated from the political environment and maintain their independence. This provision of a Collegium is mentioned nowhere in the Constitution and was not made by an Act of Parliament. Still, it evolved through a series of Supreme Court judgments, viz. the First, Second and Third Judges' cases of 1981, 1993 and 1998. In 2015 the Government, through the 99th constitutional amendment, wanted to replace the Collegium with



the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC). The NJAC comprises three judges of SC, a central law minister, and two civil society experts. However, it was struck down by the Supreme Court in 2015 in the Fourth Judges Case.

So, in this Indian scenario, who judges the judges? This question is vital because judges who are paid by the public exchequer through taxes are public servants. There can be no doubt about that. But judges often proffer arguments that they are somehow special under the Constitution and they cannot be subjected to the same norms of transparency and accountability. No one other than the judges themselves take this argument seriously! But again, there's morality, and there is the law. The former transcends the latter. Morality means acting voluntarily even when the stick of the law doesn't require it. But can anyone vouchsafe that when justice has been done following manmade laws, the judgment pronounced was also based on morality and universal cardinal principles?

There's another aspect that is, criticizing the judges for giving judgments that appear not quite just. The recent oral observations by a bench of two SC judges in the Nupur Sharma case deserve mention. For her alleged misdemeanour for which she received death threats from extremists, multiple FIRs were filed all over the country. She had prayed to the SC for

clubbing all the FIRs into one in Delhi, where the first FIR was filed. The honourable judges could have easily denied relief but chose instead to castigate her severely for her action; in short, they pronounced her guilty without hearing her and told her to go to all the High Courts for individual relief. And the bench forced her to withdraw her plea. There was a public outcry at this apparent and blatant injustice, but the judge did not publicly withdraw the oral remarks. The media received a lot of flak. Ironically a month later, the same bench gave her the relief that she pleaded for!

Judges opine that judgments may be criticized but not the judges. The Contempt of Courts Act 1971 (COCA), which Justice VK Krishna Iyer pronounced as contemptible, has been growing demand for doing away with the COCA so that the judiciary does not indiscriminately use it against the persons and institutions,

including the media, who dare to expose them. For example, the Supreme Court could summon an editor of a daily newspaper which carried a news item, though not defamatory or contemptuous but allegedly based on false information, to pull him up in an open hearing. When the editor's counsel asserted that the information published was not factually incorrect, the court could remind him promptly that "truth is not a defence" in contempt-of-court cases. The lawyer would be forced to withdraw and leave it to the court to decide the matter without taking note of the editor's plea that the news item was not untrue.

But the court took a contrary view while dealing with Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray, against whom it had initiated contempt proceedings. In the Sena's mouthpiece, Samna Thackeray had questioned the right of judges who were hearing petitions alleging corrupt electoral practice

by him. Thackeray had called Muslims names and also said that it was beyond the jurisdiction of the country's highest court to look into what he had to say and what he always believed in. The court asked Thackeray's lawyer Ram Jethmalani to counsel his client to apologise. Otherwise, the judges warned, they would send him to jail. The counsel, instead, urged the court not to resort to the extreme step as ordering Thackeray's arrest would lead to mass unrest in the country. Later, the judge dropped the contempt proceedings. The judges said they hoped that the people holding high positions in society would not utter such words that might lead to unrest among community members.

The court also absolved former Union law minister P Shiv Shankar of committing gross contempt when he declared publicly that the Supreme Court was meant for the "bride burners, diamond smugglers, corrupt and mafia". The court did not find Shankar's utterances serious enough to have him hauled under the COCA. His sweeping allegations against the Supreme Court were considered his personal feelings and something the Congress leader had said in the public interest. Similarly, former bureaucrat and the then Trade Fair Authority of India's chairman Mohammad Yunus got away with his statement about the judges who ruled that one could not compel the members of Jehovah's Witnesses to sing the national anthem or asked to stand in respect of the national flag. Yunus had said these judges deserved deportation as they were anti-national. The court passed a detailed judgment but did not order any action against Yunus.

These were all VIPs. However, in another case, a poor litigant who had lost everything coming to the apex court was sent to jail for committing contempt.





He pleaded before a judge to pity him and his children, who would be rendered homeless. He was, however, found guilty and sent to jail. It was absolutely against human cardinal principles. These and many other instances of COCA demonstrate that judicial discretion alone plays a major role.

But what happens when judges themselves fall foul of the law? In the Karnataka judge's sex scandal case of 2002, which became public following an IB report, several journalists, editors and publishers faced prosecution by the high court for indulging in character assassination of judges. The media had written about judges' conduct when they were not performing any official duty as prescribed in the Constitution or any law. The truth was not the issue; the only question was whether the media crossed the line. Later the Supreme Court, in an in-house enquiry, ruled that there was no evidence. However, it could never remove the dark stain on the judges.

There's another matter about the disclosure of assets by the judges. In 1997 the Supreme Court



adopted a resolution making asset disclosure mandatory for their judges. Strangely they left out the 25 High Courts; they were to follow separately on their own. Though no clear guidelines were stipulated, some but not all followed. In 2009 the Supreme Court, by another resolution, watered it down by making it voluntary from mandatory. All High Courts readily accepted it. But since the information from voluntary disclosure finds its way into the public domain, this aspect

was not watered down, which made the judges think twice about voluntary disclosure. According to UN reports, out of 161 countries, more than half the judges mandatorily disclose assets; for Supreme Court judges, the figure is 60%. So judges declaring assets happens in half the world, but that's not the half India is in?

Unlike judges, the ministers, legislators, presidents, and governors represent the people's will. Legislative and executive elections are designed to match candidates with voters who share their views. Promises are made, votes are exchanged, and accountability is secured by faithfulness to the promises and fear of unemployment. Judges are meant to be different. Courts are also intended to be different. They are created to arbitrate disputes without favour to one side's wealth, viewpoints, or political connections. But judges are human, after all, and more importantly, public servants and all such laws equally apply to them. In half the world, the judiciary has to disclose assets mandatorily. Why is this not the case in India? What is the harm if the judges in India, too, are told to declare their assets mandatorily? Coming clean abreast would certainly make them more respected in the public eye. ●



# Long Overdue Police Reforms

 Kamal Kumar

On 22 September 2006, the Supreme Court of India delivered its landmark judgment in the famous Prakash Singh case, mandating country-wide police reform and issuing seven crucial directives to start the implementation process immediately. The 15th anniversary of the judgment is a good occasion to take stock of where we stand on the reform front. We must ask what's holding up police reforms – Indians' lack of appreciation for good policing or the feeling of having given up?

Unfortunately, not much has changed in how policing is done in India. Despite widespread disenchantment and discontent with the functioning of the police force, the cause of reform has not captured the imagination of Indians. Is it because of inadequate appreciation of the importance of good policing for the health of a



vibrant democratic society with the economic potential to develop into a world power? Or is it sheer apathy – a feeling of having given up? Possibly, a mix of both.

## Why does our policing need reform?

Those who claim that the existing police system is working satisfactorily turn a blind eye to several glaring reasons necessitating reform, the foremost being the common public perception of our police being unprofessional, insensitive, brutal and corrupt. These perceptions may be too sweeping yet bear correction through conscious effort. Hence the need for reforms. Further, good policing is a sine qua

non for a healthy socio-cultural environment. Economic progress, too, is a function of a climate of safety and security. Police reform is, therefore, important for India's socio-economic health.

Most importantly, the need for reform is dictated by the all-important role of the police as the primary protectors of the rule of law. It demands a police force that is apolitical, unquestionably fair and impartial, and free from all kinds of extraneous influences. A classic example of the rule of law-oriented policing was provided recently by the Norwegian police, which imposed a heavy and exemplary fine on its prime minister for organising a party on her 60th birthday in violation of

**Only public pressure  
can bring police  
reforms now.**





Covid-19 regulations. Our police officials also need to practise unbiased law enforcement without fear or favour, as demanded by the rule of law.

### Legacies of the past

Much of the ills of our police system can be traced to its colonial inheritance. Its edifice is based on the foundations laid by the British in 1861. Created on the heels of our First War of Independence, the Colonists intended it to be a force that would ensure domination of the 'Raj' through control over the native population and not so much as a 'service' to cater to the policing needs of citizens.

Therefore, the force had to be kept isolated from the populace, regardless of its policing methods led to creating an adversarial relationship with the public. Policing also had to be done at the bare minimum cost – anxiety vividly reflected in the provision of workforce strength, equipment, etc., besides abysmal working conditions and poor salary structure.

Interestingly, the Colonists did not model the police system introduced in India on their police

### Saga of reform initiatives in independent India

As the infirmities and inadequacies of the police system reared their ugly heads time and again, in the post-Independence period, state after state, starting with Kerala in 1959, constituted their Police Commissions to examine the ills dogging the police functioning. The central government, too, appointed several commissions and committees to study the problems and ills of police functioning either solely or as part of the administrative apparatus, criminal justice administration, or national security architecture of the country.

The maladies afflicting police functioning, thus, also came to be studied by several national-level expert bodies. The eight volumes of the Report of the National Police Commission, in particular, represent a seminal and comprehensive study of the existing structures, methodologies, and weaknesses, alongside the policing needs of modern India – a secular democracy pursuing the goal of an egalitarian and economically strong society.

However, despite hundreds of useful recommendations, our police forces remain plagued by most of the ills of their colonial past, further multiplied manifold by the frailties piled up since then. An earnest attempt at implementing the recommended reforms has been missing, barring some nominal, piecemeal refurbishments here and there.

system based on the celebrated Peelian Principles but on the Irish Constabulary, which was more of an occupational force than a public service. Regrettably, the functioning of the police continues to be primarily governed by the tenets of the Police Act of 1861. Reform is needed to change this.

### Supreme Court's directives

The Supreme Court judgment of

2006 resulted from public interest litigation filed by a retired illustrious police officer, Prakash Singh. The judgment decreed setting up certain institutional mechanisms aimed at insulating police functioning from all kinds of unlawful extraneous influences, providing for due professional autonomy to the police, and ensuring their accountability for any misconduct or unlawful

actions. It also sought to deal with the malady of abrupt transfers, used as a tool to 'control' or manipulate officers. The mandated institutional mechanisms were:

1. A non-partisan State Security Commission for each state, headed by the Chief Minister/Home Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, a retired High Court Judge, a few non-political independent individuals, etc., are members. The Commission would serve the checks and balances purpose of providing restraint against the exercise of unbridled 'superintendence' over the police by the state government or by the ruling party by proxy.

2. A Police Establishment Board as a collegium, comprising the DGP and four other senior police officers, to decide on transfer/postings, etc., of officers up to Dy SP rank and to make recommendations to the state government on similar matters respecting officers of higher ranks.

3. Police Complaint Authorities headed by retired judges, one at the state level and one each for the districts, to inquire into the complaints of serious misconduct like custodial deaths/rapes, etc., against senior officers and officers of and below Dy SP level, respectively.

4. Another important directive mandated a transparent, merit-based process of selection of DGP. In addition, it would take care of undesirable extraneous considerations, often governing such appointments. The directive also provides for a fixed minimum tenure of two years to the selected officers and all officers on operational duties, including District SPs and SHOs.

The obvious hope was that implementing these directives would help inject functional autonomy and accountability – the two main pillars of democratic policing – into police work,



besides providing a spur to the other needed reforms.

The governments initially dilly-dallied, but having exhausted all avenues of seeking 'review' and dilution of the directives, finally proclaimed 'compliance' with them, albeit more in defiance. The Supreme Court-appointed monitoring committee, in its report (August 2010), ruefully expressed its 'utter dismay' over the total indifference of the states to reform police functioning.

Even the current situation of the implementation of the directives, after a lapse of 15 long years, is dismal. Forget about ground-level performance. Even in terms of paper compliance, no state or union territory fully complies with any of the directives. A recent assessment concludes that "checks and balances that the Supreme Court directives seek to instill to make policing more professional and accountable are being stymied by the states in multiple ways".

## Roadblocks

Good policing has obvious merit and value, but why are reforms so stoutly stonewalled? The obvious answer is the antipathy and aversion to it borne by the powers-that-be and other beneficiaries of the inept and unprofessional policing. A sizeable section of the political class and influential bureaucracy has become so habituated to using, misusing and abusing the police force that the reform issue sounds anathema to them. Moreover, not all police officers are reform-minded. The apathy of the citizenry, too, deserves the blame.

## The way forward

Indian citizens have a crucial role in the actualisation of police reforms. After all, in a democracy, the people's voice holds the strongest power. Political leadership needs people's support to win elections. Issues that can potentially fetch them votes are swiftly lapped up. In the absence of public pressure, the political class can easily afford to ignore the cause of police reform, which, in any case, suits their vested interest. Therefore, there is a dire need for the citizenry to rise and build pressure on powers-that-be.

Ironically, Indians are quite indifferent to reform even though they feel the pinch of bad policing now and then, and they benefit the most from reform. They need to be sensitised to their vital role, and community leaders and NGOs can play a part in promoting this awareness through systematic campaigns, extensively using social, print, digital and visual media. Political leaders at various levels also need to be educated about the significance of good policing in their overall interests. A multi-pronged approach is required. ●

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**L**et us say we were creating the law on the criminal process from scratch for a just utopia. The law would need to empower police to arrest persons who are probable, not merely possible, suspects. Inbuilt in such a power to arrest must be a restriction against arbitrarily arresting people who are not potential crime suspects. Such a restriction would have to be founded on the right of individuals against arbitrary intrusions into their lives by the state and law enforcement, recognised in *Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017). Departing from the view of privacy as a bundle of rights, the Supreme Court held that privacy is essential for protecting personal liberty as it allows us to define

# In Pursuit of an IDEAL CRIMINAL PROCESS

Malavika Prasad

ought to incentivise honouring the individual's right to privacy as autonomy while discharging law enforcement duties. After all, one is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

## Cognisable offences

How close is India to being this

suspect without seeking a court's warrant to do so, if she has "reason to believe" that the person has committed the offence and is satisfied that the arrest is necessary on certain enumerated bases. Within 24 hours of the arrest, the officer must have any further detention of the arrested person



ourselves and our relations with others. But it is not enough to merely recognise a right of individuals and a corresponding restriction on the power of the police. The restriction must also deter the police from intruding willy-nilly into the private lives of individuals. On balance, a criminal process in a just utopia

utopia? Activist Shehla Rashid, on FIRs accusing her of sedition and promoting enmity between religious groups, had to recently secure protection against arrest from a court. This is because both the named offences are "cognisable" — that is, an officer can take cognisance of and arrest a

ratified by a judicial magistrate.

How would officers decide on whether to arrest someone? They must first weigh the probability of a person engaging in criminalised conduct. It is a factual question. Next, they must assess if the conduct in question fits the definition of the offence to decide

if the person should be arrested. This, too, is a factual question. However, this question is comparatively easier to answer when the offence criminalises conduct for constituting the harm.

For instance, the offence of murder constitutes the harm of loss of life — the police officer must decide, on facts, whether the loss of life results from the intentional conduct of the accused. But it is a harder question to answer in case of offences such as those in the FIR against Ms Rashid, as officers must answer whether the suspect's conduct will result in or cause harm as a downstream effect. This prediction can only be accurate and free of error if officers are clairvoyant!

Whether the offence criminalises conduct for constituting harm or causing harm as a downstream effect, there is no restriction on the powers of the police that deters arrests based on an error in answering these factual questions. However, in the case of offences mentioned in Ms Rashid's example, factual errors can result from exuberant policing, driven by subjective convictions on what might cause hatred, contempt or excite disaffection against the government or promote enmity between religious groups. In offences like these, the line between exuberant policing and a reasonable belief that the arrested person engaged in criminalised conduct can be hazy. Therefore, it is unclear what parameters can be employed by the judicial magistrate in deciding whether to remand the accused person to further custody for investigating the accused's acts.

An arrest based on such an error would unconstitutionally curtail not only the arrested person's freedom to engage in speech and conduct but also her liberty against arbitrary arrest. Further queering the pitch requires the police to apply judgments of the Supreme Court, modifying

definitions of offences to bring them in line with the Constitution. For instance, the definition of sedition was read down in *Kedarnath Singh v. Bihar* (1962) to encompass only speech or conduct that can "incite violence" or "involves the intention or tendency to create disorder". Thus, an officer examining a sedition FIR needs to accurately understand and apply *Kedarnath Singh* before taking cognisance of the offence. The Court restated this requirement in September 2016 in *Common Cause v. Union*. The question is whether such an essentially mixed question of fact and law can be left to the police force, an essentially executive authority trained to undertake investigative decisions.

### **Non-cognisable offences**

On the other hand, a non-cognisable offence would need officers to approach a court for a warrant before they can arrest a suspect. Why some offences can lead to arrests only upon judicial intervention for issuance of a warrant is unclear. One rationale proposed by some courts is that grave, and serious offences are cognisable. However, the Malimath Committee noted in 2003 that many serious offences like public servants disobeying the law to cause injury to any person; bribery during an election; buying or disposing of any person as an enslaved person; cheating; mischief; forgery; making or using documents resembling currency notes; and criminal intimidation were non-cognisable.

Contradicting the gravity-of-offence rationale is the 177th Law Commission Report which states that cognisable offences are those that require immediate arrest. However, lawyer and scholar Abhinav Sekhri notes that Part B of the Schedule comprising cognisable offences in the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) carries several offences that do not

necessitate immediate arrest, such as making unauthorised constructions, repairs and modifications to one's house under a Maharashtra town planning law. It raises questions about the rationale behind selectively requiring judicial scrutiny of some arrests while permitting complete police discretion over other arrests.

The CrPC was written in 1973. Ever since, multiple judgments of the apex court, such as *Joginder Kumar* (1994), *DK Basu* (1997), as well as Law Commission Reports (154th, 177th), critiqued the wide powers of arrest for cognisable offences. It led to the 2009 amendment, which restricted the power to arrest, persons against whom "a reasonable complaint" or "reasonable suspicion" exists, or "credible information" is received of having "committed a cognisable offence." Even so, the CrPC neither deters arbitrary arrests nor comprises incentives for carrying out arrests consistent with individuals' individual liberty and autonomy. What then happens to the right to privacy and autonomy of a person arrested on a charge that does not meet the tests laid down by the Court — such as in *Kedarnath Singh* or, worse, on a charge that is proved to be empty?

A code that does not constantly compel the police to be accountable to individual liberty and the Constitution is merely a police procedure manual. After Puttaswamy's emphatic recognition of the right to privacy as autonomy inherent in personal dignity, we must rethink the powers to arrest for cognisable offences against the state and public tranquillity. For the CrPC to truly realise criminal justice, we might even profitably reimagine the concept of a cognisable offence as we presently know it. ●

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*These flying coffins are a result of India's broken procurement process.*

# AGEING MIG 21S OF THE INDIAN AIR FORCE

■ Bhupendra Singh



*The latest MiG 21 crash on July 28, 2022, during a night sortie in Barmer, Rajasthan, killed Wing Commander M. Rana and Flight Lieutenant Advitya Bal. It was the seventh since January last year, which killed five pilots. Any life lost is one too many. Flying these ageing supersonic aircraft with poor maintenance and lack of effective quality control of spares has been and is fraught with risk. It is not the first crash involving the MiG-21 fighter jets, often called 'Flying Coffin' and 'Widow Maker' for the sheer number of crashes it has suffered over the years, killing many pilots of the IAF.*

Former Defence Minister AK Antony said in Parliament in 2012 that more than half of the 872 MiG aircraft purchased from Russia had crashed. Over 400 of them have been lost in accidents since 1971-22, killing over 200 pilots and 50 civilians on the ground. Such tragic deaths of skilled and trained personnel are a very heavy loss to the nation.

The MIG-21 is the first

supersonic aircraft in aviation history and the most sold fighter jet in the world. IAF's tryst with MiG 21s began in 1963 when Type 74 was inducted from the erstwhile Soviet Union in limited numbers. Over the next 60 years, later versions bought or modified included the Type 76, Type 77, Type 96, Type 75 (Bis) and the latest Bison. Apart from these, the IAF had to shop across the Eastern

Bloc for MiG 21 Trainers in all 900 aircraft. For the major part of the last six decades, the largely Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) manufactured formed the backbone of the IAF and made a mark in the 1971 war even as other newer aircraft gradually began complementing the fleet.

All along, the venerable aircraft kept being adapted to fill in the capability gaps. As a result, it is

a misnomer to believe that the MiG 21 is of 1950s vintage and ignore its evolution to its most recent sixth form. Over these decades, the MiG 21 evolved from a pure air defence fighter to a strike aircraft, multirole fighter and even as a lead trainer for young pilots transitioning from basic jet trainers to fighters.

In a leading national newspaper, aviation historian Anchit Gupta says: “To a large extent, this reallocation of roles was necessitated by an air force that was either cash strapped or was awaiting the purchase of an Intermediate Jet Trainer and Light Combat Aircraft (LCA). Its ad-hoc jet trainer role between 1985 and

was the main reason for human error accidents on MiG 21s. Once the Hawk Jet Trainer was inducted in 2007, the accidents notably reduced, but the sobriquet agonisingly persisted”.

That the MiG 21 needed to be replaced was realised by the IAF in the late 1970s, followed by an Air Staff Target 201 issued in 1982 – 40 years ago. The very next year, the LCA project was approved by the government. The adopted approach foresaw the development of various capabilities, including the Indian Kaveri engine and bringing together all the pieces of the endeavour. Once IAF witnessed the technologies' demonstration, it committed itself

March 2006 while trials continued. IOC meant that the government accepted the minimum deployable form, and it was in this form that the IAF inducted the aircraft in 2016. Anchit Gupta says: “A per a CAG report, IAF went on to waive 53 shortcomings to accommodate the LCA into service and has committed to purchase 83 more aircraft to be delivered over eight years. To IAF's credit, it foresaw the LCA delays and upgraded the MiG 21, keeping the squadron numbers from plummeting over the last two decades”.

The MiG 21 aircraft are long past their retirement date, and despite the unfortunate reputation



2005 earned the MiG the sobriquet of 'Flying Coffin'. When rookie pilots had to take a big leap higher than ideal, the country saw many young pilots cremated in sobering ceremonies. Some even called it a widow maker. He adds: “Prodded by the IAF Chief in 1992, the MOD in 1995 impressed upon the PMO that the lack of a jet trainer

to the project about 20 years later, in 2005.

Over LCA's subsequent development, most of its flying was done by IAF test pilots. They, along with Air Headquarters, developed personal stakes in the project. The IAF signed a contract for 20 aircraft in the Initial Operational Clearance (IOC) in

it has come to acquire, the MiG continues to be in service. Its continued role needs to be seen in the two-front scenario that necessitates a larger number of aircraft, which the IAF doesn't have. But with alarmingly high crash rates during the last two decades, the IAF announced that all these aircraft would be retired



by 2025. However, the phasing out of these ageing aircraft which lack modern systems with built-in safety systems has been repeatedly deferred due to the depleting number of IAF fighter squadrons and huge delays in the induction of new generation fighter aircraft, especially the indigenous Tejas light combat aircraft. Out of the 123 Tejas ordered from Hindustan Aeronautics at an overall cost of Rs. 55,700 crores, less than 30 have been delivered till now.

Even before the crash on the 28th, the IAF had drawn up the plan to phase out 70 of the ageing aircraft and trainers still in the fleet. As part of this plan, the Srinagar-based '51 Sword Arms

Squadron' would be decommissioned in September of this year. The other three MiG 21 squadrons at Uttarlai, Suratgarh and Nal in Rajasthan would be decommissioned within the next three years.

51 Squadron had played a significant part in thwarting Pakistan Air Force's retaliation a day after the IAF's pre-dawn air strikes on the Jaishe terrorist facility in Balakot on February 26, 2019. Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman flying his modified and upgraded MiG-21 brought down a much advanced newer generation American F-16 fighter aircraft of the Pakistan Air Force during an aerial dog fight

that day. However, his aircraft went down sometime later, crashing inside POK, and Pakistani authorities captured him. The air warrior was awarded Vir Chakra later the same year for this feat.

The IAF is presently grappling with just 32-33 fighter squadrons (each with 16-18 jets) when they need at least 42 squadrons to face the combined threat from China and Pakistan. Therefore, Tejas's production rate must be increased considerably to compensate for this grievous shortfall. On the other hand, the 36 new Omni roles Rafael fighter acquired from France for the IAF under a Rs 59,000 crore deal are several times more capable than MiG 21s and have reduced the gap somewhat. But as sheer numbers and costs matter, this is where Tejas will have to step in.

Will the government take a hard call on MiG aircraft? So far, the government has focused on acquiring Tejas fighter jets, but a stop-gap programme to buy 100 foreign jets has drifted for years without forward movement. Currently, the IAF has 32 squadrons against the 42 mandated by the government to tackle threats. However, the number could go down to 28 squadrons by 2024-25 when all the MiG-21s are phased out.

As aviation historian Anchit Gupta rightly points out: "Policy makers must fix the procurement process and bring an intellectual honesty in the procurement production chain, much of which resides outside the IAF. The coffins are a result of India's broken procurement process. Therefore the MiG 21 must continue to soldier on till 2025; 43 years after the IAF formally approved a replacement". These serious issues need to be addressed and solutions found soon in the interests of national security. ●



(Continued from previous issue)

# THE EVOLUTION OF MORALITY

## Objective-Subjective Humanist Morality

Numerous systems of morality, such as the Maat, functioned not only as an objectivating system but practically as a blending of initial primitive morality and later more developed systems of increasingly subjective ethics. Besides the above examples, other affirmations of Maat, such as “I am not a deceitful person,” “I have not shut my ears to the words of truth,” and “I have not acted with arrogance”, indicate a more subjective tone. Here “subjective” pertains to the development of the inner being, that is to say, not a moral code only watching over objective standards, but one aiming to develop subjective human standards and potentialities. Indeed, the goddess Maat was conceived as a feminine

■ Prabhákar T. Överland

manifestation of the universal fundamentally ethical power whose ultimate nature is found in her consummate state with the all-pervasive supreme being.

In Medieval China, with Confucius (551-479 BC), moral philosophy became the basis of education, and institutions even began to admit even capable, deserving commoners to their ranks, not just nobility. The tradition of Chinese ethical thought is mostly concerned with questions about how one ought to live: what goes into a worthwhile life, how to balance duties toward the family versus duties toward strangers, whether human nature is

predisposed to be morally good or bad, how one ought to relate to the non-human world, the extent to which one ought to become involved in reforming the larger social and political structures of one's society, and how one ought to conduct oneself when in a position of influence or power. The personal, social, and political aspects are often intertwined in Chinese approaches to the subject.

Thus, an intermediate humanist stage appears between simple objectivating morality and evolved subjectivating, spirit-oriented ethics. Humanist morality is focused on human





needs and potentials. It supposes subtle (“non-natural”) facts embrace objective moral facts. “According to the tradition of classical moral philosophy, the task of the moral philosopher is to formulate fundamental moral truths, normative principles, from which other moral truths can be deduced.”

Humanist ethics are highly intellectual, centring on the human experience and rational thinking. One such thought is, “In the absence of an afterlife and any discernible purpose to the universe, human beings can act to give their own lives meaning by seeking happiness in this life and helping others to do the same.” It is a subjective statement that ignores the subject of all non-human beings, namely plants, animals, and the entire inanimate creation. By objectivating the rest of the world, humanist morality excludes the existential value of the whole environment, our planetary system, and the entire Cosmos. Indeed, human morality views the Cosmos, out of which the human being was created, only as a utilitarian object and not as an entity in its own right.

The high point of humanist morality is encapsulated by the so-called golden mean or principle: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” This universal expression of human conscience is often ascribed to Confucius. However, the same idea is also found in Mahabharata, where the wise Vidura advises the newly anointed King Yudhisthira to “treat others as you treat yourself”. Vidura and Yudhisthira lived one thousand years before Confucius and are perhaps the oldest known source of this idea. For the rest, human-centred morality is limited to the nearly eight billion individuals on this planet. They are all different from any intellectual point of view and, therefore, would find it very difficult to agree on



policies that would benefit both themselves and other living species in the absence of more comprehensive ethics.

#### **Subjectivating Morality**

In the course of human evolution, we eventually arrive at purely subjective, spiritual morality serving as a dependable vehicle throughout the existential journey of human beings towards their all-round liberation. In ancient Sanskrit texts, this kind of morality was termed *niiti*, defining morality as that which leads towards the ultimate existential state (*kṣemārthe nayanam ityārthe niiti*). Perhaps we might find that such an ultimate yardstick of morality has been with us all along, hidden in every elevated expression of living being, civilization and culture.

Buddha, a contemporary of Confucius, formulated a purely subjective form of morality known as The Eightfold Path. He used the term “Sadhu” for those who did to others as they would want others to do to them and placed that concept in a greater existential perspective:

*“Think once before you speak. If you have the eyes to see, cast a quick glance before you look at anything, otherwise, do not look*

*at all, because whatever you see will influence the mind. Don't listen to anything which is not worth hearing. Only listen to that which purifies and elevates the mind. O Sadhu, control your eyes, control your ears, control your sense of smell, control your tongue, control your speech. Control your mind, Sadhu; control everything. Then you will never suffer from sorrows.”*

About five thousand years before, Confucius and Buddha lived in North India a great spiritual teacher. His name was Sadashiva or Shiva. He propounded a moral code consisting of five principles called Yama (externalised control) and another five principles called Niyama (internalised regulation). Yama and Niyama constitute the classical subjectivating morality of the spiritual practices that arose in ancient India. Any practitioner of the ancient system of Astaṅga Yoga knows Yama and Niyama as the first two parts of that eightfold system. The ten principles of Yama and Niyama evolve a greater sense of subjectivity, of one's differentiating powers, soul and spirituality. These ten principles are not grounds for punishment per

se but rectification, improvement, and existential transformation.

As subjective morality is directly linked to and promotes spiritual progress, these principles of morality serve to liberate us from crudeness and not about condemning ourselves or others. Among other things, Yama and Niyama tell us that we should:

- ❖ Not be a hindrance to the development of others.
- ❖ Be ready to face adversities to develop ourselves and others.
- ❖ Cultivate a sober lifestyle of a balanced mind, allegiance to eternal truth, and other subjectivating points.

## Values

Human beings have an affinity toward authenticity, balance, and genuineness. They tend to admire and respect people with personal integrity, moral courage, and expressed values. In fact, all human beings have the potential to express characteristically human traits such as decency, closeness, warmth, service-mindedness, morality, sense of responsibility, conscience, compassion, and

magnanimity of mind. Other examples of cardinal human values are grace, forgiveness, selflessness, love, friendship, dignity, nobility, and pity. We are all eager to experience such touches of another human being and see them expressed in our collective existence. Human values are a family affair, the concept of the universal, joyous human family. We find the same fundamental human values constitute the base of legislations, the formation of nations, and other developments toward the realisation of individual and collective welfare.

Today, most countries have a solid body of enlightened criminal - and other laws based on notions of sin, virtue, morality and ethics, and values such as those mentioned above. However, due to corruption and abuse of power, those lofty factors are not getting adequately expressed. In most places, the problem is not the laws themselves but their practical implementation. The fundamental shortcoming of objective morality systems is the physical world's

limitation. Any system that takes the physical world as its essential object of reference will fail to deliver justice and peace because of the limited nature of the physical world and its reflection on the human mind.

Subjective values are based on subtler realities of the inner world of human beings. A moral code enlightened from within provides a unifying sense of the universal human and its obligations. More advanced moral compasses give both external and internal direction as they aim to improve the entire sphere of human existence and not only the outer. In the words of the spiritual teacher Shrii Shrii Anandamurti (1922 Jamalpur-1990 Kolkata):

*"Where animality ends, humanity begins, where humanity ends, divinity begins. The meeting point of the highest attainment of humanity and the blossoming of divinity is the base on which the cardinal human principles are established."*

The age-old code of Yama and Niyama, given a renaissance by Anandamurti, provides the







subjective moral approach necessary for humanity to properly adjust its actions to the requirements of the blossoming new global society we see today. These ten cardinal moral principles are:

### External control (Yama):

1. Not to intentionally harm others with one's actions, words or thoughts (Ahimsa).
2. To use one's words and one's mind for the welfare of others; benevolent truthfulness (Satya).
3. Not to take what rightfully belongs to others, and not to deprive others of what is their due (Asteya).
4. To respect and treat everyone and everything as an expression of the Supreme Consciousness (Brahmacarya).
5. Not to accumulate wealth or indulge in unnecessary comforts for preserving life (Aparigraha).

### Internal regulation (Niyama):

1. To maintain the cleanliness of one's body and the environment, as well as mental purity (Shaoca).
2. To maintain a state of mental

contentment and peace (Santosa).

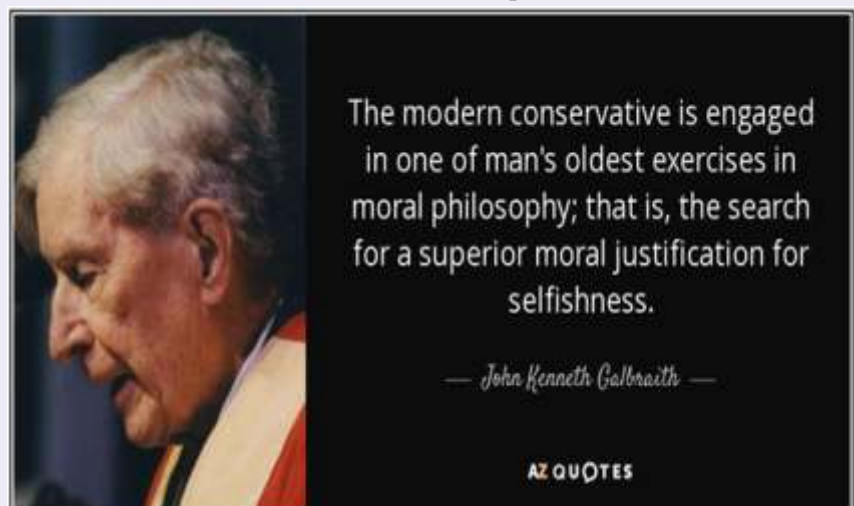
3. To alleviate the suffering of the needy through personal service and sacrifice (Tapah).
4. To read, gain a clear understanding of spiritual books and scriptures, and listen to wise teachings (Svadhyaya).
5. A c c e p t C o s m i c Consciousness as one's shelter and goal (Ishvara Pranidhana).

### While visiting Caracas, Venezuela in 1979, Anandamurti offered:

*"A subjective approach is the final thing, but while moving on towards*

*the subjective goal, you must maintain adjustment with the objective world. There is no alternative. And when human society accepts this goal and is ensconced in this supreme idea in the very near future, this will knit, will construct, a human society on this planet."*

Moral development is not an isolated affair but an aggregate of human existential, civil, and cultural developments. Therefore, for the all-round development of world society and its citizens, a morality that embraces all living beings and not only secures the interests of a few persons or groups is required. ●



# WILL MICROVITA SCIENCE OVERTHROW MATERIALISM?

Richard Gauthier

## Introduction

In the scientific world today, the triumph of materialism seems nearly complete. In cosmology, the universe is said to be created out of nothing. In physics, matter is described as only organized energy. In biology, life is explained as growing, competing and reproducing complex groups of molecules. In psychology, thoughts, feelings and consciousness are explained as the results of physical nerve cell activities and endocrine cell chemical secretions. Individual souls and fundamental human values and right have become practically irrelevant in materialist ideologies. The dominating materialist philosophy of matter, life, mind and consciousness is being carried over from science to society as well. Religions are in disarray and decline as being scientifically irrelevant. Their scriptures about creation, the origin and development of life and the value of human beings have been undermined by scientific, industrial and technological advances that are based on a materialistic, naturalistic, God-free, survival-of-the-fittest view of life in the universe. The desires of various social and political groups for ever greater wealth, power and social control dominate social, political and economic life in the world today. In a materialism-dominated worldview, world wars, economic depressions and other global depopulation schemes become tools to achieve social dominance and totalitarian

control of the Earth by wealthy and powerful individuals and groups espousing and dominated by such materialistic philosophies.

## Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar on Materialism and How to Overthrow It

Here is one of Shrii P.R. Sarkar's comments about materialism: "The greatest drawback of materialistic thought is that materialists think that this visible world is the ultimate reality. They deliberately refuse to understand that their existence is completely transient, subject to time, space and person. They deliberately refuse to turn their eyes towards the original causal entity of the world, in whose body the rhythms of changes appear and disappear. Matter resides in energy and energy resides in thought; energy begets matter and thought begets energy. Rejecting this simple, obvious truth, their palsied minds cannot face all problems with courage. Thus, they become avidyās (the extroverse force of creation) slaves by worshipping transience as eternity, impurity as purity, sorrow as happiness, and self-ignorance as self-consciousness. Truly speaking, any molecule, atom, electron or proton which is taken to be the fundamental stuff of this world, is but the manifestation of energy, for matter is nothing but bottled-up energy. But energy is not an original entity either; it is simply consciousness under the bondage of Prakṛti (the creative power of Supreme Consciousness). Hence for the true comprehension of the essence of matter one must accept

the theory of Brahma (the Supreme Entity) composed of Puruṣa (infinite Supreme Consciousness) and Prakṛti (the infinite creative power of Supreme Consciousness). Whether He (the Supreme Entity) is considered in His all-pervasive aspect or in any of His individual aspects, His Macrocosmic State manifests the same characteristic that is manifest in His individual aspect also."

In this era of global social, political and religious degeneration and decay, Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar emerged as a beacon of light and hope for creating a new society manifesting all-round progress for all living beings, based on implementing cardinal human and spiritual values of life. On the socio-economic level he introduced PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory) for a balanced, decentralized society based on economic democracy. On the human values level he introduced neohumanism to guide humanity with a vision of human society as part of a universal family of all living as well as inanimate beings, guided by a loving cosmic progenitor. On the spiritual level he introduced a complete system of spiritual practices and spiritual philosophy called Ananda Marga ("the Path of Bliss") for the attainment of the highest spiritual goal of life. On the scientific level he introduced the concept of microvita—to create a scientific and technological revolution that would help overthrow materialism and replace it by cosmic social and spiritual values of life.



## Microvita

In 1986, Shrii Sarkar introduced the concept of microvita, subtle subatomic living entities created by a Cosmic Mind, that produce life and minds throughout the universe. He elaborated the concept of microvita in a series of discourses, collected as *Microvitum in a Nutshell*. (3) Research on microvita in physical and mental laboratories will lead to the transformation of society into a "microvita age" where science and technology are applied for the progress and happiness of all. Shrii Sarkar briefly described this microvita age: "According to the modern biologist, protoplasmic cells are made of carbon atoms, but in the microvita age the biologist will say that the protoplasmic cells are not made of carbon atoms, rather they are the collective solidified form of innumerable microvita. By controlling the microvita of the protoplasmic cells, big changes can be effected within the human body. Ordinary people can be made extraordinary. Their mental qualities and capabilities can be enlarged by supplying microvita in sufficient quantity. That is to say, the theory of microvita has immense potentialities in introducing numerous changes in human society. By changing microvita, ectoplasmic changes will come which in turn will bring about endoplasmic change, and thus the mind will be able to control the organism, the physical body, in a better way."

Regarding research on microvita, Shrii Sarkar stated in his first discourse on microvita: "Now, there should be extensive research work regarding these microvitum or these microvita. Our task is gigantic and we are to start our research work regarding these microvita immediately without any further delay. Otherwise, many problems of modern society won't be solved in a nice way... I think, rather I hope, rather I am sure that that day is sure to come when human beings will have proper control over these microvita."

## A Microvita and Radioactivity Experiment for the Origin of Life

A recent experimental proposal, based on the concept of microvita

(see the August issue of PROUT Journal), is to test the hypothesis that living protozoic cells can be created in a test tube containing suitable sterile chemicals, in the presence of an external shielded radioactive material, in what would appear to be spontaneous generation of life from non-living materials. The positive appearance of protozoic cells in a well-controlled microvita radioactivity experiment could however be explained by the action of microvita. Chemical atoms are composed of billions of microvita, according to P. R. Sarkar. These microvita carry detailed codes for DNA or RNA, the chemical codes of life, and are "awakened" and released from radioactive atoms. These awakened microvita expand and develop into molecular RNA or DNA-carrying viruses which construct the living protozoa predicted in the proposed experiment. Various implications of a positive outcome to the proposed experiment are summarized in this article.

## What Would Constitute a Positive Outcome in this Experiment?

1. Various types of living protozoic cells (bacteria and archaea and perhaps simple eucaryotic cells) will form in a sterile test tube containing chemical building blocks and certain other minerals, in the presence of an external radioactive material.
2. In a suitable, well-controlled experimental design, these protozoic cells are expected to form from the clear sterile chemical solution in a matter of minutes, fully alive and functioning, within the viewing/video-recording field of a suitable microscope, when a shielded radioactive material is brought nearby, outside the sterile test tube. These protozoa will not form in the absence of a nearby radioactive material.
3. The protozoa formed in the test tube will be the same or similar to the types of protozoa that appeared early in the Earth's history and still exist today.

## Implications of a Positive Experimental Outcome

1. It is not nuclear radiation such as alpha rays (helium nuclei), beta rays (electrons) or gamma rays (photons) from the radioactive materials that produces these protozoa, because these radiations are shielded in the experiment, but microvita released from radioactively-decaying atoms. Microvita are subtle subatomic entities that can pass through radiation shielding as well as glass.
2. Awakened RNA- or DNA-code-carrying microvita are released from radioactive atoms, and expand to form physical viruses that contain molecular RNA or DNA formed by the awakened microvita. Separate experiments can be done with an electron microscope to check for the appearance of these viruses, which normally are too small to be seen in a light microscope. Some of these physical RNA- or DNA-carrying viruses created the protozoic cells that appeared in the test tube of sterile chemical components.
3. Because radioactive atoms existed throughout most of the universe's history, they could have produced protozoic life throughout the universe. The same or similar protozoa, having the same DNA-coding system as on Earth, would be produced from radioactive atoms releasing microvita in similar chemical and energetic conditions anywhere in the universe.
4. The protozoa appear in the present experiment as they would have appeared in the early Earth's hot ocean that formed 4.4 billion years ago. Different types of bacteria could appear in test-tube chemical solutions of different temperatures. In the early Earth, protozoa could have formed in relatively stable hydrothermal vents on the ocean floor, transmitting liquids from within the Earth, where there were radioactive materials along with chemicals undergoing energy-producing chemical reactions in and near the hydrothermal vents. (The Earth was formed about 4.56 billion years ago.)

5. Other possible locations for the origin of Earth's earliest protozoa would be on, inside or near volcanos spewing out radioactive magma 4.4 billion years ago, or beneath the ocean, inside the Earth's relatively new solid crust, where energy-yielding chemical reactions occur alongside radioactive reactions.

6. A new experimental field of microvita biology, or microvitology, will need to be created to research the various conditions under which protozoa can be produced from microvita through radioactivity and chemical reactions.

7. A new system for writing chemical formulae will be needed that will include the numbers and types of microvita in the atoms contained in different chemical samples.

8. The effect of microvita on the evolution of species as well as the origin of protozoa will need to be investigated, since DNA or RNA-carrying microvita are expected to influence the evolution of species as well as the origin of life. New alternatives to the present neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory of random mutations and natural selection will have to be considered.

9. Hypotheses for how DNA- or RNA-code-carrying microvita produce atoms and are also released from atoms will have to be developed and tested to help explain the results of positive outcome experiments.

10. With the microvita origin-of-life approach, there may not have been just one or just a few living protozoic cells first produced on the Earth from which all other cells evolved and spread. This is because the earliest living cells on Earth are being created by microvita released from different radioactive atoms in suitable chemical environments around the Earth, and not from just one or a few first cells. Since chemical atoms exist throughout the universe, all microvita released from atoms anywhere in the universe are likely carrying coded-DNA and RNA that use the same genetic code found in all living beings on Earth.

11. Would a positive experimental result indicate that spontaneous generation has occurred? Spontaneous generation is defined as "the supposed production of living organisms from nonliving matter, as inferred from the apparent appearance of life in some supposedly sterile environments." A positive outcome of the present experiment would seem to meet this definition. Most origin-of-life researchers expect some form of spontaneous generation, now called "a biogenesis" to have occurred to form the first life on the Earth from non-living chemical building blocks. But if microvita that are released from radioactive atoms caused the positive results in the proposed experiment, then the concept of "nonliving matter" may have to be reconsidered, if all atomic matter is understood to be composed of microvita, which are subtle subatomic living entities. Then the principle of Louis Pasteur that "life only comes from life" or "omne vivum ex vivo" would also be followed in the case of a positive experimental outcome.

12. Questions about the origin of microvita themselves may arise. The idea that microvita are creations of a Cosmic Mind, as described by P. R. Sarkar, could be considered as a possible explanation for the origin of microvita composing atoms, among other explanations. The question "How did the Cosmic Mind create microvita carrying the universal genetic code?" would then arise.

13. If the microvita explanation for the formation of protozoic cells in the experiment, using "awakened microvita" released by radioactive atoms, is not accepted by some scientists, then they or others will need to propose alternative hypotheses for the origin of the protozoa's cellular DNA and RNA that is somehow coded in radioactive atoms. Then further experiments will be needed to test these various alternative hypotheses to explain the positive experimental result.

14. Questions about the meaning,

purpose and goal of human life, though not strictly scientific questions, may find satisfactory answers when microvita are considered in the context of a consciousness-based theory of the universe, as described by P. R. Sarkar. Such questions are often considered meaningless in a materialistic description of our universe only in terms of matter and energy.

The answer to humanity's long-sought search for the "secret of life" may be microvita.

## Summary

The actions of microvita, if demonstrated practically in a laboratory setting, would constitute a great blow to the philosophy of materialism that is dominating science and society in the world today. There would be many important implications, both for science and society, of a positive outcome to the proposed microvita and radioactivity experiment or any other definitive positive outcomes to experimental tests of microvita hypotheses. Experimental researchers interested in developing a new paradigm in science and in overthrowing the current chokehold that materialistic philosophy has over science and society today are encouraged to look into researching the concept of microvita, and particularly the present experimental proposal. Materialism-supporting experimenters are also invited, who, due to the possible implications of a positive experimental result, might like to try to discredit the revolutionary idea of microvita by undertaking experiments such as the one proposed here, with carefully controlled experiments that will minimize the chance of a "false positive" result. The experimental goal is to get clear experimental outcomes, either positive or negative, where, under carefully controlled experiments, a variety of experimental approaches to establishing the possible existence of microvita may be carefully tested and implemented. ●



## 2.3 billion People were severely or moderately hungry in 2021



*People wait their turn to receive donated food during an aid humanitarian distribution in Bucha, in the outskirts of Kyiv.*

**A** new U.N. report says world hunger rose in 2021, with around 2.3 billion people facing moderate or severe difficulty obtaining enough food. World hunger rose in 2021, with about 2.3 billion people facing moderate or severe difficulty getting enough to eat — and that was before the Ukraine war, which has sparked increases in the cost of grain, fertilizer and energy, according to a U.N. report released Wednesday.

“The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World” paints a grim picture, based on 2021 data, saying the statistics “should dispel any lingering doubts that the world is moving backwards in its efforts to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms. The most recent evidence available suggests that the number of people unable to afford a healthy diet around the world rose by 112 million to almost 3.1 billion, reflecting the impacts of rising consumer food prices during the (COVID-19) pandemic,” the heads of five U.N. agencies that published the report said in the forward”.

They warned that the war in Ukraine, which began on February 24, “is disrupting supply chains and further affecting prices of grain, fertilizer and energy”, resulting in more price increases in the first half of 2022. At the same time, they said, more frequent and extreme climate events are also disrupting supply chains, especially in low-income countries. For example, Ukraine and Russia accounted for almost a third of the world's wheat and barley exports and half of its sunflower oil. At the same time, Russia and its ally Belarus are the world's No. 2 and 3 producers of potash, a key fertilizer ingredient.

“The global price spikes in food, fuel and fertilizers that we are seeing as a result of the crisis in Ukraine threatened to push countries around the world into famine,” World Food Program Executive

Director David Beasley said at a U.N. event launching the report. “The result will be global destabilization, starvation and mass migration on an unprecedented scale.” He said in an online briefing that WFP's latest analysis reveals that “a record 345 million acutely hungry people are marching to the brink of starvation,” and a staggering 50 million people in 45 countries are just one step away from famine. Beasley said there's a real danger that the number of people facing famine will rise in the coming months, urging world leaders “to act today to avert this looming catastrophe.”

According to the report, of the estimated 2.3 billion people who were moderately or severely “food insecure” in 2021, the number facing severe food insecurity rose to about 924 million. The prevalence of “undernourishment” — where food consumption is insufficient to maintain an active and healthy life — is used to measure hunger. Undernourishment continued to rise in 2021, and the report estimates that between 702 million and 828 million people faced hunger last year.

The report said hunger kept rising in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean in 2021, but at a slower pace than from 2019 to 2020. “In 2021, hunger affected 278 million people in Africa, 425 million in Asia and 56.5 million in Latin America and the Caribbean,” it said. U.N. development goals call for ending extreme poverty and hunger by 2030. Still the report says projections indicate that 8% of the world's population -- nearly 670 million people -- will be facing hunger at the end of the decade. That's the same number of people as in 2015 when the U.N. development goals were adopted.

The gender gap in food insecurity, which grew during the COVID-19 pandemic, widened even further from 2020 to 2021. Driven largely by widening differences in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia, it said that “in 2021, 31.9% of women in the world were moderately or severely food insecure compared to 27.6% of men.”

In 2020, the report said, an estimated 22% of children under the age of 5 — or 149 million — had stunted growth and development while 6.7% — or 45 million — suffered from wasting, the deadliest form of malnutrition. At the other end of the scale, 5.7% of youngsters under 5, or 39 million, were overweight. “Looking forward, the gains we made in reducing the prevalence of child stunting by one-third in the previous two decades — translating into 55 million fewer children with stunting — are under threat by the triple crises of climate, conflict, and the COVID-19 pandemic,” the five U.N. agency chiefs said. “Without intensified efforts, the number of children with wasting will only increase.”

The heads of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, World Food Program, U.N. Children's Fund, World Health Organization and International Fund for Agricultural Development said the intensification of these three crises and growing inequalities require “bolder action” to cope with future shocks. With forecasts for global economic growth in 2022 revised significantly, the five agencies expected more limited financial resources to invest in “agrifood systems” — the production, handling, transportation, processing, distribution, marketing and consumption of agricultural products. But the agency chiefs said the almost \$630 billion annually that governments spend to support food and agriculture globally can be invested “in agrifood systems equitably and sustainably.”

Currently, they said, “a significant proportion of this support distorts market prices, is environmentally destructive, and hurts small-scale producers and indigenous peoples, while failing to deliver healthy diets to children and others who need them the most.” The five agency heads said evidence shows that if governments redirect their resources to prioritize consumers of food and give incentives for producing and supplying nutritious foods “they will help make healthy diets less costly and more affordable for all.” The report said a key recommendation “is that governments start rethinking how they can reallocate their existing public budgets to make them more cost-effective and efficient in reducing the cost of nutritious foods and increasing the availability and affordability of healthy diets.”

WFP's Beasley called for an urgent political solution that allows Ukrainian wheat and grain to re-enter global markets, substantial new funding for humanitarian organizations to deal with “the skyrocketing levels of hunger” around the world, and governments to resist protectionism and keep trade flowing. Investments to help the poorest countries protect themselves against hunger and other shocks. “If we had successfully threaded this needle in the past,” he said, “the war in Ukraine wouldn't be having such a disastrous global impact today.” ●



# Supra-Aesthetic Science and Music

- Shrii Shrii Ānandamūrti

Are art, music and supra-aesthetic science inseparable? To proclaim the glories of Parama puruṣa, the Supreme Consciousness, in a loud voice is termed "kiirtana". The Saṁskṛta root verb kirt means to "utter something loudly so that others may also hear it"; thus, kiirtana means proclaiming the Lord's glories loudly for all to hear.

Now the question is, does Parama Puruṣa really want people to sing His glories? He never tells anyone to do kiirtana for Him: then why should people do kiirtana? There is a subtle science behind kiirtana. Human beings always want to proceed from the crude to the subtle in all spheres of life: they always seek the subtle amidst the crude, and in the subtle, they always seek the subtlest – this is how they advance towards greater and greater subtlety.

Primitive human beings in the distant past used to appreciate the harmony of music; they also liked to dance in joy. But the music of the people of the prehistoric age was extremely crude, and so was their dance style. However, their urge to seek the subtle amidst the crude was very great, and thus, they evolved various kinds of rhythmic dance and various rhythms. Similarly, they came to appreciate subtle aesthetic beauty in melody by bringing songs within a definite system and introducing various rāgas and rāginīs (classical melodies). Sadāśhiva largely did it. Later a perfect blending of song and dance through tāla ("metre") was developed. Shiva first introduced the particular dance of taṇḍava, and His wife Parvati created another special dance known as Lalita lāsya. It is now in the process of the artistic endeavour to advance from the crude to the subtle; people developed the science called aesthetic science, and as a result of this subtle development, people no longer appreciated the cruder expressions of life.

Once upon a time, people preferred baked or roasted food; in ancient times, they used to eat everything baked or roasted, for they did not know how to cook at all. Gradually they developed the art of cooking by adding spices, and thus they learned how to prepare special and delicious dishes like ghaṇṭa, shukto, etc. [various delectable food preparations]. Once they experienced the taste of something subtle, they no longer appreciated anything prepared crudely. Similarly, once people had heard something rhythmic and melodious, they could no longer enjoy any crude song or music.

Previously people only watched silent films, but once the "talkies" were introduced, they no longer appreciated those silent movies. So nowadays, if silent films are shown in any cinema in a city, even free of charge, there is hardly any gathering – people would much rather go elsewhere, making polite excuses. But at cinemas where contemporary films are shown, people rush to purchase tickets even on the black market. People only watched silent films, but once the "talkies" were introduced, they no longer appreciated those silent movies. Nowadays if silent films are shown in any cinema of a city, even free of charge, there is hardly any gathering – people would much rather go elsewhere, making polite excuses. But at cinemas where contemporary films are shown, people rush to purchase tickets even on the black market.

Thus the general psychology is that once people experience something subtle, they automatically discard the crude. This continuous progress from the crude to the subtle, and from the subtle to the subtlest aspects of life come within the scope of aesthetic science. In this process of movement, ultimately, we reach a state where our refined tastes, feelings, and expressions transport us into the realm of Eternal Beauty. Then those who attain such a state will no longer possess the ability or capacity to taste the beauty of anything: the beauty of music or the beauty of dance will no longer remain an object of experience for them; because, at that time, they will have attained a state so intoxicated with joy that they will lose their limited identity, and thus their ability to experience anything. This exalted state beyond even aesthetic science is called Mohana Vijiṇāna or supra-aesthetic science. Those enthralled with delight can no longer experience anything, because their very entitative rhythm is almost lost.

The diverse schools of music or dance that people have developed so far, and the many more varied branches of music and dance that will be developed in future, are all meant to provide joy to people through aesthetic science. But kiirtana was first invented by devotees to give joy to parama Puruṣa, and in the process of pleasing and delighting Parama Puruṣa, the devotees lost themselves. Thus kiirtana belongs to the category of supra-aesthetic science.

Now the question may be asked, what is supra-aesthetic science? To put it precisely, it is the endeavour to ensconce the microcosmic entity, the individual entitative rhythm, in the eternal being, the infinite rhythm of Parama Puruṣa. So of all the branches of music, kiirtana is the best. And since music is the composite of song, dance and instrumental music, kiirtana is not only song – it also includes instrumental music. These three aspects of music when combined together create such an unblemished, heavenly environment that people completely forget themselves. This is the charm, the excellence, of kiirtana. So those who are truly intelligent should certainly do kiirtana. So those who are truly intelligent should certainly do kiirtana either in public, or if they feel rather shy – in private. ●

*September 14, is the fortieth anniversary of Prabhata Samgiita*





## Proutist Bloc, India(Vidarbha)'s Central Office Inaugurated



On 10 August, Proutist Bloc, India's national convener Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta inaugurated Proutist Bloc, India (Vidarbha)'s central office at Ghatanji.

PBI(Vidarbha)'s convener Madhukar Nistane, well-known social worker of Yavatmal Bondeji, Ravi Kuthe ( president, PBI, Yavatmal), Vishwabandhu (President, Annyaygrast v Sajjan Suraksha Sangathan), social worker Moreshwarji Watile, Homdev Kinake Saheb, Vijay Bijewar, Mohan Pawar, Pandurang Kirnapure were present on the occasion. Vivek Dehankar, president, PBI(Maharashtra), was the chief guest at the programme.



Speaking to the people present on the occasion, Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta said that according PROUT - a socio-economic philosophy propounded by PBI's founder and great philosopher Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar- every human being must be guaranteed sufficient purchasing power to fulfill their basic necessities of life; while the per capita limit of the acquisition of mundane wealth should be fixed according to the collective resources of society. He said that education and medical care must be free and available to all without any discrimination of gender, caste, religion etc. PBI, he added, is here to create a moralist leadership and a just economic system to end all the ills the country has been suffering from since her independence. He called upon everybody to come together for the cause of humanity.

On this occasion, Madhukar Nistane said, "This office was long due, and is now finally here to serve the people of Vidarbha, by voicing their concerns and fighting for their rights." He said PBI(Vidarbha)'s objective is to spread social, economic and political consciousness among the common people, and thereby, prepare them for a movement to secure statehood for Vidarbha, which will unleash a new era of progress under a moralist leadership. He expressed hope that the party cadres and his colleagues will help him in the expansion and consolidation of the party in the region.



## People of Vidarbha Betrayed: Nistane



On 25 July, PBI (Vidarbha) staged a sit-in protest in front of the District Magistrate's office, Akola to raise its demand for the statehood to Vidarbha, and for the arrangement of permanent residence in the villages for the government employees posted in the countryside. The District Magistrate was also given a memorandum of the demands afterwards.

Addressing the agitators, PBI's national convener Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta said that for the last several decades, there has been a constant demand for full statehood to Vidarbha; There have been many agitations to this end, but sadly, the people of Vidarbha have always been betrayed. The leaders of these movements were bought by either money or power. Even Devendra Fadnavis, born in Nagpur and the Chief Minister of Maharashtra for many years, did nothing to fulfill this long pending demand of Vidarbha.

The demand for statehood, he added, has a strong basis. Vidarbha has been continuously neglected from the very beginning. A fragment of Maharashtra's budget is allocated to the region, which is too little to meet its needs. Despite Maharashtra having its 2/3 minerals and 3/4 forest wealth in Vidarbha, the industrial development here is inadequate. Most of Vidarbha's coal and other mineral resources are diverted to the other





parts of the state and the country, leading to power shortages and inadequate industrial development in the region. Over 45,000 farmers have committed suicide in 11 districts of Vidarbha in the last 15 years, which is indicative of the government's apathy.

Madhukar Nistane, convener of PBI (Vidarbha), said, "The demand for Vidarbha state is very old. Even the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, supported the demand for a separate Vidarbha state in the Nagpur session in 1920. The question arises why Vidarbha is not getting its due, while the states like Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Telangana have been recently formed. The people of Vidarbha feel betrayed.

If Vidarbha becomes a state with Nagpur as its capital, it will be easier for common people to access the government. In a short span of one to three hours, people can personally contact the administration. Ministers and public representatives will also be able to monitor development projects better. They won't be able to pass the buck to Mumbai."

Prakash Pohare (Editor, Dainik Deshonnati), Arun Ji Kedar (National President, Jai Vidarbha Party), Shri Arvind Bhonsle (Politburo, Jai Vidarbha Party), Ravindra Singh (Public Relations Secretary, PBI), Dr. Sahebrao Dhotre (National Vice President, PBI), Annaji Rajedhar (National Vice President, PBI), Vivek Dehankar (State President, PBI), Manoj Chauhan (General Secretary, PBI, Maharashtra), Mohan Panwar (Vidarbha President, Proutist Youth Organization), Atul Atram (Proutist Student Organization), Arun Kapile (District President, PBI, Yavatmal), Balkrishna Gotarkar (District President, PBI, Akola), Dr. Janrao Savankar (District Vice President, PBI, Akola), social worker Pankaj Wadwe, Shankar Rao Kunwar (District President, Jai Vidarbha Party, Akola), Devendra Gawli (Vice President, Jai Vidarbha Party, Akola), Vishwabandhu Agwan (President, Annyaygrast v Sajjan Suraksha Sangathan), Yashwant Bonde (District President, Annyaygrast v Sajjan Suraksha Sangathan), Bhaiya Saheb Ghode (Taluka President, Annyaygrast v Sajjan Suraksha Sangathan), Krishna Tekam (Taluka President, PBI, Pandarkavada), Raosaheb Dhule, Pandurang Kiranapure, Prashant Dongre, Sanjay Kamdi, Shubham Borkute, and Nikhil Kachare actively participated in the event.

## PBI (Vidarbha) Unveils Netaji Portrait in Gatanji

On 10 August, PBI (Vidarbha) unveiled a portrait of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose at a major crossing in Ghatanji, in the presence of several party workers and state committee members. Proutist Bloc, India's national convener Acharya Satosananda Avadhuta was also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, PBI's Vidarbha convener proutist Madhukar Nistane said, "Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose was a leading luminary of the Indian freedom movement. He made great sacrifices, the fruit of which we are enjoying today; unfortunately, his contribution has not been given the recognition it deserved. But, PBI has always held him in high esteem and has, therefore, today organized this event to pay our tribute to this great soul." The event, he added, also marks the intensification of the party's movement for Vidarbha's statehood. The party will conduct

agitations, rallies, seminars etc in all the 11 districts of Vidarbha, and thus try to mobilize the public opinion in favour of the statehood to Vidarbha. On 24 August, he informed, an agitation will be held at the district magistrate's office in Wasim, and a memorandum of the demands will be given.





## PBI (Bihar) to Speed Up Membership Drive and Contest Municipal Elections



On July 3, 2022, an important meeting of Proutist Bloc, India's Bihar State Committee was held at the central camp office of the party in Vijay Nagar, Patna, in the presence of the party's national convenor Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta. Along with the party's national spokesperson Prof. Mahendra Pratap Singh and national organising secretary Prof. Ashutosh, all the executives of the state committee participated in the meeting.

Besides the routine review of the party's progress in the state and a discussion on the means and ways to accelerate the expansion of the cadre base, the following proposals were made and accepted unanimously:

1. Monthly meetings will be held on the second Saturday of every month at the party office. 2. It is mandatory for every member to be present in the meeting. 3. Every member of the committee will be personally involved in the membership drive.

On 13 August, PBI (Bihar) state committee held its monthly meeting at its camp office in Patna, under the chairmanship of the party's state president Acharya Shivrinarayan Prasad.

National president Dr. Bhaskar, national convenor Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta, national organizing secretary Prof. Ashutosh Kumar Sinha and national spokesperson Prof Mahendra Pratap Narayan were also present in the meeting, along with other office-bearers and members of the state committee.

After the review of the party's work and progress in the state, the upcoming municipal elections were discussed. It was decided that the party will contest the elections due to be held in November. Pratima Sharma, Bhukti Pradhan of Patna, a social worker and the wife of PBI's national president, was unanimously selected as the party's candidate for mayorship from Patna metropolis.

The names of some more potential candidates for the post of ward councilors also came up during the election. The list of the candidates will be finalized soon. Besides, four more resolutions were passed.

## Uttarakhand Welcomes PBI

PBI's national convenor Acharya Santosanand Avadhuta and proutist Nidhi Sati were in Haldwani on 29 July to meet with Deepa Joshi, D.K Joshi and Bhagwat Pandey, the native residents of Uttarakhand.

After a discussion on the various issues of social and national interest, three of them expressed their desire to propagate Prout in the state. They were also willing to work for Proutist Bloc, India.

Soon, they will be joining the party with Bhagwat Pandey as the party's convenor for Uttarakhand.



Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

# You are the life

MANER MADHU NAY SE SHUDHU  
ÁRO BESHII HOE JE  
JAY BÁUNGLÁR JAY

Not just the nectar of the mind,  
She is a lot more,  
Victory to Bengal victory.

JYOTSNÁ JHARÁ ÁVESHA  
BHARÁ ÁLOY ÁLOMAYA  
JAY BÁUNGLÁR JAY

In a flood of cascading moonlight  
Filled with feelings of radiant effulgence.  
I behold You in the light of ideation

BHORER ÁLOY TOMÁY DEKHI  
PHULER RAUNGE TOMÁY DHÁKI  
TOMÁR PARÁG PRÁÑE MÁKHI  
TUMI JE CINMAY  
JAY BÁUNGLÁR JAY

With shades of blossoms I invite You.  
Thy pollen I anoint on my soul,  
O matchless You are.  
Victory to Bengal victory.

TOMÁR SNEHER SANTÁN ÁMI  
BÁUNGÁLISTÁN MÁTRBHUMI  
MANDA BHÁLOR URDDHVE  
TUMI JIIVANAMAYA  
JAY BÁUNGLÁR JAY

I am child of Your love,  
Bangalistan Mother mine.  
You are above good and evil,  
You are the life.  
Victory to Bengal victory.







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