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TOWARDS A NEW DAWN

The Other Voice
of the PEOPLE

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the PEOPLE

Volume XI
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Editorial

The world has entered yet another stage of crisis within capitalism. On one hand in international politics we see the possible beginning of the end of European Union after Britain's tensed exit, China's aggressive imperialist expansion in African and Latin American countries, and on the other we have a clear view of all the dictators that has entered world politics. Any meeting of global powers now fail to maintain even the limited facade of bourgeoisie democracy anymore, and Russia, China, USA have fallen under great dictatorships. Dictatorships now have a global alliance to conserve power among the chosen few, and implement unprecedented exploitation of land, labour and resources. On this front, we are not falling behind; we too have a dictator in our land, and the new fascism of 21st century.

This issue concerns about the rise and flexing of the new fascism in India. It has taken the already ruinous economic condition of the country and dragged it down through the vile swamp of crony capitalism, bribery in international trade, rampant privatisation of public resources and a massive offensive against small scale and regional producers. This is also noted in Venugopal's article how the Sangh Parivar or Hindutva politics has now a deeply rooted relationship with aggression of capitalism in India.

Capitalism has learnt much from fascism in the past. Especially, capitalism learnt the mistakes not to make (mistakes that fascism and colonialism did) in order to ensure a status quo and maintain relentless exploitation of the people. One such exploitative mode is through neo-liberalism. One must not make the mistake of thinking it as a stage of capitalism alone, rather it is a complete package of recurrence of fascism dotted by years of relative "peace", and pushing forward ideas and compulsions that reproduce its credibility in the nation. One such idea is that of postmodernism, of which Guruprasad Kar's article sheds some crucial light. The other, and very important aspect of neo-liberal reactionary policy, is the promotion of identity politics. Identity is a strong medium and cause under which many oppressed and wretched people can unite under. However, if it is not guided by revolutionary politics, it then becomes the false god under which all progressive movements end up to meet an untimely death, or worse, assimilation into right-wing politics.

Nonetheless, struggle continues. It is not easy for us to forget our martyrs, nor to forget the unrelenting choices many had to make in order to fight capitalism. We remember all our struggles, individuals as Samar Sen, or as smaller groups by women during Naxalbari movements. And in doing so, we create an archive not just for the liberated people of the future, but we rather liberate our past as well.

Electoral circus of **Indian** politics

Sabyasachi Goswami

"THE OPPRESSED ARE ALLOWED ONCE EVERY FEW YEARS TO DECIDE WHICH PARTICULAR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OPPRESSING CLASS ARE TO REPRESENT AND REPRESS THEM."

-KARL MARX

With the Lok Sabha election around the corner, the political atmosphere of the country is heating up. On the one hand, there are self-proclaimed "patriots" and on the other the "keepers of the constitution". The I.T cells of the rulers of various shades along with the corporate media are trying to polarize the people into these two camps. Whether one should enlist themselves as a "patriot", or they should pledge to "guard the holy constitution", the public opinion is being divided on this question. While the arrogant bragging of 56 inches contains extremist nationalistic fervor, the opponents (the "great alliance") are trying to implicate that not supporting them is equivalent to strengthening the Fascists and jeopardizing the "holy constitution".

The parliament centric lefts and their loyal intellectuals, "eager to protect the holy constitution" are also shouting on top of their voices, 'the system is in danger'. In reality, either you are in my camp otherwise you are an "anti-national" or a "fascist" -these are essentially the two different expressions of the Indian statist fascism, only the articulation is different. In this situation, it is important to take a conscious political stand. We need to carefully determine our programmes based on a holistic understanding of each of these political parties' activities and a dialectical materialistic analysis of our past experiences with them.

Today our reality is overshadowed by the virtual space. The 'false' is being established as the 'truth', thanks to the joint effort made by the corporate media and the so-called internet world. As Sukumar Roy once said, "a cat materializes out of a handkerchief". They have successfully projected the main architect of the Gujarat genocide as the "poster boy of development" through their publicity, Congress, the epitome of injustice becomes the flagbearer of "justice". The corrupted and fallen lefts are being worshipped as the "communists" and TMC, the party with no



ideology who came to power in Bengal only by using their politics of opposition is now being praised for its "principled politics".

Although the different ruling parties have certain differences in their expressions and articulations, they are essentially similar in their activities, there is no materialistic basis to doubt this. Because firstly, all of them are corroborators of the development model that serves the interest of the corporates. Each of them actively takes part in accordance to their abilities in palming out the natural resources to the corporate sharks, displacing the people to gratify the corporate greed, inviting foreign investment in all sectors in the name of open economy, repressing the people's agitation by using military powers, passing repressive laws, killing people in fake encounters and imprisoning thousands of people in fascist style. Their only aim is to protect the interest of the national compradors like Tata, Ambani, Adani, Jindal, Mittal and Vedant, and the multinational corporations and to ensure their profit. All of their hands are soaked in the blood of the protesting people. All of them are "Chowkidar" (gatekeeper) of the looters of the country.

Secondly, denying the fact that India is a country of diverse ethnicity, they promote an idea of "Indian nationalism". This is nothing but a false claim. It is their ploy to impose the upper caste Hindi-Hindudominance on the oppressed nationalities. All of them perceive the Kashmiris and North Eastern people's desire for freedom as separatism and terrorism. In the same way, they try to brutally oppress the self-determination movements of Gorkha, Kamtapuri, and others. They are using military forces to tyrannize the tears, blood, and dreams of these oppressed identities in the name of "Akanda Bharat", "Indian Nationality" etc. and none of them ever attempted to find a political solution to these issues. They are actually trying to ensure that the capital market of different national and multinational corporations doesn't get divided.

Third, all of them always stood for Hindutwa and oppressed minorities. Hands of both the Congress and BJP are stained with the blood of minorities. We shouldn't forget how the BJP and the Congress directly fueled the massacres of the minorities in Meerut, Maliyana, Bhagalpur, Bhiwandi, Neli, Gujarat, Kandhamal, Muzzafarnagar and in many

other places. We need to take note that when the BJP is trying to push the nation towards a religious fanaticism, how all other parties are trying to prove their credibility as Hindus instead of boldly promoting the idea of secularism. We have seen how these parties including Congress, CPM and TMC surrendered before the BJP's call for war and nationalistic frenzy during the incident of Pulwama. Avoiding the main question, all of them were busy in shedding crocodile's tear in the candlelight vigils. But all of them maintained complete silence when the security forces killed 10 innocent villagers at Abujhmar in Bastar when 42 Adivasi people who gathered for a marriage ceremony were brutally killed in Garchhidoli when thousands of Kashmiris were injured with a pellet gun and several others were disappeared forcefully. This is their patriotism. A country, to them, is merely the map, the market, and the investment. The people and their plights do not have any place in it.

Forth, whenever any of them came into power they advocated for a more concentrated form of ruling. Time and again, mass movements have raised the demand of a true federal structure of government, where the defense, communication, currency and foreign these four departments will remain under the control of the center and all other powers will be vested on the state governments. But these parties have never recognized this demand in their programs. Rather they promoted the idea of "Akhand Bharat" to safeguard the undivided market for the big capitals and imperialist multinational capitals. The leftists, rightists and the religious fanatics all are on the same boat.

Fifth, all of them are promoters of the Brahminical caste system, only they differ in their expressions. They are expert in dominating any attempt made by the Dalit people to reclaim their rights. There's no doubt that physical attack on the Dalits has increased manifolds in this present Hindutwavadi era (according to the National Crime Bureau, since 2015 each day six Dalit women are being raped in this country, in 2003 the figure was three). But all of these ruling parties are desperate to protect the Brahminical ideology and socio-economic condition that has created this situation. None of them have initiated any mass movement against the decision of evicting almost 10 lakh Adivasi people from the forests. They are not ready to accept the provision

of reservation for the Dalits and Adivasis. Even when all the higher positions in the society including in the education are monopolized by the upper castes, still they have passed the bill for 10% reservation for the upper caste in the name of poverty. In this way, they are trying to blur out the actual purpose of reservation. The purpose of reservation is to bring forward the Dalit representation according to their ratio in the overall population. Poverty alleviation was never the agenda of reservation. In this case, not only the Brahminical parties but most of the parties who claim to be the protectors of Dalit's interest have also shamelessly supported this bill.

Sixth, all of them are corrupted to the core. They forget the people and the election promises as soon as they assume the power. In fact, these electoral parties do exactly the opposite of what they preach once they get the power. For example, in 2011 in their election manifesto (in the Bengali edition) TMC promised to release all the prisoners who are behind the bar due to a political conspiracy. After assuming the power TMC not only refused to do this but also, they revoked the political prisoner status of these activists. They also intensified their attack on the political prisoners by transferring them from one jail to another, killing them without providing proper medications and in so many other ways. Once a staunch opponent of TADA, Mamata Banerjee imprisoned several mass activists in Lalgarh, Nonadanga, and Bhangar and slapped the draconian UAPA on them. During the Congress regime, the BJP opposed everything right from the FDI in retail to Adhaar card, but the same party expedited all those processes once they came into power. They declared war on corruption, and we can see how the leaders of the BJP and their family members have become richer after the party assumed power. After the revelation of Rafael Scandal the oppositions are directly calling out "Chowkidar is the thief". When in power the CPM is pro-investment, the lapdog of multinational corporations and busy in portraying the 'human face' of globalization and while they are in opposition seat, they become the "anti-imperialist revolutionaries"!

Congress is the most efficient in all these. In their election propaganda, they promised to repeal TADA. They did that too, but at the same time, they introduced the more oppressive UAPA. In this current election, they have promised to repeal

the sedition act and AFSPA. It can be said quite responsibly that they must have some plans to implement certain severer laws. We shouldn't forget that right after assuming the power in Chhattisgarh assembly, they killed 10 villagers in Bastar in a fake encounter. Although the "Urban Naxal" is a BJP coinage, we must remember that it was the Congress Home minister P. Chidambaram who tagged the human rights activists as Naxals and propagated the urban Maoists are even more dangerous than the Maoist armed squads. Mr. Buddhadeb Bhattacharya of CPM also labeled the well-known human rights organization APDR as "Maoist Outfit". Mamata speaks in the same tone. While BJP uses Operation Samadhan to combat the Maoists, Congress used the Operation Green Hunt.

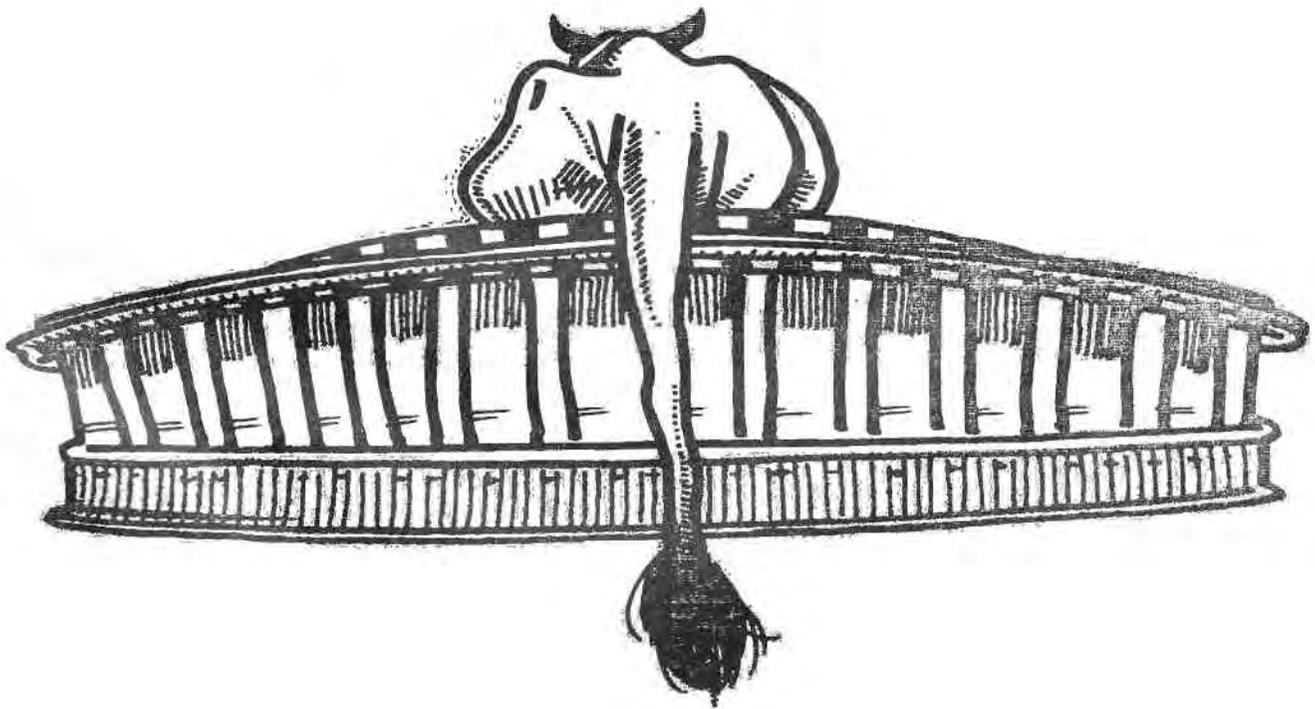
Seventh, all the bluffs of these electoral parties become crystal clear on the question of agrarian crisis. Farmers are killing themselves all over the country and these parties are trying to appease them with some superficial relieves without addressing the issue of basic land reform and other fundamental issues. The present Hindutwawadi rulers do not even care to note the statistics of farmers' suicide. But not only the BJP and Congress, the former CPM government and present TMC government in Bengal are also expert in denying the incidents of farmer suicide. All of them are keeping mum about the open market economy, withdrawal of all debt schemes for the farmers and exploitation of them by the landlords-moneylenders and crops businessmen.

Eighth, all of them clearly stand against the interest of the working class. After the apparent downfall of communism when the worldwide working-class movement is comparatively weak, they have removed all their masks. They have snatched away all the rights, that were achieved by different national and international workers' movements. Workers are being employed on a contract basis; permanent employment is becoming a thing of the past. None of these parties have ever taken any administrative steps against this. The companies are robbing the crores of Provident Fund's money of the workers and we do not witness any effective police action. But the moment there is a workers' agitation, the police bring down brutal oppression. These ruling class parties are trying to curb the workers' right to unionize by amending the Labor law. There's no job security for the contractual labors and labors working

in the unorganized sectors. The right to work only 8 hours a week is also being disregarded everywhere. 12 hours working hour has become the norm. They are providing every support to the owners of the companies to sack the workers by establishing capital intensive industries and implementing automation. They are stripping away the workers' power to bargain. The century-old Congress-BJP and the newly emerged TMC, all are exactly the same in this regard.

This is true, that the constitutional governmental system has been disrupted in the era of Narendra Modi. Modi has dismissed the Planning Commission right after assuming the power. He attempted to impose legislative control over the judiciary completely disregarding its autonomy. He has intervened in the autonomy of Reserve Bank and blatantly used the CBI. All the parties who have been in power in the center have done this to some extent. BJP, in an attempt to portray a clean image of themselves, are sending the CBI after the opposition leaders. They are completely ignoring all the norms

of parliamentary politics. However, they have failed to maintain this mask of honesty, as we can see how the looters of public money are fleeing from the country with their full support and aid. We have also witnessed, how all the murderer SANGHA leaders have got clean chits from the courts. The BJP has tried to arrest the high-ranking police officials and Chief Minister's secretary in order to exhibit their power and threaten the state governments. They have even arrested and jailed elected Chief Minister of a state as they failed to tame him in any other ways. As a result, we are witnessing the incidents like the unrest within the Reserve Bank, the conflict inside the CBI, the clash between the Lalbazar and CBI, and non-confidence of the judges. All of these are coming out rapidly. Further, the extremist Hindutwavadi organizations are killing people, raping the women, orchestrating riots in the name of Gau-Raksha, Ghar-wapsi, and Love-jihad. They are nurturing the issue of building up the temple in the Babri ground to disrupt the social fabric. These all are an indication of fascism, there's no doubt about it. But the question is, when does fascism assume power?



'GAU'v'erment of!

When the ruling class faces an extreme economic crisis; when the system is on the verge of collapsing; when there is an excellent revolutionary condition; but the subjective force of the revolutionaries is less, in such situations fascism is the only weapon of the ruling class to protect themselves.

What is a revolutionary situation? In the "Collapse of the Second International", Vladimir Ilych Lenin has described it as, "(1) when it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis, in one form or another, among the "upper classes", a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for "the lower classes not to want" to live in the old way; it is also necessary that "the upper classes should be unable" to live in the old way; (2) when the suffering and want of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual; (3) when, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in "peace time", but, in turbulent times, are drawn both by all the circumstances of the crisis and by the "upper classes" themselves into independent historical action."

We need to remember, the open market economy which is being praised by world capitalism since the 1980s is not an indication of the strength of capitalism, rather this globalized liberal economy signifies its weaknesses. In this ever-growing economic crisis, they are failing to provide any aid to the citizens. The aids that were once provided by the so-called welfare nation-states are being snatched away in the name of this globalized economy. As a result, we are witnessing a globalization of recession. Unemployment, starvation, and poverty are increasing rapidly.

Although the grievances among the workers and farmers are rising, the subjective force of the proletariat class has weakened due to the downfall of the world socialist movement. So, the rise of fascism in different countries has become the norm of our time. The economic crisis of capitalism creates the objective ground for fascism and the weakness of communist movements helps it to grow. In this situation, the fascism emerges as the savior of the

system to pacify the hearted of the mass towards the current system. They deceive the people with their ultra-nationalist slogans. It may appear from these slogans that they indeed want to bring a radical change to the system. Some people actually start believing them and fall prey to their falsely created image. Like during the demonetization, many middle-class people said, "we do not have a problem to suffer for a few days as long as it ensures the seizure of the black money!". Their deep resentment against this corrupt system that gives birth to the black money hoarders and corrupt politicians, drove them towards Modi. They forgot that demonetization can no way touch the black money hoarders as the hoarders, of course, do not store the black money in their houses. In the name of seizing the black money, the demonetization actually aimed to destruct the unorganized sector and small retailers. It harmed the farmers. It was an attempt to ease out the process of implementing FDI in retails, however, Modi promoted it as a war on black money! So, a section of the ruling class (which is more frenetic and violent) put forward some slogans or takes certain steps to deceive a section of the mass. It exploits the anti-system emotions of the mass in order to become the savior of the corporate capital. They organize a section of the mass based on some wrong assumptions and instigate them to violently attack the other sections. They utilize violent religious or nationalistic fanaticism and thousands of lies in this process.

When they successfully bring down violent attacks on a large section of people (in our country this section is comprised of workers, farmers, small and medium business persons, and women, Dalits, Adivasis, religious minority and oppressed nationalities), another section of the ruling class emerges as the savior. This later section then deceives the mass by telling them that the system is in danger and it needs to be protected. A section of the people naturally falls for this trap just to get some relief. In this way, the system reproduces itself again and again.

We need to remember, it's not only Modi, but all the ruling class parties of our country also have some fascist agenda, only the intensity varies. The parties which are being projected as the saviors of the system also have their hidden fascist agenda. The internal market of our country is weak, and the purchasing power of the people is low due to the backward production relation in the agricultural

sector and the prevalence of the unorganized sector. It is inadequate to gratify the ever-increasing greed of the corporate capital for profit making.

So, breaking away from the general norm of business, capitalism is now directly snatching away the wealth from the people to accumulate profit and it is continuing from the last few decades. They are violently grabbing the land, forest, and minerals. Here the main victims are the Adivasis and Dalits. People are resisting these attempts; democratic patriotic people are taking an active part in these resistance movements. Sometimes the resistance is non-violent and sometimes it is violent. Threatened by these resistance movements, the ruling class has unleashed brutal military aggression. In an attempt to provide some permanency to this aggression, a fascist tendency of the state is being evident. Congress-CPM-TMC-BJP all are in the same position on this question. So, the parties who are now projecting themselves as the savior of the constitution and bringing forward the demand of "justice" and poverty alleviation, will have to maintain the fascist policy of state aggression once they assume the power. We shouldn't forget that Indira Gandhi used this same slogan of "poverty alleviation (garibi hothao)" to establish the fascist regime during the 1970s emergency. Those who are falling prey to this call for protecting the constitution should be reminded that the fascist programs can efficiently be implemented by using this constitution and the constitutional institutions including the Supreme Court. We shouldn't forget this very Supreme Court has passed the judgment against the interest of the Dalits; they have directed the eviction of the Adivasis and snatched away the workers' right to strike. It is important to learn from history. India's constitution was imposed on the people from the very beginning. Even though there is a space in the Preamble for the rhetoric of "We the People of India", it was never really taken seriously nor was the people's demands really taken into consideration. The constitution did not come into being following a revolutionary democratic movement, nor were multiple bodies or committees formed to make the Constitution represent all the people of the country. Firstly, most of the laws and codes created by the British are still in the Constitution. Secondly, the citizenship rights section is really challenged, and that too has been so remodified by different amendments that no rights

really remain. An example is how the Constitution gives rights to the citizens to conduct a peaceful gathering, but at the same time takes it away by granting a Head Constable the authority to take it away by imposition of 144. The repressive laws are taking away the most basic rights today, and therefore is proving again and again that the constitution is exclusively for the ruling classes. Only a few years back when the large section of poor people including the farmers was suffering massively under the NDA government led by Vajpayee, many of us participated in raising slogans to defeat NDA. In effect, we saw the UPA-1 government expedited the process of selling out the forest, water, and land in the name of liberal economy, at the same time they implemented the "operation green hunt" to destroy all the resistance movements that were being organized against this policy. After the "change (paribortan)" in the regime in West Bengal, the Mamata-led government is following the footsteps of the former Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharya in oppressing all the voices of oppositions. The "paribartan chai" slogan sounds so feeble nowadays. In fact, the Mamata-led government started its job right where Buddhadeb Bhattacharya left it. That means, whenever a ruling party came into the power by exploiting the people's movements against the fascist rulers, they became even more tyrant and escalated the process of selling out the country. So, if we fail to restrain ourselves from doing the same mistake time and again, that'll actually harm the anti-fascist movement. We need to remember the anti-fascist struggle is not some politics of parliamentary coalitions, it is not limited to a few conventions or publications. Rather the task is to organize the people at the grassroots level and to connect all the democratic movements that are being emerged all over the country. Building up the ground movement against fascism is more important than the electoral fight or the meetings and seminars. Initiatives to organize at the grassroots level is much more important.

If we want to have a truly democratic system where there is no inequality and exploitation, where people can live respectfully and are allowed to freely express their views, where corporates cannot loot the people, where there is no inequality based on the caste, religion, and gender, then the revolutionary change of the system is the only way out before us.

(Translated by Sananda Dasgupta)



The **Economic** Scenario and the **Fascist** Offensive

N Venugopal

**'FASCISM IS NOT DEFINED
BY THE NUMBER OF ITS
VICTIMS, BUT THE WAY IT
KILLS THEM'**

- JEAN PAUL SARTRE

There has been a debate for the last several decades on whether it is appropriate to term the offensive of Indian ruling classes against Indian masses as fascism, given its Italian and German connotations. There are certainly undeniable differences between the inter-war context of fascism and the present, but I would like to argue that the essential conditions which gave rise to fascism in Italy, Germany and elsewhere are similar to Indian economy and society today and ruling class response is also similar.

Fascism is essentially a ruling class response to the imminent or ongoing crisis in any society. The crisis may occur fundamentally in economy and get reflected in society, politics, culture and governance. Gradually the symptoms of crisis become apparent in all walks of life as the crisis becomes all pervasive. As the crisis deepens and gets more and more visible,

the state and ruling classes cannot but indulge in fascist policies to address and attempt to crush the crisis. They will not be able to resolve the crisis and hence indulge in fascist methods to divert the people from the crisis, and use violence to silence all the dissenters. Beginning with Italy in 1920s to India of 2010s, the ruling class response to crisis has always been fascism. Of course, there are some differences as well as some similarities between the fascist rulers, depending on time, space and the personal traits of the fascist leaders.

There have been a number of studies on fascism as it appeared in the 20th century as well as in the present day. Here we do not have sufficient time to make a comparative study between various types of fascism and I would like to restrict myself to three issues: the economic scenario of crisis that is spreading, the fascist offensive as a result of the economic and social crisis and the tasks of progressive and revolutionary forces in the face of the growing fascist offensive.

While the existence of class society itself is a crisis, a number of developments on the way exacerbate the crisis. We do not have time to go far into the past history but the crisis of Indian society since the colonial times is very well documented. As the colonialists transferred power to a section of the feudal, big bourgeois and comprador ruling classes in 1947 the crisis entered a new phase. The collusion between imperialism and feudalism gave rise to a continuing crisis, which can be termed in political economy terms as semifeudal and semicolonial society, which is crisis-ridden. This society could not complete the tasks of a bourgeois democratic revolution to fulfill the genuine anti-feudal aspirations of the people and stagnated in its semifeudal stage. The old colonial rule of one imperialist power was replaced by neo colonial plunder by several imperialist powers thus making it a semicolony. From a land ruled by one power on which sun never sets, India was turned into a land ruled by MNCs on whom sun never sets. This actually is the real crisis and to hoodwink people from this real crisis and prevent them from a search for real solutions, the Indian ruling classes needed fascism. As the people's discontent grew in both quantitative and qualitative terms, state began using fascist offensive, roughly from the late-1960s. Simultaneously, as a response to the crisis and also on the directions of the international financial agencies, Indian ruling classes began following Liberalization

- Privatization - Globalization policies from the early-1980s which became the order of the day in 1991. Thus by the time Sangh Parivar took the reins of power in 2014, India was already neck deep in experiencing crisis and the ruling class responses in the form of fascist suppression and integration with globalizing forces.

The following five years of Sangh Parivar rule has witnessed further aggravation of the economic crisis, which can be seen in various sectors such as agriculture, industry and services. The government's attempts to ostensibly address the situation in fact led to further exacerbation of the crisis, as each of the attempts was aimed at protecting the interests of both feudal and imperialist forces and their compradors.

The fact that Indian agriculture is going through a severe crisis does not need any elaboration as it is quite palpable. The ever increasing number of farmers' suicides, growing input costs, stagnation in real price farmers get for their output, agriculture becoming unremunerative for small and middle peasants, more and more land being diverted to non agrarian sector,

particularly real estate, new legislations and policies to snatch land away from the real farmers and giving it away to corporate firms, unemployment and underemployment are a few symptoms of the larger agrarian crisis. The so-called palliative measures announced by the governments like Minimum Support Price and Fasal Bima Yojana are either insufficient or beneficial to the vested interests but not to the real farmers. If the agrarian sector in a country where 70 per cent people depend on it is experiencing such a severe crisis, that actually means that the entire country is in crisis. This large crisis in base naturally spills over to superstructure sectors and that's why we are witnessing crises in society, politics, culture, governance, education, religion, arts and literature.

Then if we look at the industrial sector, it also shows up several symptoms of severe crisis like stagnation in manufacturing sector, meager share of formal sector, more and more dominance of MNCs, more penetration of FDI and FPI, growing share of footloose capital and stringent labour laws. Service sector, though demonstrating double digit growth and bandied in high decibel propaganda, its benefits to MNCs, its nature of volatility, its jobless growth

and unreliable jobs and uselessness of a larger part of the services to the real needs of people show its unsustainable nature.

Put together, these three elements of Indian economy are giving us a picture of an all-pervasive crisis and most visible aspect of this crisis is unemployment. The government under Narendra Modi has implemented demonetization and GST in this scenario and involved itself in various corrupt practices including banking scams and Rafale deal. Each of these policies and practices have directly or indirectly impacted the employment scene in the country by not creating new employment opportunities and throwing existing employees out of jobs. Thus a significant portion of India's working population is without work and as the proverb goes, "their hands are empty to work or to hold guns". The ruling classes that cannot provide work and afraid of them taking guns, are trying to stuff their minds with fear and hatred, thus leading to fascism. In any country there has been a direct correlation between the rise of unemployment and the rise of fascism. India exactly fits into that unemployment-fascism model

This all pervasive crisis is so widespread that even the government statistics of growth rates, averages, GDP and per capita, FDI inflows, balance of trade,

investment-GDP ratio, wealth generation, growing number of billionaires are unable to cover the actual crisis that is ready to explode anytime.

Thus the obtaining reality of Indian economy or society is that of crisis, getting manifested in inequality, poverty, regional imbalances, unemployment leading to discontent, unrest and rebellion. In classical sense a crisis is defined as a situation where old is dying and new is yet to take birth. This interregnum gives out morbid symptoms like fascism. Classical analysts equated fascism that emerged in Italy and Germany with growing corporatism and spread of an environment of hatred and fear. As people suffer from everyday problems in social and individual life, they are prevented to go to the root causes of the problems, but forced to identify or accuse some "problem makers" and to hate and annihilate them.

Fascists try to use this kind of volatile, explosive situation with two strategies: One, trying to fool people with attractive slogans, false prejudices as well as creating scapegoats. Two, using violent

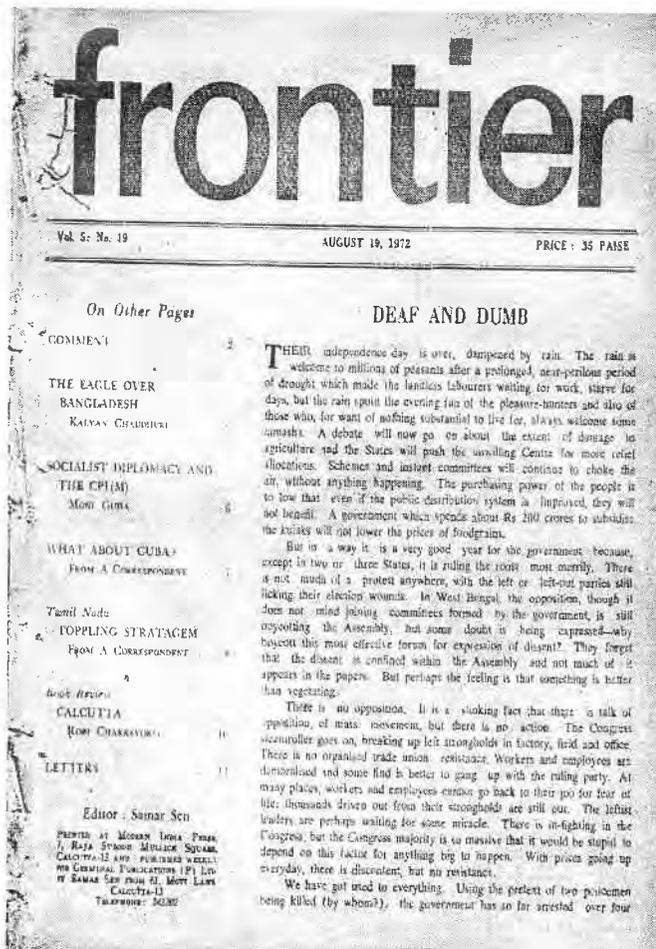
methods to silence dissenters. The fascist rulers in India just copied these strategies from the fascist textbook and adhered to same strategies. Narendra Modi in particular and all Sangh Parivar leaders in general expressed attractive slogans like Achchedin, Sab ka sath sab ka vikas, Make in India, Stand up India, Start up India, Minimum government and maximum governance and pronouncements against corruption (Na khaaungaa, na khaane deoonga) and at the same time created several scapegoats and enemies like Muslims, Dalits, Adivasis, women and Urban Naxals. After creating such enemies, the next logical step is using violence against them. In Italy and Germany also, "problem makers" were identified as Jews, workers, socialists and communists and in India they are Muslims, Dalits, Adivasi, women and Urban Naxals. In other words all those who think and critical towards the ruling class policies and practices are termed as anti nationals or enemies.

In fact, in this respect the present Indian brand of fascism is similar to both Italian and German types of fascism. In Italy under Benitto Mussolini also dissent and criticism are treated equivalent to treason. Mussolini in 1934 categorically asked to "end intellectualizing" and said "intellectuals are a threat to nation". Italian state infamously wanted "to stop the brain (of Antonio Gramsci) functioning". In Germany, Adolf Hitler also gave importance to "heart, faith and inner voice" than intelligence. In present day India, thinkers and public intellectuals are either killed, like Govind Pansare, Narendra Dabholkar, M M Kalburgi and Gauri Lankesh or imprisoned, like in the case of G N Saibaba and others in Gadchiroli case, Sudha Bharadwaj, Shoma Sen, Varavara Rao, Surendra Gadling, Sudhir Dhawle, Vernon Gonsalves, Arun Ferreira and Mahesh Raut in Bhima Koregaon violence case. Muslims like Aqlak and Dalits like Una victims and Adivasis of central Indian forests and women all over India are being subjected to the fascist offensive. It is no coincidence that all these targets of fascism in India are actually the targets of Brahminical Hindutva. The new term, originally coined by the failed film maker and Sanghi Vivek Agnihotri, has become the buzzword for Indian fascists.

Since fascism is associated with a higher stage of capitalism, there are some scholars who hesitate to treat Indian brand as fascism per se. But I think some of the essential characteristic of capitalism and

Samar Sen and 'Frontier'

Asok Chattopadhyay



19th August 1972; Frontier.

To remember dates of events is important for us. Some dates are just numbers on a calendar, neither has it evoked memories nor does it demand remembrance. Days come and go by as if painted by dust.

However, last October 10th was a day, which history marked as the birthday of Samar Sen, the renowned journalist and esteemed editor of Frontier. Two years ago his birth centenary year passed with relative silence and no ceremonies whatsoever. August 23 last was his 31st death anniversary which again passed into oblivion. It is more painful than surprising to have witnessed the so-called left-wings' apathy towards a daring, conscientious and uncompromising left intellectual of West Bengal like him.

History had recorded the dots of a famous and unbending rural journalist who, in the seventies of the nineteenth century Bengal, taught the lesson how to wage war against both the tyrant zamindars and the profiteering ruling class in the general interest of the peasantry of Bengal. And just a century latter we found another one who had held his head high in spite of state-terror and heinous political goons in West Bengal. Of the two, first one was Kanga Harinath Majumder, the renowned editor of Grambartaparakashika, a Bengali weekly published from Kumarkhali now in Bangladesh, and the other one was no other than Samar Sen himself.

Despite trotting a long journey as a conscious, undaunted left intellectual, Samar Sen was not at all satisfied with the role of the intelligentsia especially in the seventies of the twentieth century Bengal. He admitted that most of the intelligentsia was dissociated from the greater masses of people of the country. Their feelings were more superfluous than condor. He believed in the concept that the intelligentsia should go to villages and share the labor and distress of the working people there, though he knew very well that it was much of a reverie.

Once Khrushchev too insisted the academics and artists to have been engaged in some manual labor as it would be able enough to help them improving quality of their intellectual work. Samar Sen did hardly accede to and wrote : "In the Calcutta school I went to, polytechnical training was compulsory and for four years I labored at carpentry, weaving and dyeing. The result was most fortunate. I can sharpen my pencil with a blunt knife, thanks to my knowledge and practice of carpentry."

And yet he considered revolution and intelligentsia to have been a complete oneness of the whole. And from this point of view he expected the vivid role of the revolutionary intelligentsia acting forth on the fore. But he himself confined himself within the periphery of Calcutta itself and pleaded for his crude limitations. And as such he did never opt to identify himself to be a revolutionary one.

He appeared not to be ignited with the fiery logic in face of sharp debate lodged by his friend Saroj Datta in the forties of his youthful days. Rather he somehow became indifferent. After the lapse of a long three decade, and in the days of flaming seventies, when Samar Sen referred to that debate and found out a pitting justification of his friend's anger, his indifference stood tall. When a great numbers of pen-armed intellectuals of Bengal were much fond of applause in the late thirties and early forties citing revolutionary phrases, Saroj Datta, the young firebrand left intellectual, assayed dragging their masks open in public. In the days of flaming seventies, Samar Sen did have the reminiscences of the time and reasserted that he never considered himself a 'revolutionary'. To feign a revolutionary was what he disliked the most. But the phraseological attack of Saroj Dutta against him branding a pseudo-revolutionary actually did hurt him the worst. Never could he shake it off from his mind. In the days of flaming seventies he again pleaded for his disliking considering himself a revolutionary at all.

Owing to his social and class-oriented limitations Samar Sen consciously distanced himself from being a Party-insider in the days of his youth and he maintained it till the far end of his life. He was a devout Marxist and as such took up his life at the shore of it, and unhesitatingly accepted poverty-struck life, strolled a long thorny way with almost no friends beside him. And in spite of such a laborious job he was averse to be called a revolutionary. Samar Sen and the Frontier

were generally considered the same and inseparable. He thought it was possible to run a 'revolutionary' journal like Frontier without being a 'revolutionary' himself. He openly confessed that he failed to get over the middle class prejudices and stood far from the madding crowd of the country. And herein lays his unquestionable honesty that he flagged high in the winds of the tower of life.

Twenty-four-paged Now under the editorial desk of Samar Sen first came into public on October 9, 1964 when he was 48 years old. In his first editorial of Now Samar Sen wrote he along with many felt badly a need of an 'independent analysis' which was found absent in the columns of widespread newspapers. And Now had to bat on this tough pitch. He wrote, "This weekly (Now) will not be committed to any party or dogma....Our commitment will be to certain principles, proclaimed in the Constitution and often in public speaking, but not always practiced... And socialism? It is still a far cry. For most people life is a harsh cold war with shooting prices and misery is still among the widest communally spread." Obviously Samar Sen in his late forties dared to start a new innings in the sphere of journalism of the people. Far from being committed to any political party Now, he soon became sharp critic of Congress and latter ardent supporter of left ideology which the owner of the paper could hardly approve. In the days of the flames of the spring thunder of Naxalbari peasant uprising Now earned, the fame of Naxalite which drove him away from the editorial desk of Now. And then came Frontier, first in public on April 14, 1968. Samar Sen started his independent fray of journalism just from where he had to leave Now. And as such now unlike 'Why Now' was found unseen in the start-up issue of Frontier.

Frontier first came out almost a year back of Naxalbari uprising. An almost 'Naxalite' Samar Sen was overall a leftist in the political arena of journalism but within a short interval he found out the true facet of the ruling left in power of West Bengal under the leadership of CPI(M). Not unsure of the role of CPI(M) in the sphere of ideological practice Samar Sen stooped to conquer his trust among the Naxalites branding them true revolutionaries. Again he invited enmity of his age-old friend and Naxalite leader Saroj Dutta for his open criticism of the misdoings of the Naxalites in the pages of Frontier. Some branded him Naxalite, some stamped him agent of CIA and some brandished him

as counter-revolutionary. Even some Naxalites called him enemy of the revolution! Samar Sen went through all these indifferently, calmly and went forward with his pen and Frontier to confront the state terror that witch hunted the young Naxalites both in jails and in open space in broad daylight.

Samar Sen was not politically aligned to Naxalism and at the same time he was more a Naxalite in empathy. He was well aware of the shortcomings of them and still was unwilling to publish harsh criticism in his Frontier of their misdoings when they were the helpless prey of the white terror of the state in the seventies of the century passed by. He wrote in his introductory column of 'Naxalbari And After—A Frontier Anthology' on June 16, 1978, "Though not a participant, Frontier became associated with the movement...Admittedly, the Naxalites raised more problems than they solved. But the very problems they raised and tried to solve in a hurry had never been raised with such force of sincerity before or after Telengana. This is their achievement...The Naxalite movement has been defeated, but not routed. A process of thinking is on." This was Samar Sen, so misunderstood, misapprehended even in the hot bed of his dear Naxalite's camps!

In an article on 'Role of Intelligentsia under the Emergency' Samar Sen wrote that almost two hundred intellectuals published an 'anti-fascist' statement much ahead of the mid-night of June 25, 1975 when emergency was declared. All these intellectuals discovered unparalleled anti-fascist quality in the facet of Indira Gandhi and kowtowed to her anti-people draconian measures in name of emergency! A great number of these intellectuals belonged to CPI. They found Indira siding with Moscow and as such she was 'anti-fascist'! What she did during the black days of emergency were called 'progressive' and the then anti-Indira movement was branded blatant right-wingers' job!

Horrid massacres, under the dark days of emergency, were committed inside and outside the jails of the country. Samar Sen hardly found out any such instance even in the days of the Raj. The Blue Eagle nailed the country having a gory experience all through that we witnessed in the regime of Indira Gandhi. But the afore-stated intellectuals hailed this chapter heartily! Samar Sen wanted to live more in order to witness the consequences of bragging of 'the cow and the calf' staged awkwardly on the scene. Under the state-

led terror Naxalites had to face dire consequences of their ideological war waged against the state. Corpses assembled inside the jails and in the open space in even broad daylight. Samar Sen kept his pledge to the newly born CPI (ML) and found their futility, division and helpless prey of state terror, got disheartened.

But this disheartenment didn't entice him thinking otherwise. Rather he, in an article published on August 24, 1977, argued bitterly about the possibility of constructing a new Bengal under the leadership of CPI (M), which exposed his complete disbelief with their art of politics. On December 28 (1977), Samar Sen wrote that it's nothing hard to stave the intelligentsia down to earth especially when going to bar reaches to an art of impossible. But he asked how many of them suffered this experience in those bloody black days of emergency? Sen denounced those who with their supportive stand to Indira-regime jeopardized their age-old colleagues. He knew it very well that these intellectuals would obviously change their allegiance with the changing regime; the old guards would be pets again under a newer order to come. Only the honest ones would be degenerated. And his inferences came true in the post 1977 period. The emergence of the 'left' intellectual in the post 1977 period tried to draw the sketch of a new firmament where no cloud of other hues assembled. And now at the behest of 'morality' a few of the said 'left' intellectuals have recharged their loyalty to Mamata Banerjee. History at times is jealous and never patron to loafers.

Within the periphery of socialistic concept in the fifties and sixties Samar Sen was upbeat to have the perfection of life and philosophy. And in the domain of the Naxalite upsurge he was over expectant of having more light onwards. While he was in Moscow in the late fifties he failed to hide his love for Stalin. But the downfall of moral ethics in Soviet Russia in the post-Stalin era agonised him bitterly. The great leap forwarded by Mao encouraged him further on to the shore to sail on. The anti-American war waged by Vietnam furthered his hope to the full swing. But latter he could not but be down to earth with the negative developments erupting both in China and Vietnam in the socio-political arena.

Again in India the collapse and pitiable decay of the spirit of Naxalite movement, assassination of his age-old friend Saroj Dutta, 'mysterious' death of Charu Majumder in the police custody, sharp difference

within the Naxalite ranks and the mass killings by the police and party goons befriended with state terror dejected him worse.

But despite being an urban intellectual of the middle class community Samar Sen reminded Karl Marx's teachings and dared initiating sharp criticism of the existing order keeping himself off from the consequences come what may. And thus his Frontier came to be on the fore. The rise of Naxalite movements got him upbeat with intellectual arms but its downfall failed to disarm him to find out the reality in light of Marxism. Never did he slip from his left ideological tower. But for his solemn sympathy with the Naxalite views he was not a less critical of their misdoings. And this he did valiantly. Away from the close touch of the communist party a middle class intellectual cannot but be a rubbish, he thought. And still he remained outside the party with the Marxist ideology as usable arms to fight out the state autocracy and repression.

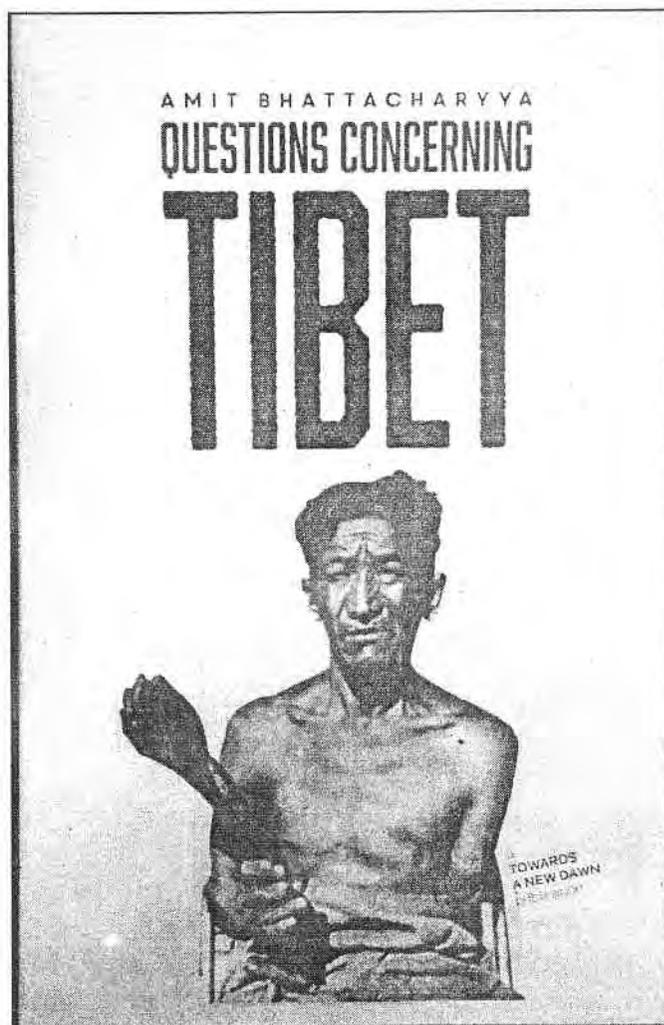
Never did he opt to bow down to hedonism. He earned only eighty rupees from his Frontier as monthly salary which was his only and all to meet the pecunier devil. He had almost nothing for his own pleasure. A full cigarette had to pieces for a thrice smoke. A second class monthly ticket was his passport to journey from his home to his Frontier office. He was satisfied enough to have his life running at the meagre income of the independent journalism of his rebel Frontier.

We may quote a few lines from Charles Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities to explain the ground and environment when Frontier was born: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only."

It was the ground of the then societal phenomena when Samar Sen felt to voice for the suffering people of the country. There was light and dark admixed, tough was the time, friends were far off. He came forward to unfurl the flag of valiance and to get it on in the wind afloat.

In the year 1964, he thought it wise enough to get out of the 'Hindustan Standard' in protest of anti-muslim tirade lodged by the authority. He could not avoid conflict with Humayun Kabir and had to leave 'Now'. And then he took up his arms with Frontier which now runs through the weal and woes of fifty years when Samar Sen is no more. And the fragrance of golden jubilee of Naxalite movement has not gone too far and at the same time November (October) revolution has completed its century last year. All these appear walking hand in hand onwards!

Bidding good bye to the idealist life, taking up all the risks of dark and tedious troubles all throughout, Samar Sen remained an uncompromising Marxist in both of his life style and ideology and trotted the way ahead in the sunny and rainy days and flagged high his dreams of tomorrow. Who but this man can be a revolutionary?



// COLLECT NOW//

Hindu Nationalism

Sidhartha Samtani

Nationalism and religious identity have served each other in precarious ways over the centuries. This is very apparent in the European context. Fascist regimes of Italy and Germany integrated Christian theology with white supremacy. On the other hand, liberal nationalists of the German imperial government fought against the Roman Catholic Church in a bid to establish the authority of the state in all matters of the public. This was famously known as "Kulturkampf" which resulted in passing of laws separating the church and the state. The evolution of nationalism and its link to majoritarian religious identity is quite different from that of Europe. But the colonial legacy somewhat continues to dominate in modern day developing nation-states, which require a closer look. Nationalism has been a convenient refuge for the state

power to establish itself during times of crisis. The tumultuous days after French Revolution which laid the foundation for the modern nation-state also saw the rise of nationalism. The armies of nation-states were no longer hired mercenaries but patriots brainwashed with jingoistic hysteria. The aggressive drive for colonisation reached new levels. On the other hand, history was distorted and moulded to prove that each nationstate was superior than others and even within each nation-state some races were considered inherently undesirable within the ideology of the nation-state. When the borders of competing colonial powers expanded coupled with economic crisis, conflict on a global scale was inevitable. The World Wars not only cost millions of lives and destruction of property but also showed the failure of the capitalist system which survived on colonial



expansion. Unable to sustain military occupation in Asia and Africa, some colonies of European powers were granted "independence." However, particularly in the Indian subcontinent, the British tacitly encouraged the growth of religious nationalism on the lines James Mill's historiographical divisions of India. The Hindutva variant of nationalism has been much influenced by the communal interpretation of James Mill in his book "History of British India." This in the long run sowed the seeds of divisive politics in the name of religion throughout the subcontinent and hampered the secular outlook of the anti British struggle. However, religion and nationalism are intricately related. Nationalism driven by majoritarian religious fanaticism is playing an influential role on a global scale in the contemporary world. To study the Hindu nationalism in Indian politics one must look into its gradual development over the decades starting from the colonial period.

SHAPING OF HINDU NATIONALISM AND ITS COLONIAL LEGACY

Hindu nationalism slowly started to raise its head during 1920s although its origins in the nascent form can be traced back to the nineteenth century. It developed as an ideology not only rejecting Gandhi's "non-violent" strategies against the British but also developing a parallel notion of India. To define the idea of nation in the Indian context radical Hindu groups, like their Muslim counterparts, sought refuge in the historical justification of dividing India's past into Hindu civilisation, Muslim civilisation and British civilisation as per Mill's interpretation. This periodisation of India's history received further patronage from Elliot and Dawson's eight volume "History of India as Told by its Own Historians" (1867-1877) where they cherry picked biased and incorrect translations of Persian texts to endorse the view that Muslims and Hindus in India have conflicting interests. The objective was to drive a wedge between Muslims and Hindus in the aftermath of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857. Later on, through the works of Vincent Smith this distorted form of historical analysis was made popular throughout the colonial era. This approach was taken up by Hindutva groups to view Muslims as "outsiders" to their concept of India. The Hindutva notion of Aryans being indigenous to the Indian subcontinent is also drawn from colonial Indology. This view was shared by members of Theosophical Society like

Colonel Olcott and Blavatsky who were of the opinion that Aryans originated and travelled westward from India to other parts of the world. Dayanand Saraswati, founder of Arya Samaj upheld this view. Although in 1875, Arya Samaj and Theosophical society merged and soon after split, the two organisations were always in agreement on the question of "Indigenous Aryans." These unsubstantiated erroneous claims were the foundation of the Hindutva version of establishing Aryan supremacy. This is akin to what was happening in the name of nationalism all across Europe. A German scholar, Gustaf Kossinna went to tremendous levels to prove that Aryans originated from Germany and drew arrows across maps to demonstrate the journey of Aryans to other parts of the world. It was not long before that Nazi armies also followed those arrows in an attempt to establish their Third Reich. Hindu leaders like Golwalkar also followed the same trend and went on asserting that North Pole was once located in Bihar-Orissa region in order to reconcile with Bal Gangadhar's claim that Aryan originated from North Pole. Under Sarvarkar's leadership the Hindu Mahasabha launched a massive drive to recruit youths for the British. According to Sarvarkar, it was a service to the cause of "Hindudom" and he concluded by commenting "Let Hindus measure their swords with the bravest races of the world." In 1937, after massive victory of the Congress in provincial elections, Hindu Mahasabha in a bid to claim prominence formed coalition governments with the Muslim League in Sindh and North West Frontier Provinces. On the other hand, RSS chief Golwalkar like Sarvarkar emphasized on creating a Hindu nation defined in terms of Hindu culture where upper caste hegemony should be maintained. This corroborated in his works where he referred to minorities as mlechhas (mlechhas in Hindu caste system are referred to as barbarians). In Golwalkar's view to define a nation, race was "by far the important ingredient of a nation." He openly supported Hitler's persecution of minorities and praised his genocidal policies as a "good lesson for us in Hindustan to learn and profit by." Given the historiography of Hindu nationalism, it is very evident that their ideology was based on a deliberate communal interpretation of Indian history, which was propagated by British colonisers. The idea of India as put forward by various Hindu Mahasabha and RSS leaders was also inspired fascist regimes of Italy and Germany of 1930s. One cannot deny the fact that Hindu communalism has influenced major trends of Indian nationalism. As

historian Sumit Sarkar correctly points out in his book *Writing Social History*, the tendency has remained strong to as-sume some kind of cultural or civilisational integration as the ultimate foundation of nationalism. And then it becomes di cult { even for a Nehru writing his *Discovery of India* { to resist the further slide towards assuming that unity, after all, has been primarily Hindu." This is rather a very important observation. One should not be misled to think that Hindutva is only con ned to organisations which overtly claim themselves to be ghting for a Hindu India. Congress leaders who claimed to uphold principles of liberal democracy and tenants of socialism failed to come of the communal and casteist aspirations. Although Congress started to distance itself from Hindu nationalism as incompatible with its idea of India from 1930s onwards it failed to come out of the communal shadow. There were incidences of Congress leaders calling for boycott against Muslims and promoting anti cow slaughter campaigns during 1930s which led to riots. In 1932, Gandhi launched an inde nite hunger strike in Yerwada jail in Pune, literally blackmailing Ambedkar into signing the Poona pact which annulled a separate electorate for the Dalits to choose their own representatives for state legislative assembly. Not only Gandhi's attitude towards political repre-sentation was problematic but he was also a staunch supporter of the caste system which plagued the Indian society for centuries. One of the main objectives of Harijan Sevak Sangh which was

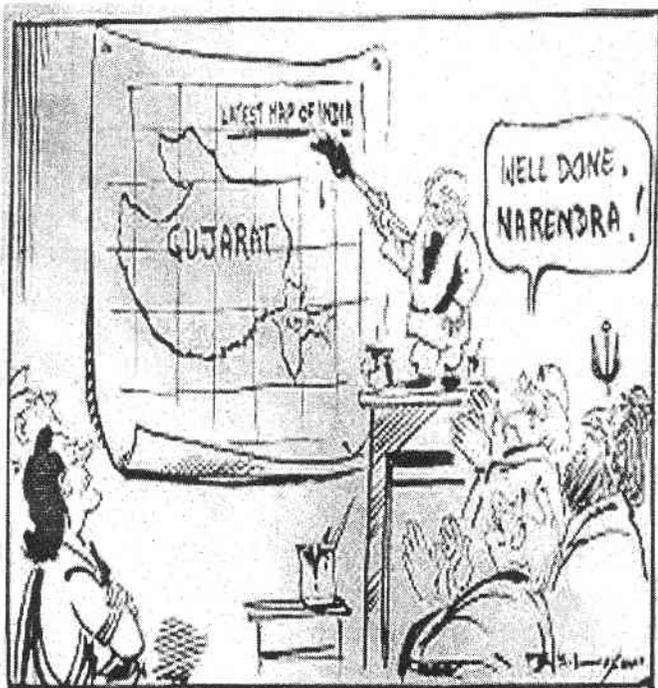
established in 1932, was to keep Dalits (untouchables) within the Hindu fold. One cannot help but notice the similarities between leaders of RSS and Gandhi when it came to addressing the situation of Dalits. Around the same timeduring 1930s both RSS and Congress started feeling the heat when the Dalits started raising their voice against caste based discrimination. The attitude towards the \untouchables" slowly started to change. One of the leaders of RSS, Keshav Baliram Hedgewar acknowledged the growing tension between upper caste Brahmins and the lower castes. RSS soon started declaring the need of \Hindu Brotherhood" to woo lower castes into its fold, although it is well known that the Hedgewar's successor Golwalkar considered the caste discrimi-nation as "indivisible part of nature". On similar lines Gandhi believed in "Varnashramadharma" where he argued that social classes/castes are determined by birth and one can later convert to other castes if that particular individual possesses the properties of the other caste. The whole intention of Harijan Sevak Sangh becomes clear when one comes across Gandhi's understanding of the Indian society, as propagated by him,

"I believe that if Hindu society has been able to stand, it is because it is founded on the Caste system. . . . A community which can create the Caste system must be said to possess unique power of organization. . . . To destroy the Caste system and adopt the Western European social system means that Hindus must give up the principle of hereditary occupation which is the soul of the Caste system. [The] hereditary principle is an eternal principle. To change it is to create disorder. . . . It will be a chaos if every day a Brahmin is to be changed into a Shudra and a Shudra is to be changed into a Brahmin. The Caste system is a natural order of society."

This becomes clear how Hindu nationalism started making inroads into Indian politics right from the colonial era. It was inspired by communal periodisation of Indian history by the British, reinforced by tenants of fascist movements in Europe and nurtured by upper castes into mainstream Indian politics.

THE RAPID EMERGENCE OF HINDUTVA IN 1980s

Hindu nationalism in its organised form started gaining momentum during the riots which took place all over the subcontinent during partition. Even those who spoke for peace and Hindu-Muslim unity became



Cartoon by R K Laxman, 2002

a quick target. This was evident in the assassination of Gandhi by Nathuram Godse, who viewed Gandhi as acting against the interests of Hindus. Even after independence, it was clear that both Congress and Hindu outfits were very uncomfortable with Ambedkar and his attempts to fight against caste discrimination. Soon after 1947 when Congress took over the reins it consolidated its casteist character which hindered the development of India into a secular state. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was repeatedly attacked for standing up for the rights of minorities. Vallabhbhai Patel even accused Ambedkar of dividing the country when he tried to pass an amendment for greater electoral rights of the Dalits. Ambedkar also faced mounting attacks from Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). On February 6, 1950 an article titled "Manu rules our hearts" was published denouncing Ambedkar's endorsement of the Constitution of India and suggesting that it should be replaced by Manusmriti. It is also well known that for the sake of maintaining national integrity some leaders of both Congress and Hindu Mahasabha wanted Ambedkar to resign from his post. Finally, Ambedkar resigned when the parliament stalled his draft of Hindu Code Bill, which he wanted to introduce in order to guarantee gender justice in laws of inheritance and marriage. Although a section of the Congress leaders wanted to counter Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's (RSS) influence, where Vallabhbhai Patel was instrumental in banning the organisation but continued to follow the same militaristic attitude upheld by the Hindu right.

Post 1947 it was evident that establishing upper caste hegemony was one of the top priorities of the ruling classes. Nothing can be more compelling than the event of Dr. Rajendra Prasad washing the feet of 201 Brahmins and drinking the water. It was a clear demonstration that the constitutional head of India had a lower status when it came to the status of the Brahmins. This has similarities to Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany of 1930's where every democratic institution of the state was undermined in order to establish the hegemony of majoritarian communalism under the command of the "Duce" or "Führer."

To trace the rise of Hindu fundamentalism in India, it is imperative to look into the economic condition that made it favourable to root itself in the society. In January 1944, leading industrialists J.R.D. Tata and G.D. Birla along with some others came up with the Bombay plan as a blueprint to modernise India. The plan was based

on Keynesian deficit spending models, where state intervention was sought in infrastructure and education. It was a Keynesian model which became popular in the 1940s where the state intervened to bailout the crisis-ridden economy. This hardly worked in favour of the impoverished masses and rather strengthened the Hindu right. It should be noted that the essence of such economic policies lies in the fact that capitalism should be managed appropriately and hence in the words of Mussolini, economics of John Maynard Keynes, served as a "useful introduction to fascist economics." In the Indian context, it did not work as efficiently as it did in Italy but definitely created a crisis which paved the way for the emergence of the Hindu fundamentalism. The economic crisis during the late 1960s deepened with slowing growth rates, rising deficits and external debts. The misery of the masses multiplied with the failure to implement land reforms and take action against feudal landlords and money lenders. These gave rise to popular unrest against the ruling classes. Having no options, Congress in order to survive electorally became more dependent on traders and big land owners who helped the state in crushing the upsurge. The Congress only extended support and addressed issues of the elite conservative sections of the Muslim community to maintain a steady flow of votes, neglecting voices of the oppressed sections of the community. The Naxalbari movement which served as a ray of hope of the oppressed masses was brutally crushed.

It is also well known that in the 70s Congress helped shape Shiv Sena which acted brutally against the Communists. The economic condition further worsened when public debts started rising in the late 1980s. Thus the failure of the economic model slowly was giving rise to an increasing authoritarian ruling class which was also creating fertile grounds for RSS and Sangh Parivar to enter and dominate Indian politics in the future. After brutally crushing the Naxalbari movement and peasant struggles all over India, a vacuum was created where the voices of the downtrodden weren't given any importance. This gave impetus to the Hindu right to enter the scenario and make their presence felt. Prior to 1980s the support of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jana Sangh was very limited. Given the social instability the Hindu identity politics functioned as a tool to divert anger on the minority community. The seeds of communal violence remain unabated even after Partition. The socio-economic crisis coupled with wars with China

and Pakistan quickly assumed a communal nature. Riots broke out all over India. There were communal incidents in Jabalpur where Congress leaders were involved, in 1962. Justice Madan Commission Report clearly stated the role of Shiv Sena's involvement in Bhivandi riots where 300 Muslims were killed. Similar reports by Justice P. Jagmohan Reddy Commission of Inquiry and Justice Vithayathil Commission of Inquiry concluded that active role was played by Hindu out ts in 1969 riots in Gujarat and 1971 riots in Tellicherry, respectively. These con icts served as an opportunity to Sangh parivar to spew the venom of communalism in order to gain in uence in 1980s. Instead of addressing the core issue of economic crisis, they remained con ned in attacking the Congress for corruption, nepotism and ine ciency. They carefully chalked out the idea of creating Hindu India. Deriving inspiration from fascist regimes in western Europe of 1930s they started their propaganda of the "Hindu revivalism." One of the major driving forces of Hindu nationalism post 1947 were centred around the building of temples which was based on their communal understanding of the history of India. Lots of e ort was put to drive the Ram temple movement and integrate it with Hindu identity. The Ram temple in Ayodhya was deliberately picked up to fuel anti-Muslim sentiments. After the anti-Sikh riots in 1984, a very suitable envi-ronment was created for the BJP and Sangh parivar to aggressively pursue its idea of Hindu India where minorities can be persecuted with impunity. But historically it is seen fascist regimes need to exploit the parliamentary system as well as maintain para-state organisations. As, German Marxist Rosenberg points out that the distinct feature of fascist forces are their storm-troopers, the basic instrument of para-state organisations, who are mostly recruited from the common masses. This is possible when the masses have lost total faith in the state and do not look up to them to solve their daily issues. Due to absence or incapability of revolutionary forces. Their main objective is to operate beyond the law of the state and justify atrocities as path to liberation. These para-state organisations, play a very powerful role in recruiting members from oppressed sections of the society and give them a sense of identity and e ctively diverting attention from the actual issues plaguing the society. This is exactly how "Blackshirts" of Mussolini and "Brownshirts" of Hitler went about. One can also draw parallels of how the parliamentary wing BJP and its para-state organisations work in building consensus amongst the common masses to establish their project

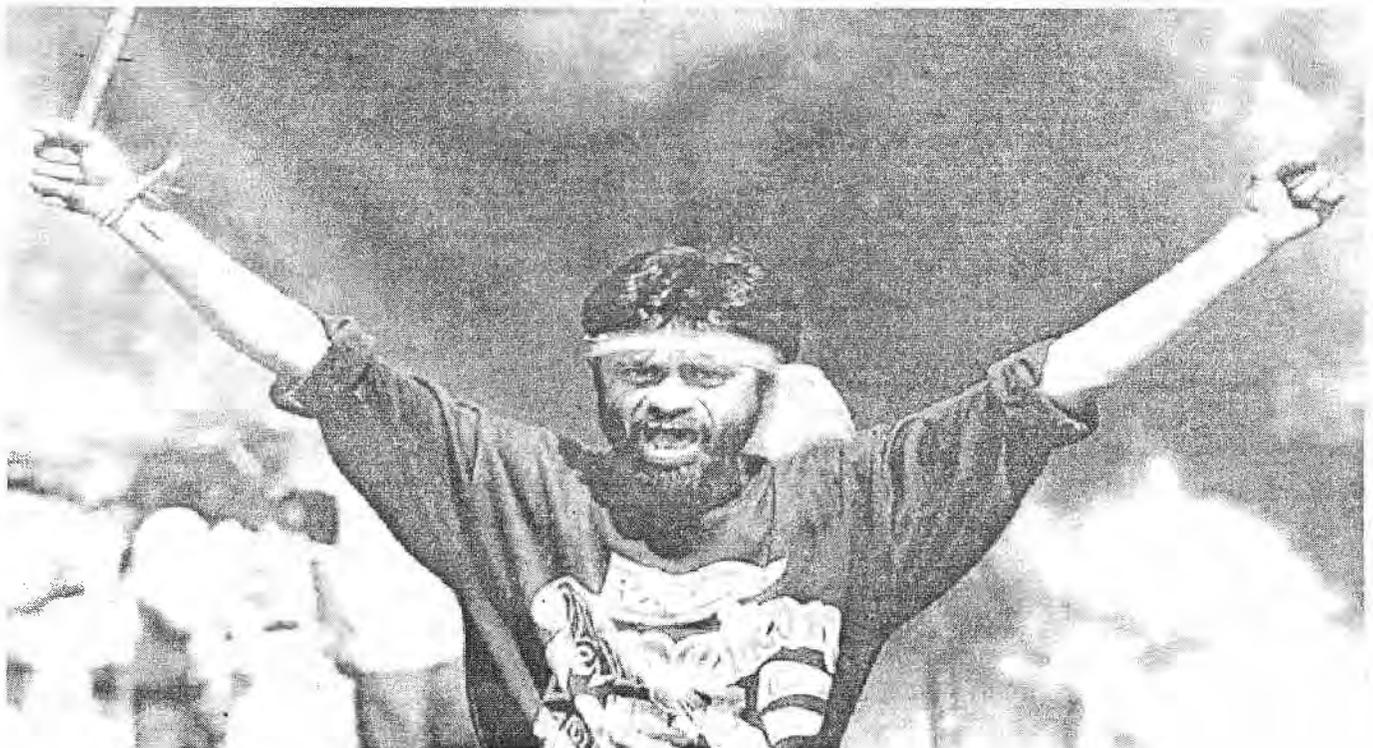
of Hindu India. Cow protection groups, mobs inciting riots and volunteers indoctrinating the general public through various forms of media are reminiscent of fascist methods of operation. Thus one can see how BJP and the Sangh Parivar e ciently used the economic crisis, the parliamntary escenario and para-state organisations to mobilise support for their brand of Hindu nationalism.

HINDUTVA IN NEOLIBERAL AVATAR

Although BJP and the Sangh Parivar started gaining prominence in Indian politics from 1980s, they still found it di cult to make their presence felt electorally. In 1989, BJP got only 2 seats in the Lok Sabha (Lower House of the Indian parliament) elections. Slowly, they progressively enhanced their communal campaign around the Ram temple issue, which culminated in the destruction of Babri Masjid and led to riots all over India in 1992. But it was not enough. One needs to look at the international situation to understand the exponential rise of Hindu nationalism. \Neoliberal order" was starting to gain prominence on a global scale. To tackle the increasing public debts, which resulted in sharp decline of exports. This paved the way for the Indian government to approach international nancial institutions like Internal Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. IMF o ered loan to India in 1991, and in return asked the Indian government to make adjustments to its economy, in accoardance to neoliberal policy. The rest step was to lower tax rates on capital and open the doors of Indian economy to imports. For the rst decade from 1991 to 2001 GDP grew at 5:7% annually. This growth is however very misleading. If one looks closesly ta the data it is easy to observe that the nancial services sector grew at 11:5%, while agricultural and manufacturing sector grew at 2:3% and 4:5% respectively. This included nearly 80% of India's workforce. It is thus safe to say that neoliberal reforms were only useful to further the interests of nance capital, as it bypassed the interests of the working classes. To understand the workings of neoliberalism in the Indian context, one must understand the theory of neoliberal economy and its gradual development. The word "Neoliberalism" was rst used by Alexander Rustow at the Colloque Walter Lippmann in 1938. The concept of neoliberalism was de ned as "the priority of the price mechanism, free enterprise, the system of competition, and a strong and impartial state" although there were di ference in opinions among the neoliberals as to the extent of state intervention in the economy.

In 1950s and 1960s neoliberalism was dubbed as social market economy by most scholars. The economic theory of neoliberalism mostly remained confined within academic circles until 1970s. Neoliberalism was preceded by "Embedded Liberalism" which was seen as a class compromise designed to prevent a return to the disastrous conditions of 1930s that threatened the whole capitalist structure. Embedded Liberalism was structured to support free trade where the state can intervene in order to maintain welfare and reduce unemployment. But in the late 1960s embedded liberalism started to fall apart. Thus the fertile ground was made to put neoliberal theory into practice. The first instance where neoliberalism was put to test was in Chile under the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet who came to power in a successful CIA backed coup. In 1970s neoliberalism was seen a political economic theory designed to promote individual entrepreneurial freedom and skill within an institution which will guarantee strong private property rights, free market and free trade. Frederick Von Hayek one of the major proponents of theory, considered individual freedom to be one of the indispensable central values of human civilization. Ironically, neoliberalism which proposes that individual freedom is protected by the freedom of market and trade, was first experimented under the military dictatorship of Pinochet under whose rule hundreds of students, artists and intellectuals were persecuted and killed. Wherever neoliberal policies

were implemented it was marked by deregulation and curbing of workers rights which was inevitable. Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher all followed the same suite. But in the Indian context it ran into obstacles. Most of the policies as desired by global capital was limited to financial sector for nearly a decade in most parts of India. The agricultural sector and manufacturing sector, except for a few parts of India was left largely untouched. But these sectors comprised the majority workforce. This practically reflects the weakness of Indian capitalism." This sector also represented a lucrative ground to exploit cheap labour. As Marxist economist correctly put that one of the major ways of neoliberalism to progress is, accumulation by dispossession. Private capital was allowed to infiltrate in mining sector, natural resources were privatised and Special Economic Zone's (SEZ) where labour laws were diluted, were established. These required passing of laws which would make it easy to hand over public resources to big corporations. This directly affected tribals living in forested regions, the working class and to a certain extent small traders. To achieve this an authoritarian state becomes a valuable ally. This is where the Hindu right wing comes of use to free market economy. It becomes the most trusted ally. But this alliance is not without hiccups. The Hindu right has shaped its ideology which was inspired by fascist movements in western Europe. Historically speaking, fascists have always supported state



intervention to regulate market economy and hence that was the reason why Mussolini was attracted to Keynesian economics which he referred to as an "useful introduction to fascist economics". If one is familiar with politics of RSS, it always favoured protection from international market with liberalisation of internal trade. This was a bitter pill to swallow. Even now RSS has been vocal against Modi governments' attempt to introduce Foreign Direct Investment in certain sectors of economy. In the Indian context no major political party has made neoliberalism as a part of their ideology, especially. Although all right wing parties receive funds from private players, during election campaign they have always called for more public expenditure and promised to address the issues of peasants and working class. During 2007 Gujarat elections where Modi won a huge victory, the electoral campaign which was funded by big capital, was all about creating a better environment for big businesses where little thought was given to the benefits of the farmers and the working class. The smooth growth of Sangh parivar prevented any opposition voice to take control of a counter narrative. Thus, which was on the cards for a long time, finally got materialised.

Now the parliamentary wing of the Hindu right BJP can be seen as an efficient negotiator between the Sangh parivar and free market economy. It is not at all difficult to see why in 2014 elections corporate media was behind Modi who rode the wave of Gujarat model and Hindutva to win the elections and become the Prime Minister of the country. One of the central demands during 2014 elections was good governance. Every political party promised to provide a better governance and promised better days (Acche Din) for the common masses. The corporations which invested millions for the propaganda of different political parties wanted a "strong governance" which will provide security for their investments. Their investment paid off very well. The Coal Ordinance, Insurance Ordinance and Land Acquisition (Amendment) Ordinance was passed without much opposition facilitating corporate loot and ensuring their unabated profit. The justification for developing a strong government to deal with socio-economic crises has been the backbone of electoral campaign of various right wing political parties around the world in the recent past. In order to carry out such a project it is required to infuse jingoistic hysteria among the general populace. Thus Hindu nationalism which was incubated for a long time finally made its dominance

in India politics through a very well-planned blueprint mixing Hindu nationalism with free market economy.

CONCLUSION

The marriage of free market fundamentalism and an authoritarian state has catastrophic effects culminating into increasing communal unrest and suppression of democratic rights of citizens all over India. It won't and doesn't destroy remnant feudalism and is incapable of developing the social structure. What we are witnessing here is not sudden but an obvious outcome of the policies followed by the Indian state, irrespective of any parliamentary political parties which has assumed power regionally or nationally. All these attempts to find a solution within the capitalist world economy are proving to be futile. One must note that fascists have always come to power through the support of the masses and it is not because they address "emotional" or "historical identity" issues. There are objective economic conditions which make it favourable for fascism to gain popular support among the masses. Perhaps, one should also see the growth of Hindu nationalism as the weakness of revolutionary forces to make their presence felt. Both the major ruling class parties Congress and BJP are trying their best to uphold Hindutva ideology in various forms. The democratic rights won so far by the masses through intense struggle with the state are slowly being diluted. In Gramsci's language neoliberalism was an ideology without an organisation, but now it is no longer the situation and it has made alliance with Hindu right to establish a hegemony. But one must know hegemony is neither spontaneous nor automatic. It always requires a totalitarian party. In the contemporary Indian context, it has aligned with Hindu nationalist forces but it can very well adjust itself to any party that can be easily moulded in its favour and establish itself in a totalitarian form. Thus, one must be careful that Hindutva or Hindu fascism does not only exist with organisations which openly claim themselves to be working to achieve their goal of Hindu, it is a very handy concept to exploit for electoral gains. So the fight is two fold, on one hand identifying and challenging majoritarian communalism in every form and the other is to build movements to prevent neoliberalism from impoverishing the nation and serving the elite of the society. For such movements to consolidate it is necessary for all democratic organisations, individuals and intellectuals to come together and stay united in this struggle.



Chittoprasad, 1941

Women's Liberation - **class** Struggle - **Naxalbari** Path

B. Anuradha

In the history of struggles against feudalism and imperialist domination, the Naxalbari struggle is a historical turning point. In the context of the 50th anniversary of the Naxalbari struggle, if one examines history, one can understand the extent of its impact on various social aspects. Revolutionary greetings to Virasam, that is making such an attempt!

The revolutionary movement alone provided great hope to women in India. This point was proven repeatedly during the Telangana, Tebhaga and Birbhum movements. From the time the Communist Party of India was formed in 1925, it faced many ups and downs. Until the Naxalbari struggle burst upon the scene in 1967, there was no clarity on the path the Indian revolutionary movement is to follow. Bringing down the curtain on various doubts, Naxalbari placed a clear path of struggle in front of the people. Under the leadership of Com CharuMajumdar, the revolutionary movement adopted the path of protracted armed struggle and started its

program of action. In March 1967, land struggles burst forth with the slogan "Onward with armed revolutionary path". The exploited people participated bravely in these struggles with their traditional weapons and the participation of women sharpened the struggles. In order to suppress the struggles that have become fierce by the end of May, the then CPI(M) Government deployed the Police in large numbers. They started arresting the leaders and imposed section 144. They also attacked a group of farmers discussing about ways to deal with the situation. The people resisted the police attack with bows and arrows. In that context, a policeman named Sonam Wangde died due to an arrow shot by a woman. The next day, i.e. on May 25th, when the police opened indiscriminate fire on the people who gathered in large numbers under a big banyan tree in Prasadote village in order to review the situation, 11 people died. Among the 11, there were 8 women, 1 young man and 2 children. The dead are: 1. Dhanesvari Devi, 2. Sonmati Singha, 3. Phoolmati Singha, 4. Surubala Barman, 5. Nayanesvari Mallick, 6. Nayanesvari's six month old daughter, 7. Samsari Saibani, 8. Gaudrav Saibani, 9. Gaudrav's daughter, 10. Seemasvari Mallick, 11. Kharasingh Mallick.

The revolutionary movement that started thus with women's sacrifices, recognized the importance of women's participation and raised the slogan "revolution without women will not succeed". The primary intention of this paper is to provide an outline of the ideological understanding and practice of the revolutionary movement to accomplish women's participation.

PART I: WOMEN'S LIBERATION, MARXIST PERSPECTIVE

Though the women in United Communist Party made an effort to fight patriarchy, the party itself lacked the correct perspective on the problem of patriarchy. Subsequently, when the party became revisionist, the political struggle against patriarchy retreated further. The same thing repeated in the CPI(M) party. After the formation of CPI(ML) in 1969, even though the party tried actively to make women a part of the revolutionary movement, it did not have a correct understanding of patriarchy which is crucial to women's liberation. In the past five decades, in its effort to overcome revisionist tendencies and many other incorrect perceptions, the revolutionary movement reviewed many aspects and came to a clear understanding on the nationalities

question and women's question. The revolutionary movement summarized the revisionist parties' thought process on women's question as follows -

"The revisionists, while upholding the Marxist view that women's oppression emerged with class society, understand this in a mechanical way. According to them, patriarchy operates in the superstructure - in the realm of ideology, religion, culture, traditions, customs, law, family etc. - as a reflection of the exploitative class basis of society. Hence, one cannot think of fighting patriarchy as long as the economic basis is not radically transformed. Once the economic basis is changed, and a socialist economic basis is brought about, patriarchy will also disappear."

As a consequence, "the fight against patriarchy is postponed to an unknown future, nay, it is totally abandoned since revolution will change the economic basis and the entire superstructural edifice built on that base. Hence, in effect, class struggle and the struggle for women's emancipation did not get interconnected in practice."

They also commented on how the principles being enunciated by some feminists are incorrect - "some feminists are locating the roots of patriarchy in the family. By looking at the problem in this way they are overlooking the fact that the family is itself based on certain economic and social processes - it is based on the very economic structure of society. It changes as the structure changes. By not giving due importance to the relation of the family to the wider economic-political structure they are also limiting their struggle to the realm of the superstructure."

The anti-liquor struggle that shook the united Andhra Pradesh in 1992 can be shown as an example of how the feminists' understanding reflects in their practice. In determining the targets of the fight against liquor, while the Marxists aimed at the State and its machinery, the feminists proposed that the fight should be against "husbands who get drunk and beat their wives".

The revolutionaries, who fought an uncompromising battle against revisionism and established a clear understanding of the revolutionary path in India, declared their clear perspective on women's liberation. In 1995, the CPI(ML) People's War Party made the first attempt to formalize this understanding in the form of a document. They subsequently refined their understanding further - once in 1998 when they merged

with CPI(ML) Party Unity, and then again in 2007 after the second Congress of the combined Maoist party, that was formed with the merger of People's War and MCCI. They declared that the ideological base needed for providing correct direction to women's movement in India is Marxism, Leninism and Maoism. In their document, they defined patriarchy as follows – "Patriarchy is not just a superstructural phenomenon that can be eliminated with the elimination of the economic basis i.e., the exploitative class relations that constitute the base of any mode of production. Patriarchal relations are also economic relations. Relations of patriarchy mean relations of subordination of women to men and to the exploiting classes, not only politically and culturally but also economically and socially."

"Patriarchy, by denying women ownership rights over the means of production, provides the material basis for their exploitation. Patriarchy determines the fundamental relations of women to the means of production. The denial of the right of ownership and control over the chief means of production to women had determined women's place in society right from the time of the slave-owning society in the West and the Shudra-holding system in India i.e., ever since the period of emergence of classes. Whereas under feudalism this right to property is openly denied to women as inscribed in the reactionary Manusmriti and other literature of the feudal period, capitalism does it more subtly, in more sophisticated ways."

In explaining the path for women's liberation, they state "To sum up, actual ownership or control over the means of production; participation in social production on an equal footing with men and abolition of division of labour along gender lines; and releasing women from domestic drudgery and transforming domestic work into the public domain with men partaking in the domestic work on an equal basis – only these changes in the base will bring about the genuine liberation of women from patriarchy".

In the Indian context, the oppression faced by women has to be seen in the framework of the nature of Indian society.

"After the withdrawal of the British in 1947, India became a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society under the rule of the big landlords and comprador bureaucratic bourgeoisie. With the aid of imperialism they oppress the working class, peasantry, petty bourgeoisie and

national bourgeoisie."

"Even while feudalism remains the predominant social relation, capitalist relations have also spread and the two coexist. Hence in India, both the feudal as well as the capitalist varieties of patriarchy are visible. However they do not exist as separate entities. Just like other aspects of the semi-feudal, semi-colonial structure, patriarchy exists in a combined form. It is with the help of this form of patriarchy that the landlords, compradors and imperialists oppress India's women. But due to the uneven development of Indian society, patriarchal oppression has its specificities among the different classes, castes and tribes; its manifestations also vary in the big cities, in the towns and in the vast rural areas. While in the big cities and to an extent in towns, influence of capitalist-imperialist patriarchy is greater, in the villages feudal patriarchal norms dominate more. Therefore in India the concrete struggle against patriarchy requires that semi-feudal, semi-colonial structure be overthrown and a new democratic society be set up in its place. The struggle for women's liberation from patriarchy should be carried on with anti-imperialist, anti-feudal people's war as its goal. The struggle for New Democratic Revolution (NDR) opens new vistas for women's emancipation from patriarchy and the struggle against patriarchy energizes the NDR. There is a continuous and lively dialectical relationship between the two. One cannot be conceived without the other. The NDR, harbinger of liberation for the Indian masses, is the sure road to women's emancipation. Subsequently, the NDR should be taken forward towards socialism and communism".

It is necessary to understand these things. When people deal with women's issues in practice, they understand those as per their perspective. For example, a Dalit female student in University of Hyderabad committed suicide when an upper caste male student, who promised to marry her, cheated her. In that context, when various women's and people's organizations held discussions to form a joint action committee, an activist from a women's organization said "since ours is a capitalist country, this is not a caste issue, it is a class issue". This understanding leads us to take a completely different stance on where and who our fight should be aimed at. Similarly, if we don't correctly understand the nature of the State, we cannot aim our fight in the correct direction. For example, when the Jharkhand state government banned Nari Mukti Sangh - a women's organization - that was a part of "The Committee Against Violence

on Women', some organizations in the committee proposed that Nari Mukti Sangh should not be allowed to be part of the committee. The organizations aiming at New Democratic Revolution disagreed with that. At that time, an activist from an Anarchist organization seconded them and said that it is not correct to accept all the actions of the State and argued that instead, we should be questioning the ban itself.

These two situations indicate how important it is for any movement, including that of women, to correctly analyze the society and to correctly identify its friends and foes.

PART 2: WOMEN'S LIBERATION-REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT'S PRAXIS - AN EXAMINATION IDEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH DEMOCRATIC METHODS

The People's War Party released a circular in 1995 which stated "Let us improve the role of women in the party's political, organizational and military fields. Let us build a strong revolutionary women's movement". From the contents of the circular, we can see how the party made women participants in the effort to formulate the party's perspective regarding women's liberation.

The party's first special women's meeting took place



Panchadi Nirmala, Srikakulam.
First women Martyr Of Naxalbari Movement
22.12.1969.

from 5th to 15th August 1994. Women's representatives from United Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Dandakaranya attended this meeting. The Central Organizing Committee presented the document "Our party's attitude towards building revolutionary women's movement" for the first time in that meeting. They stated that "the ideological understanding of women's representatives improved in the context of this meeting" and also that the valuable experiences and opinions shared by the representatives are such that they contribute to realizing the aims specified in the document. They said that the circular is an appraisal of the summary of that meeting.

In the circular, they stated that they failed to recognize the importance of establishing women's organizations till 1982. Even after recognizing it, it took some more time to bring it into practice due to spontaneity, which is why they could not obtain good results anywhere except in Dandakaranya. They formulated some guidelines to build women's movements in Andhra, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa where the revolutionary movement is already present. They gave a call to build, not a single unified organization, but multiple open and secret women's organizations depending upon the opportunity in each place. They also added suggestions necessary to build urban women's movement to the document.

Further, they made the following additional suggestions - that necessary changes have to be made in "Party program" and other such important party documents; that the understanding of women's question should be recognized as an important aspect and added to the manifestos of people's organizations; that women comrades in guerilla squads should be given the responsibility to build women's organizations in villages for which they are to be separated from their squads and sent to villages where they are to be provided adequate protection.

They stated that in 1995, at the time of writing the above circular, there are a total of 23% women in the party's organizational, military and technical fields put together. They suggested that the party should correct its mistakes in understanding and practice with respect to women's question while moving forward; that building a women's movement should not be confined to only women but should instead be viewed as related to the entire party. They suggested that special women's meetings should be conducted at district and state levels once in two

years and they can be stopped after two such meetings since it is only a temporary requirement. The primary purpose of these meetings is to discuss and understand the problems being faced by women comrades and formulate a program to address them.

PERSPECTIVE ON WOMEN'S LIBERATION - EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS

After the publication of the document "Women's liberation - Marxist Perspective" in 1995, this document was used not only to educate the cadre all over the country but it was also disseminated among the people living in movement areas. For example, in 1996-97, women comrades conducted meetings with women in the villages of North Telangana districts (Warangal, Khammam, Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Adilabad) to take classes on different aspects contained in the document. For this, the various aspects in the document were split into smaller pieces and each was assigned to a different comrade. They called these meetings "seminars". Subsequent to each seminar, they also took up a program of action to defy a patriarchal custom that is local to that area. In some Adivasi areas, women are not allowed to eat eggs because there is a superstition that women who eat eggs cannot conceive children. In such areas, the comrades distributed boiled eggs to the women. In another area where married women are prohibited from wearing blouses, they distributed blouses to them after the seminar. Women leaders who were then in leadership role at the district level - NyalakondaRajitha, YellankiAruna, JNM Padma, Motibai and others - led these seminars and subsequent actions. Among these, the first three have become martyrs. It was during the successful conduct of these seminars that Comrade NyalakondaRajitha got injured in the enemy's ambush and escaped.

SPECIALIZATION ON WOMEN'S ISSUE

The party passed a resolution in 1995 to assign responsibilities to some people at state and central levels in order to do a focused, special study of women's issues, and to codify their experiences and present them to the party. The Andhra Pradesh State committee went further and established a Women's sub-committee. The women comrades in that were assigned various responsibilities such as - to study women's problems and provide guidance and suggestions to the party on a regular basis; provide guidance to women's

organizations; conduct classes for women on the party's perspective on women and other political matters; publish literature on women's issues etc. After looking at the results of AP's experience, such sub-committees were established in several other states. Subsequently, they formed a national level Women's sub-committee too. In a statement made by the party at the time of Central Committee member Com AnuradhaGhandy's death, they mentioned that she was the Secretary of the national Women's sub-committee. They also stated that under her leadership the committee was involved in the study of 'status of women in the party'.

SPECIAL ATTENTION TO WOMEN'S HEALTH

In general, women in our country are physically weak. That is not surprising since women in our country face discrimination right from childhood. The party is doing good work in this respect. To prevent anaemia among women members, they provide special food such as groundnut, jaggery, boiled eggs etc. Though it is not possible to do this under repression, the party is trying to provide these whenever possible. Conducting classes on hygiene to women, providing them with clean clothes during menstruation, giving extra Dettol and detergent soaps are some of the facilities that are made part of the daily life of the squads. In case women comrades decide not to have children, the party helps them understand how much their health is likely to be impacted due to abortions and encourages them to undergo operations to prevent unwanted pregnancies. It also educates the men scientifically so that it has become a general practice for them to undergo family planning operations. The party educated its members on how women may be in a great deal of discomfort during the menstrual cycle and asked them to be understanding of the situation. It also educated the women to discuss their health related issues openly with their commanders. This is so that they take it into consideration when assigning them weights or while doing exercises.

WOMEN IN CLASS STRUGGLE

The role of women in movements subsequent to Naxalbari grew along with the movements. It retreated whenever and wherever the movement went into retreat. Though the ML party was formed in 1969, it was under severe repression by 1972 with the leadership being either arrested or killed. At the same time, the movement was badly damaged by the conflicting

viewpoints within the party about the correct line to be followed. It was only from 1980 that the ML and MCCI streams of the movement started working as different parties in different regions till they merged in 2004. Even if we look at the broad picture of the revolutionary movement's praxis in the Andhra – Orissa border area, Telangana, Dandakaranya, Bihar and Jharkhand where it is strong, we can easily understand the basis for increased participation of women. Even though the movement is present in many other areas besides these, they are not being covered in this paper. This paper is an attempt to present a bird's eye view of the role of women, and the impact of revolutionary movement on women in a few select places. From 1980, a number of women's organizations have been working in urban areas. Some of them even work with New Democratic Revolution as their goal. However, those are not being discussed in the paper.

WOMEN IN ANDHRA - ORISSA BORDER AREA MOVEMENT

East Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Vijayanagaram and Srikakulam districts that were under the erstwhile Andhra State Committee, together with Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagadh, Gajapati and Ganjam districts of Orissa form the current Andhra – Orissa Border (AOB) Area.

Some tribal associations were working in Srikakulam district from 1958 itself. So, the basis for armed struggle

was already present there. Srikakulam struggle started as an echo of the Naxalbari struggle. On October 31, 1967 when 400 Adivasi women from Gumma village, dressed in red sarees, carrying red flags and singing revolutionary songs, were going to Mondenkhal to attend an Adivasi meeting, they were attacked at Levidi by a landlord's goons. Two Adivasis Koranna and Manganna died in the firing by the landlord. Women participated in large numbers in the guerilla war that started in November 1968. Women like Panchadi Nirmala led the guerilla squads and participated in the armed struggle. Even ordinary women participated in large numbers and confronted the police with brooms and wooden pestles. A total of 25 women died in the Srikakulam struggle.

The Srikakulam struggle was primarily an Adivasi struggle. Women's participation in it started after it became an armed struggle. The adivasis who lost the right to shifting cultivation and had to work as bonded labourers jumped into the movement. The forcible occupation of Adivasi lands by non-tribal landlords and money lenders, the usurpation of their property through high interest rates by traders who loaned salt and kerosene to them, and harassment by forest officials – all these pushed the adivasis into the struggle. Savara and Jatapu are the chief tribes in the Agency area. Women in these tribes participate in agricultural and other work equally with men while simultaneously doing their household work too. Bride price is prevalent in marriages there, there is polygamy too. The women who participated in all productive activities equally,



joined the movement along with men to fight against the exploitation by Forest officials and traders.

The women participated in many land struggles between 1991 and 94 due to which they developed politically and culturally. The women who would run away from their villages into the nearby hills whenever they saw white-collared officers are now able to question them without fear. The women belonging to Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari districts are actively participating in the armed movement of the AOB area thus continuing the legacy of Srikakulam movement. Many women sacrificed their lives in the movement in the past five decades. Adivasi women belonging to Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, people from plains areas and students continue to join the revolutionary movement. The participation of women helped democratize the relations between men and women in the movement. Recently, when an Adivasi woman comrade was interviewed by a researcher, she said that she was attracted to the movement by the equality she saw between men and women in the squads that visited their village and the freedom they enjoyed to marry a person of their choice. She said she came into the movement to escape a forced marriage. Even after coming into the movement, she did not get married till she understood the political aspects well. She said she wanted to marry the person that she liked only if she is confident that he has the commitment to continue in the movement. For this reason, she did not consider marriage till she worked for 4 years in the movement. She also mentioned that she got educated only after joining the party. When she was asked why they cannot try to bring about a change in society through parliamentary democracy, she countered it by giving the example of Nepal. She was categorical that armed revolution is the correct path. From this we can understand the political maturity and participation of women in the movement. These women are proof of the successful implementation of the party's belief that societal change is possible only with the participation of women.

WOMEN IN TELENGANA MOVEMENT

After the movement was temporarily defeated in Naxalbari and Srikakulam, it learnt its lessons from the defeat and started again in 1978 in Jagityalof North Telangana. It started as a heroic fight against the landlords in Karimnagar and Adilabad and spread to other districts within a short time. Since women were

subject to feudal exploitation along with patriarchal exploitation, they started taking part in the class struggles. Telangana also had the legacy of women who fought in the Telangana armed peasant struggle against the Nizam, and that legacy continued into the North Telangana movement. With the entry of paramilitary forces, the anti-feudal movement turned into a movement against the State.

Since 80% of women living in the Telangana villages belonged to the oppressed sections and they took part in agricultural production, every demand put forth and every struggle taken up by the movement reflected the problems faced by women. Struggles related to picking of beedi leaves and rolling of beedis were both primarily concerned with women since they were the most involved in both activities.

After the movement faced severe repression in 1977-78, it gathered momentum again in 80s. On 20th April, 1981, when the adivasis were going in large numbers to Indravelli to attend an Adivasi peasant meeting, the police were deployed in large numbers to prevent that meeting from happening. When the police resorted to indiscriminate lathi charge wounding even women and children, the adivasis resisted them. When the police started firing in response, a woman named Bhimbai from Pittabangara village boldly killed a policeman with a small knife. She was wounded in the police firing and subsequently she was arrested and spent two years in a jail. Among the hundreds arrested in the Indravelli incident, about one third of them were women.

Occupation of land was a very important part of North Telangana movement. About 80% of women in rural areas of Telangana were involved as hired labour in agricultural production. But, there was no value to women's labour since women were not paid adequately for their labour, even their meagre earnings were taken away from them by men, and they had no ownership over the tools of production. Even though women participated equally with men in all production activities and were thus part of social production, their labour was not given the due recognition, value and status on the pretext of gender based division of labour and disparity in women's usage of tools of production. Every time modernization techniques or higher technical skills were introduced in the methods of agricultural production, women were being pushed further away from labour. At the same time, their work load kept increasing.

Against this background, from June 1990 to September 1991, a campaign for occupation of land took place in entire North Telangana. As per information contained in a report, people occupied 89615 acres of land in Karimnagar, Warangal, Nizamabad and Adilabad districts under the leadership of the revolutionary movement. Of this, they occupied 45000 acres in Warangal district alone. In some villages, people continued cultivating these lands even under repression. While giving pattas to the occupied lands, the party gave them equally to both men and women. Because of these developments, class composition changed in some villages.

In the 90s, a lot of women from Telangana got recruited into the squads. In 1997, when the first separate women's meeting was conducted, 42 women who were at different leadership levels attended that meet. They ranged from being area committee leaders to district committee leaders. Another 40 women took care of the security of the camp. Shortly thereafter, Com NyalakondaRajitha became a State Committee member. Women led squads and platoons in several places. Even separate women's action teams were functional for some time. A special 45 foot column was erected in memory of women comrades who were martyred in the Manala encounter in Nizamabad in 1997. Women comrades from Telangana are now in leadership positions in other states too.

WOMEN IN BIHAR - JHARKHAND AREA MOVEMENT

In Bihar's villages, landlords used to have the right of "first night" with women. People suffered from this cruelty especially in Bhojpur till the onset of Naxalbari movement. The Naxalbari movement started resisting the Bhojpur landlords with weapons. The leaders could declare that "the landlords will never again dare lay a hand on poor women; this is the great victory of our movement". The Bihar movement faced two strong challenges. For a long time, class and caste were congruent in Bihar. To fight caste was the same as fighting class. The second challenge for the movement was the caste-based, private armed militias of the feudal landlords. During the initial days, the fight against the State meant primarily fight against these private armies, not the Police. In 1971, the Party even established the "Red Army" for "annihilation of the class enemy". As part of that program, 100 landlords were eliminated between 1971 and 1977 and 39 party members became martyrs.

Women were attracted to the peasant organizations due to the struggles taken up by the CPI(ML) Party Unity in 80s for social dignity and better wages and against criminals and bandits. From 1980 to 90, women participated very militantly in the activities of peasant organizations. Women fought especially bravely whenever their activists were arrested, and got them released. When some of the activists were arrested in Jehanabad, they attacked the Police with stones and agricultural implements and freed the activists. Struggles such as land occupation, crop harvesting, strikes for better wages, attacks on landlords' houses, gherao of police stations etc. were carried out militantly with women's participation. Women would participate in processions and meetings armed with sickles. Women participated in the action to destroy a landlord's office in Anandgarh. When the police came to Karpi to break up the protest for better wages, they resisted the police with traditional weapons. They snatched the guns from the hands of the Police who were preventing them from gathering mahua flowers in Panki of Palamu district. In yet another incident, they gheraoed a police jeep and tied the arms and legs of the DSP. In the police firing on a public meeting in Arwal, some women died and a lot of women were injured.

Even though women activists were moving around with squads of Party Unity, they did not become part of the squads till 1990. They became members of the squads after 1990 and women's organizations were also formed around the same time. Though the number of women in the armed struggle in Bihar is relatively less, there were women in the squads and some of them even occupied leadership positions. Dalits and women are severely suppressed due to the severe feudal oppression in Bihar. Because of this, people from oppressed castes and classes joined the squads. Since they are subject to a lot of humiliation in the society, certain measures were taken to ensure them complete respect within the party. One such measure is the way they are addressed. When addressing each other in squads or mass organizations, they are expected to use 'ji', that indicates respect, at the end of a name. This way of addressing is applicable to men, women and even children. This form of addressing - 'ji' - became so much a part of their names that they were referred to as such in villages, in newspaper reports, in police cases, and even in the court hearings. In a place like Bihar, which did not see any reform movements, being given this sort of respect is a very important thing for women and Dalits. In certain places in Bihar, the

landlords would not allow the Dalits to vote. In such places, the party stood in support of the Dalits' right to vote even though it gave a call to boycott elections.

In Jharkhand, women participated in the armed struggle in larger numbers compared to Bihar. An all women platoon was established in 2006-07 in Jharkhand. This platoon proved that women can also work competently and independently. After the platoon worked for a year, the party reconstructed it into a mixed platoon with a woman commander. Com Urmila Ganju, who has been martyred recently, was a State Committee member of Jharkhand and she was a Dalit. She was a Political Commissar in the company at the time of her martyrdom. Such incidents prove that there are women in leadership positions in the party.

WOMEN IN DANDAKARANYA MOVEMENT

The revolutionary movement brought great changes in the lives of tribal women of Dandakaranya. There is no comparison between the conditions prior to the entry of



Anuradha Ghandy (March 28, 1954 – April 12, 2008)

armed squads in Dandakaranya in 1980 and now.

Prior to 1980, women in Dandakaranya were banned from using bows and arrows. There was a superstition that hunt would fail if women handled bows. And now, women not only use traditional weapons such as bows, arrows and spears in militias but also fight with guns in the People's Guerilla Army. They are also acting as commanders of platoons and companies. Due to all these, even ordinary villagers are free from such superstitions.

It is now an accepted thing among the people of Dandakaranya that even women who eat eggs can conceive, that women can eat any part of an animal's meat and not just the stomach part, that men need not give the meat to women but that both men and women can eat meat as per their liking.

The Marxist understanding that women's participation in production is a pre-condition for the liberation of women is being practiced in Dandakaranya. The revolutionary movement introduced settled cultivation in the place of shifting cultivation which was the predominant form in Dandakaranya. A number of programs related to production such as cultivation of vegetables, fish farms, construction of tanks etc. are being carried on under the auspices of Janatana Sarkars. The understanding that social changes are not possible without corresponding changes in relations of production is being put into practice by making women participants in all activities related to agriculture.

"Women's experiences in Dandakaranya could be discussed from two angles –

- 1) Changes taking place due to Maoist political and ideological influence on social life.
- 2) Changes occurring due to the emerging new production system that is coming up from the Maoist revolutionary strategy"

"The social relations in a family are also materialistic. The Revolutionary movement understands that changes in the social aspects should be consolidated by bringing changes in the production sector. This is possible only when the process of social change becomes part of the production system. Then only social changes can last long. This conception is different from the understanding, which says that once production relations are changed, social identity problems will be automatically solved. This conception is very close

to Marxism. Since the revolutionary movement has this understanding, women were drawn not only into political agitations, the Party and military departments, and the Janatana Sarkar, but were also rallied par into the production sector.”

The field study made by Pani, the author of 'Janatana State', brings out the vigilance of the revolutionary movement in this regard. “The Sarkar activists are fully aware that when women participate in the process of production, it becomes easier for them to unshackle from social restrictions. Though this is just an elementary stage of people’s governance, women are partners in the political and production fields equally.”

“In each village, the women belonging to families of the revolutionary classes are in the Dandakaranya Krantikari Mahila Sangham [DKMS] as members or leaders or representatives of the Party. But in some agricultural works, there are some restrictions on women even now. It means that people are more revolutionary in political practice, than in productive activity, where there are still aspects of backwardness.

That is why whenever there is any mention of women participating in Maoist departments, questions such as these are posed – are they participating in all agricultural works? If they are, do men allow them to do so? Is the awareness to resist patriarchal social relations growing both in men and women? The changes in social relations should not only be speeded up, but they must be made stable.”

All these discussions reflect the Marxist understanding stated above.

FORMATION OF REVOLUTIONARY WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

NARI MUKTI SANGHA(NMS)

Nari Mukti Sangh (NMS) was formed in early 80s after the Jharkhand peasants started organizing under the leadership of the revolutionary party, against the oppression of the Rajput landlords, and the harassment of forest officials and contractors. It worked till 2000 in the united Bihar and subsequently, after the formation of Jharkhand state in 2000, it continues to work in both Bihar and Jharkhand. In Jharkhand, the leaders and members of NMS are predominantly Adivasis. The NMS mobilized women into anti-feudal struggles.

They were able to eradicate the practices of landlords’ right to “first night” as well as bonded labour. The landlords do not dare abuse the peasants or women now. The NMS not only propagandized against child marriages but could also prevent many of them. No child marriages are taking place in areas where NMS is strong. It was also able to bring down significantly the practices of dowry and forced marriages in their areas of influence. They are conducting inter-religious and inter-caste marriages in a progressive fashion, these are called ‘SibirVivaah’. NMS also preaches against feudal customs and ostentatious weddings. They led agitations in Bihar and Jharkhand against sexual harassment by Forest Range officers and contractors. In a number of instances, they also punished the offenders.

NMS also conducts People’s Panchayats (a form of people’s court) and resolves issues within families. The following is an example of such a panchayat. An Adivasi woman’s husband went away to Mumbai to find work within a week of their marriage and he did not come back for 3 years, nor did he call her. Since it is routine for Adivasis to migrate to Mumbai in search of work, they generally carry mobiles with them and there is no reason for her husband to not call her. Since her husband is anyway not coming back, another man indicated his interest in marrying her if she is willing. The Adivasi woman was also interested in marrying this man. So she brought the matter to the notice of NMS and requested them to help her annul the existing marriage so that she can marry the other man. The day she made this request to NMS, her husband in Mumbai came to know of the matter and he called to inform that he is coming back and that the marriage should not be annulled. From this, it is clear that her husband is in regular touch with his father. The father-in-law claimed that the Adivasi woman is an outsider to his family since his son never lived with her. But, since he fed her and took care of her, he put the condition that she should not re-marry till she paid him back the expenses he incurred on her. NMS conducted a Panchayat in the village on this matter in the presence of the woman, her husband, both their families, the other young man who showed an interest in marrying her and his family. After listening to both the sides, NMS ruled that since her father-in-law is considering her an outsider to his family, her parents should pay him the expenses incurred on her, and her father-in-law should pay her wages for the work done in his house for three years. Since her husband behaved very irresponsibly towards her, he should pay for her

upcoming marriage and new household expenses.

In places where NMS is strong, people stopped going to Courts since they believed they can get instant justice by going to NMS. Another serious problem in Jharkhand is that of young girls going to Delhi to work as domestic workers. Sometimes, these girls run away to Delhi without informing people at home. In such cases, they are ensnared by brokers and ruin their lives. Some of them even end up in jails. NMS is educating people against this through cultural activities and is able to prevent it to a large extent. In one incident, a female broker ensnared a school going girl with the promise of good wages and clothes and took her to Delhi. That girl came back home after a year as a living corpse. She would just sit silently and her family could not get any details from her. Her brother did his own investigations and found out the phone number of that female broker and he passed on the information to NMS. Then, activists from NMS's Jharkhand unit called the female broker, informed her that they have a lot of girls who are ready to go to Delhi and asked her to come there. When the broker came, they bound her and decided to conduct a Panchayat the next morning. She pleaded with them that she will not step into Jharkhand again. A few men from the village were assigned the duty of guarding her that night but she managed to escape, maybe with their help. A month later, she was caught by the Police in Delhi and through her a large scale trafficking racket came to light. In any case, NMS conducted extensive campaigning on this matter in Jharkhand.

NMS also takes up programs to ensure that Primary Health Centers are run effectively, and scientific temper is inculcated among people by fighting against superstitions.

After 1990, under the auspices of CPI(ML) Party Unity, NariMuktiSangharshSangh was formed in Bihar's Jehanabad and Gaya districts and NariChetnaSamiti was formed in Palamu district. Subsequently, they both joined together to form Nari Mukti Sangharsh Samiti. Women activists from both NariMuktiSangharshSamiti and NariMuktiSangh participated in the seminar 'Women's Question - Marxist Understanding', conducted by AILRC in Patna in 1993.

REVOLUTIONARY WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION

When the revolutionary movement in united Andhra Pradesh spread from North Telangana to South Telangana and from Guntur to Rayalaseema, there was

correspondingly an increase in women's participation in the movement in those areas. Starting from 1985, around a hundred women's organizations were formed in various places of different districts. In many places, these organizations functioned without even a name. Finally, in 1995, all these organizations were combined into Revolutionary Women's Organization. For a while, the organizations in North Telangana worked under the name of Women's Liberation Organization. Subsequently, they changed the name to Revolutionary Women's Organization. This organization carried on struggles for land occupation and increase in wages, and against sexual attacks, child marriages and liquor consumption and many other issues of concern to women.

ADIVASI REVOLUTIONARY WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

Many women's organizations were formed from 1991 in the context of the anti-liquor movement that saw large scale participation of women. About 190 women's organizations were established in the districts of East Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Vijayanagaram and Srikakulam. These were consolidated into Revolutionary Adivasi Women's Organization whose name was subsequently changed in 1995 to Adivasi Revolutionary Women's Organization (AVMS). This organizationsuccessfully led the struggles for increase in wage rates for coconut plucking and working in plantations. Mandal level AVMS with 2000 members, representing 15 villages, was formed in Bhamini Mandal in March 1995. They demanded and obtained wages on par with men for road construction work in many villages of Srikakulam district. In 1995, this organization also got the wages for working in the cotton and tobacco fields of 25 villages of Rayagadh district of Orissa, raised from Rs 18 to Rs 25. AVMS branches are now present in all districts of the AOB area.

KRANTIKARI ADIVASI MAHILA SANGHATAN (KAMS)

After the People's War party sent squads into Dandakaranya in 1980, agricultural workers' unions started forming from 1983. Since women started participating actively in these unions, the Party took a decision to form separate women's organizations. The first women's union was formed in Bangarampeta village of Gadchiroli district with the women who resisted

the opposition of the tribal elders to their going to the meeting of agricultural workers union. Subsequently, many organizations were formed in Kamalapur area of Ahiri. The first range committee meeting also took place in Kamalapur. From 1985 to 1991, all these organizations worked under the name of Adivasi MahilaSanghatan. In 1991, the Party felt that there is a need for a unified organization across Dandakaranya and re-named it as Krantikari Adivasi MahilaSanghatan. This organization spread so much that by 2010, which represents 30 years of Dandakaranya movement, it had a membership exceeding 1 lakh. That number might have reduced in subsequent years due to repression. But, one can confidently say that no other women's organization ever had this sort of massive membership over such a vast area.

KAMS had tremendous impact on the lives of Adivasi women in Dandakaranya. Forced marriages, finalized by their elders, were a serious problem for women in Dandakaranya and they had to face hell if they opposed them. Young, unmarried women attending marriages were sexually molested and forced into sexual relationships by men. Even married women were not spared in some contexts. After the formation of women's organizations, such incidents stopped to a large extent. Men do not dare misbehave with women in the organizations. Women could finally get the respect they deserved only because of these organizations.

Thanks to the various struggles carried on by women's organizations, domestic violence on women reduced; they are able to get equal pay for equal work; they are

guaranteed an equal share in property; no man dares subject them to sexual harassment at work places; the merchants don't dare misbehave with them or cheat them with fraudulent measurements and false accounts. Women achieved political power and they provide judgment on matters of injustice to women. This destroyed the power of the elders in the tribe. Women are taking an active part in the judicial committees of JanatanaSarkars. The environment in Dandakaranya has changed so much that when a group of women meet, they talk about political and organizational issues rather than merely indulge in gossip.

In a self-critical evaluation in front of people, KAMS publicly acknowledged the various incidents in which it had behaved rashly and thus could not take the people along with it. It recognized that some of its actions such as – forcibly making women enter grain stores and plant seeds against the approval of majority people, behaving rashly with bigamous men, burning the huts that women are banished to during menstruation – are wrong, without first recognizing and educating people on the various patriarchal forms in tribal society and without inculcating a new democratic revolutionary culture in them. Even though these are all desirable changes in the society, the mistake is in trying to enforce them without agreement and participation of the people. This is one of the lessons that other organizations should learn from KAMS.

The real success of the revolutionary women's organizations is in the progressive change they brought about in men. Men are now behaving in a cultured



manner with women and are trying very hard to rid themselves of patriarchal behavior.

RECTIFICATION:

The People's War Party conducted a massive "rectification campaign" in 1985 to correct the increasing 'other' class tendencies within the party. One aspect of this campaign to thoroughly cleanse the party was to get rid of patriarchal tendencies. The impact of this campaign was so significant that when public meetings and programs started again in 1990, the songs that were sung in those meetings were changed to eliminate all patriarchal notions in them. Women activists discussed and criticized patriarchal expressions orally as well as in print. Serious discussions were carried out against patriarchal expressions in language. The first novel by Sadhana (the writer of the novel 'Rago') was published with the title 'Brothers in Forest'. The women comrades from the party openly questioned the title in an article in 'Arunatara' (asking if there are only brothers and no sisters in the forests). Sadhana responded to the criticism and changed the title to 'Frontier'. Women comrades also debated about famous writer Com Manjeera's story 'Eldest son' in 'Arunatara'. They said that the notion of an "eldest son" taking responsibility is also a form of feudal thinking.

The Party took up periodic rectification campaigns to eliminate many non-working class traits. Though anti-patriarchal aspects were also part of these, the Party conducted a special rectification campaign against patriarchy in 2001. As part of this, the Party did self-criticism that it did not educate men as well as it educated women on the ideological aspects of women's question. To correct that, it conducted classes on women's perspective from the top to the bottom layers in the party. To a large extent, these classes were conducted by women. This process helped in building self-confidence among the women cadres and it helped male cadres accept women's leadership. Women talked about how a lack of proper perspective shows up as a deficiency in practice – for e.g. If the commander is a woman the squad members instead of reporting to her reports to the deputy commander who is a male; belittling women comrades in the guise of jokes (such as asking them after encounters if they fired their guns after releasing the safety catch or not etc), laughing while women are speaking. Some men use patronizing

terms while speaking to women comrades. Though they do this out of affection and with good intention they do not realize that this is because they don't recognize the women as equals. Sometimes, even when men tried honestly to correct their behavior, they would get confused. Since women are relatively physically weak, would it be patriarchal to try and help them? Or, is it simply being supportive to a fellow comrade? So, the women were encouraged to ask for help unhesitatingly, when needed. Rules were put in place for men to not propose to women till the women complete two years in the squads and even then, men should inform the higher committee of their intention to propose. These rules were criticized by some feminists as feudal perspective of the party. But, when women are less in number, and if multiple men propose to them, they would feel like running away from the movement. That is the reason why it was suggested that men should inform the higher committee. Now that there are many more women in the party, this problem is significantly reduced. In certain cases when women chose to accept proposals from men who were politically weak, the higher committee pointed out that fact to women and suggested that they take some time to think through their decision. This turned out to be beneficial to those women when subsequent events proved the higher committee's evaluation of those men to be correct. The strength of the revolutionary movement lies in the recognition of its mistakes and openly rectifying them.

IMPACT OF FEMINIST MOVEMENT ON REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

Just as the revolutionary movement has an impact on all aspects of a society, they in turn have an impact on the movement. The feminist movement had a significant impact on the revolutionary movement. In states where the impact of revolutionary movement was high, women mobilized in large numbers. In breaking out of the confines of their homes, women waged their first battle against patriarchy. The revolutionary organizations were democratized because of the participation of women.

The feminist movement helped the revolutionary movement understand the gender question in depth, and to recognize patriarchal expressions in all forms. The various debates initiated by the feminists during

1980 - 90 especially helped sharpen the revolutionary movement's understanding on the gender question.

WOMEN IN REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT'S LEADERSHIP

There is a criticism that there are no women leaders in the Maoist Party. Though it is not true that there are no women at all among the leadership, it is a fact that they are not there in sufficient numbers. In reality, it is rather difficult to know the overall number of women, and their numbers and roles in leadership positions in the revolutionary movement since it does not work in the open. We come to know of their details only when they get arrested or killed. It was only when Sheela Marandi was arrested, and Anuradha Ghandy was martyred, that the world came to know that they are members of the Central Committee of the Maoist Party. On the basis of different reports, we now know that there are women in almost all the State Committees of the party. Women are also leading companies (of PLA) in Dandakaranya. Women are heading Janatana Sarkar committees at different levels. State violence is the primary reason for women not being present in significant numbers in leadership positions. A lot of women comrades died in violence perpetrated by the State organs. Among them, if women such as – Nyalakonda Rajitha, Yellanki Aruna, JNM Padma, Padma (Adoni), B. Suguna, Janjanam Savithri, Geddam Lakshmi, Ajitha of Tamilnadu, Urmila Ganju of Jharkhand, and Ranita (who heroically fought the CPRF jawans alone for an entire day) - were not killed brutally by the State, there would have been substantial number of women leaders in the Party today. Most of the above mentioned comrades lost their lives in false encounters. Even though this is the primary reason for insufficient number of women leaders, for precisely this reason, the Party should put in special effort to bring up women into leadership positions.

REVIEW

The movement did not develop equally in all places. Women's organizations were formed and women were recruited into the party wherever the movement was strong. In the review undertaken by the party in 2007, it was mentioned that some states are extremely backward in terms of women's movements and organizations. The review also stated that the party failed to make conscious and persistent attempts in Bihar and Jharkhand to

mobilize women into the revolutionary movement. It stated further that new democratic revolution was not sufficiently linked with women's desire for liberation from patriarchy and for a long time the demand "land to the tiller" was not clearly articulated to include landless women too. Even though the Party led struggles to increase wages for both men and women, it did not demand equal wages for men and women for a long time. In an in-depth review, the Party mentioned that they failed to educate the entire cadre that until the above class based demands are clearly expressed and fought for, women's strength against feudalism and imperialism will not be exhibited completely and patriarchy will not be eliminated.

We know from the book 'Janatana State' that women are being made part of productive activities carried out by Janatana Sarkars on a large scale. While speaking to the writer regarding their participation in agricultural activities, some women activists said that "we are also unable to do some things because we have to handle both domestic work and agricultural work". This is definitely a big problem for women and it is not clear if domestic work has been collectivized in Janatana Sarkar areas. From the book, it doesn't appear to be so. Since women cannot participate fully in production without being freed from domestic work, Janatana Sarkars should plan for collectivizing at least some aspects of domestic work.

The most important challenge in front of the Party today is its inadequate mobilization of the industrial working class that is expected to provide leadership to the new democratic revolution. This challenge is applicable to the revolutionary women's movement too. Another big problem facing the movement is how to continue the activity after severe repression, which results in serious losses. One major drawback of the movement is its failure to gather industrial working women into the movement in these four decades.

Even though the movement faced severe losses in many places, multiple times and had undergone temporary setbacks, the consciousness generated by it is still continuing. It is an accepted thing that it is only the revolutionary movement that created a strong questioning attitude among the people. The revolutionary movement which is continuing despite many setbacks makes a promise and provides the hope that it will fulfil the desire of Indian women for liberation, by determinedly pursuing the effort it has undertaken so far.

(Translated in to English by P.ARAVINDA)

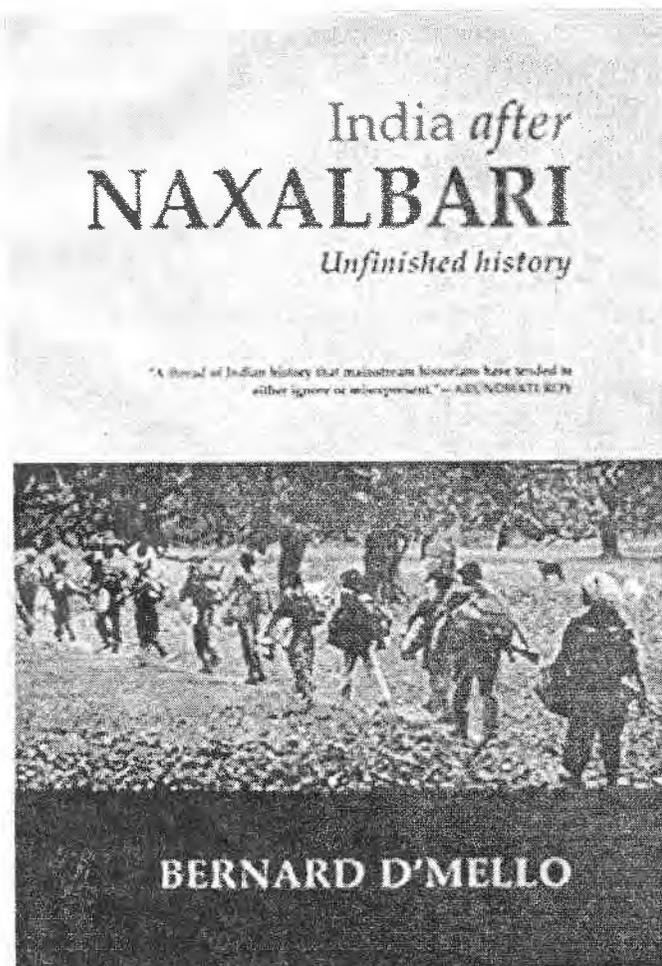
Book review ■ India after **Naxalbari**

Harsh Thakor

Hail this great work by Bernard D'Mellow on India post-Naxalbari which will carve a permanent niche amongst the books on the impact of an event that shaped the destiny of India more than anyone!

I recommend everyone to read this classic book titled "India-50 after Naxalbari" by Bernard D'Mellow that most analytically assesses the impact of Naxalbari, Maoist movement and emergence of fascism in India. In the era when proto-fascism is reaching its optimum height it is all the more significant.

It is a must in the library of any progressive reader. It does ample justice to the genuine revolutionary movements of India particularly that of the Maoists and encompasses every sphere of society. It most illustratively and vividly describes the ruthlessness of capitalism in India, the hypocrisy of so called democracy and the ascendancy of fascism. Hope readers will help circulate and publicize it. It is a major contribution to igniting the flame and enriching the treasury of works of the legendary Naxalbari movement that turned the destiny of India more than any event. . The book gives a great insight into what the future of India could be. Hope book is circulated well abroad. I feel it can reach out to even those not so familiar with leftist politics. with the lucidity of the language. The work is a thorn in the flesh for the Hindu saffron brigade and pro-cooperate intellectuals. It emblazes the torch of truth in a period when many a book is being published by the bourgeois press glorifying the achievements of the Narendra Modi with led B.J.P. rule in India containing white lies about the economic prosperity of the country to camouflage the fascist colours of the state. Significant book launch was held in the very egg of imperialism and hotbed of Hindu saffron fascism -'Mumbai' where many a journalist has become a mere pawn or tool in the hands of the corporate powers. Salute Bernard for his most intellectual and courageous effort when the Hindutva ideology and pro-corporate policies are tightening



Cover Page: India After Naxalbari:: Unfinished History by Bernard D'Mello

their noose on genuine people's movements as never before. It is a great piece of research from a historical point of view. Morally the book should not be titled 'India after Naxalbari' but a 'True history of India' as its main discussion is not on Naxalbari movement itself.

Book is divided into 10 chapters like an epic novel with each chapter a logical sequel to the previous one. The first Chapter on 'Naxalite Spring thunder phase' he recounts the history of the Naxalbari uprising. In the second Chapter, '1968 India as history', he recounts the brutal state repression unleashed. Chapter 3-'Unequal Development and evolution of the ruling bloc' describing the principal undeveloped capitalism highlighting the state-corporate nexus. Chapter 4-'Naxalite Spring thunder phase II' narrating the events from 1978-2003 doing describing the mass movements of the Maoists in light of worker-peasant alliance and women liberation. The fifth Chapter 'India 1989' sums up the financial autocracy and phenomenal disparity prevailing in total contrast to progressive capitalism. 'Chapter 6' The far'-India's rotten liberal democracy narrates how fundamental rights are violated and how it is an integral part of the bourgeois Indian state and how parliamentary democracy only protected the vested interests. Chapter 7-'Maoist, Spring Thunder phase 3' studies the movement after the formation of the C.P.I.(Maoist) throwing light on the guerrilla army Chapter 8-'Rotten at the heart -Secular state' vividly describes how essentially the state violates the rights of minorities being responsible for some of the bloodiest communal riots ever perpetrating violence on Sikhs and Muslims. Chapter 9 -'Little man, What now' sums up the semi-fascist nature of the Modi regime and the aspect of sub-imperialism. Here he draws an analogy of the Nazi regime of 1930's with the Hindu fascist agenda. Tenth Chapter is titled "History, memory and dreams' he elaborates the concept of New Democracy in term of its workability.

With great historical research he has described the basically anti-people or reactionary role by the Congress in the pre-independence period itself compromising or betraying many a struggle like the Naval ratings uprising, Chauri Chaura Movement and many peasant struggles. He also summarized the pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim nature of the Congress in the pre-1947 period itself. Bernard meticulously describes how in so many junctures Gandhi and Nehru betrayed the ant-feudal and anti-imperialist movements The

historical flow in his writings must be praised as a reader can grasp how the post-1947 India was a direct consequence of the political trend followed by the Congress before Independence.

Bernard elaborates how democratic rights were suppressed from the time of Nehru itself and how even before emergency the form or rule was subservient to the capitalist or landlord class. It sums up how even the Nehruvian regime morally did not strip the rights of the landlords with their reforms, nor awarded true rights to the working class. With great detail he summarizes how the landless and poor peasantry were still subjugated by rich peasants or landlords. Vividly describes killings of peasant and workers and in detail describes how the constitution of 1950 hardly made sufficient provisions for the dalits and Muslims. With great precision he describes how partisan Nehru was to the exploiter classes and after inheriting the reign daughter Indira in the garb of working for the poor morally attacked the workers and peasantry with greater ruthlessness than her predecessors, in the name of 'garibi hatao' etc. It summarizes post-1991 liberalization and globalization with great depth and the consolidation of Hindutva fascism. He brilliantly documents the changes that took place in every era and how the state and ruling classes have become more oppressive over subsequent decades. With great historical perspective, He elaborates how the corporate powers, big industrialists, big landlords have consolidated their stranglehold on the broad masses be it the peasants, workers or students with the total blessings of the ruling class parties. He sums up how the state made pretence of being secular and democratic but was in essence communal and autocratic. With great historical narrative and perception he portrays the economic and political oppression of the working or labour class and the modification in forms of exploitation. Gave a detailed analysis and description of how mercilessly casual and contract labour were deployed and the vast reserves of labour. With meticulous research he describes how the industrialists are flourishing given a virtual license to trample upon the rights of workers and tribes as never before giving vivid examples of Ambani and Adani.

He has virtually devoted 2 chapters doing justice to the great achievements of the Maoists and the mass organizations led by them. He critically reviews the movement from the Charu Mazumdar era where left adventurist errors were made and the rectification of

those mistakes by the Andhra Pradesh State Committee led by Kondapalli Seetharmiah. The struggles of the mass organizations like Andhra Pradesh Radical Students Union and Rytu Colie Sangham and their significance were summed up. He makes a balanced appraisal of the erstwhile C.P.I (M.L.) Peoples War Group narrating how if any revolutionary democracy was attained in tribal regions it was because of their sustained struggle. Bernard does amply justice to the Maoist movement from a critical angle as a whole. In great depth gives credit to the achievements of the erstwhile C.P.I (M.L.) Peoples War group in Andhra Pradesh and Telengana summarizing how they built the roots of alternative revolutionary democratic power or foundations of genuine democracy as well as revolutionary political consciousness. In detail he summarizes the history of the advance and setbacks and how heroically they survived against all odds from 1980-99, with flow in narration. He portrays why the C.P.I (Maoist) is a genuine revolutionary democratic force and praises its achievements. He explains the seriousness with which they have stooped to the ground to implement their task basing themselves in the very heart of the oppressed masses and deploying a methodical strategy.

I greatly admire the recognition he gives to Alpa Shah's praise of the Maoists work in Jharkhand. Vividly she praises the democratic foundation laid down by the C.P.I.(Maoist) in a camp she visited. He summarized Alpa Shah's view that 'relations of intimacy' were built between the Maoist organization and the people and that enormous effort was made to combat the phenomenon of caste and class divisions among the people. He quotes Alpa Shah writing about how they treat the villagers as equals and got far greater credibility in their behaviour pattern than the representatives of the Indian state. Alpa describes how the Maoist cadre would do the ordinary things of life like washing utensils. Quoting Alpa Shah in the book "Relations of intimacy manifest themselves in the creation of new subjects beyond the caste and class divides of rural India nurturing spaces of freedom which contest established rules of endogamy, of hierarchy and traditional conventions. These are spaces of freedom which have proved attractive to historically marginalized and discriminated populations. The views and research of Juhi Tyagi was also narrated who carried out in dept research in North Telengana area, and praised the empowerment of village level

sanghams in enhancing the class consciousness of agricultural and landless labourers. Tyagi called it "an effective organizational field."

There was also a sound criticism of lack of independence from the Maoist party of mass organizations and inadequate penetration in the working class or urban areas. Later he points out the pertinent mistakes of the Maoists in Lalgah in underestimating the enemy, functioning too openly and attempting to form an alliance with Mamta led Congress. Bernard touched on neglected aspect of revolutionary humanism analyzing instances of how Maoists themselves violated rights in certain instances, and made very bad self-criticisms. Above all makes an in-depth description on the application of 'New Democracy' in various facets of society be it peasants, workers, women, health or education.

He very accurately sums up the true nature of India being semi-fascist and how fascism of the Hindu variety could permeate the very organs of a parliamentary democratic system. He explains why it is very difficult for India to go completely fascist like Nazi Germany or Mussolini's Italy and abolishes the parliamentary political system's organs, and thus partially retain feature of a bourgeois democratic state. Yet he pointed out similarities between the Hindutva Saffron fascism pervading India and Nazism. A detailed account was made of the riots in Bhiwandi in Mumbai in 1984 Sikh massacre in Delhi in 1984, Babri Mashed -Mumbai riots in 1992-93 and Godhra riots in 2004 and how the culprits responsible from the saffron brigade were yet not brought to the book. With vivid summary he explains how the tentacles of Hindutva fascism agenda are consolidating themselves more than ever by each day. It also highlighted the importance of Ambedkar and importance of studying caste movement in relation to combating fascist trend. With meticulous research he summarizes the caste polarization in India and how much the revolutionary democratic movement has to assimilate or absorb caste struggles. Also the nascent Sub-Imperialism in India highlighted by equating it with the global face of Indian big business. Bernard explains how India's sub-Imperialism has its base in the very nature of the semi-peripheral underdeveloped capitalism, which is controlled by the Indian big business-state-multinational bloc.

Great historical light has been placed on the mass movements of the peasants, tribals, dalits and workers

since 1947. A vivid account is given of the impact and gains of Telengana armed peasant struggle. The cause and effect of the Navnirman movement led by JP has also been added. The 1974 railway strike has been written in golden letters describing the indomitable courage not only of the railwaymen but all sections of workers countering the brutal repression. An appraisal of great detail has been made of the victories of the Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha of mine workers led by Shankar Guha Nyugi where right to minimum wages was won and contract labour abolished. Summed up how the CMMS created genuine workers rule facing the tyranny of the merciless industrialists. It highlighted the participation of women workers, building of a free hospital and free schools, adult education programme and anti-alcohol programme. The importance of the 1982 Mill workers strike in Mumbai is also touched upon explaining its overall influence on the trade Union movement as a whole and the lessons the working class learnt from it. Bernard summed up the glaring shortcomings of the organization and focus of labour movement and how it became so marginalized. The formation, protest and repression of the dalit panther movement in 1972 Maharashtra has been recounted. The story of how the Dalit Panthers boycotted the 25th independence anniversary celebrations was remembered highlighting its connection with social atrocities. He described the splits that caused its decline and the ambivalence of the Hindu communal forces towards them who murdered cadres of the Dalit Panther. The founder of Dalit Panthers, Namdeo Dhasal is quoted stating how inconsequential the national emblem was the dalits were still subjugated to slavery. A significant part of the manifesto of the Dalit Panthers was quoted.

.Bernard makes a very fair appraisal of Mahatma Gandhi. He is critical of his pro-caste and pro-Hindu aspects of his ideology and practice but praises his death defying courage to prevent the Hindu-Muslim riots in post-1947 period and save lives of so many Muslims. Very vividly explain show Gandhi sided with the landlords, rich and upper castes but his 'Hinduism' was a completely different brand from the Brahmanical Hindutva fascism of the R.S.S. Bernard reflects on how Jayaparakash Naaryan erroneously felt that the R.S.S. had a progressive character and failed to read their fascist nature.

The notion that Hindutva is totally different and disconnected from Hinduism by intellectuals like

Shashi Tharoor is refuted tooth and nail with detailed analysis of the Bhagavad Gita justifying inequality.

Arguably there were flaws in his book. Describes India as backward capitalist instead of semi-feudal snot do complete justice to the extent which feudalism is still prevailing in agriculture. Does not touch upon the bargaining power of the landlord classes and the power they still possess of expropriating property at considerably cheaper rates or the existence of moneylenders, even in regions like Punjab. He also fails to connect a lot of the anti-people pro-corporate policies with the semi-feudal, semi-colonial nature of the state. Fails to learn from the study of intellectuals like R.S. Rao or 'Aspects of India's economy' on semi-feudalism where in spite of inroads of capitalism and penetration of imperialism usury still exists and agricultural production not socialized. Quoting the document of the C.P.I (Maoist) in 2004 'Even today extreme forms of semi-feudal exploitation are rampant in the countryside. The major prevailing forms of practice are share cropping, which is robbing the peasants of 50 % of their produce, as well as bonded labour, usurious and merchant capital. The countryside is dominated by landlords, usurers, merchants and religious institutions which are the mainstay of the semi-feudal relations of production in the country. Despite the hoax of all land reforms 30% of the total land is in possession of the landlords with 65% of the peasantry owning neither large land nor meagre land. This testifies that we are a semi-feudal country.' Strangely in spite of not evaluating India as semi-feudal he devotes an entire chapter discussing the practice of the formulation of 'New Democracy' in India.

It fails to understand the comprador nature of the Indian state and relevance of United front as advocated by Maoism with regards to India, with a national bourgeoisie existing. Erroneously feels that a multi-party system can award genuine revolutionary democratic power failing to grasp the essentials of revolutionary democracy as prescribed by Marxism-Leninism -Maoism which tooth and nail defend concept of vanguard Communist party and oppose multiple parties.

Inaccurate analysis and underestimation of potential of protracted peoples war in India. No clear understanding expressed about the important similarities between India and China for practicing of protracted people's

war like terrain, mountain regions, forests etc. or differences like India having parliamentary parties and elections unlike China in pre-revolution period. Conclusively he questions why base areas have not been converted from guerrilla zones without a clear perspective of the complexities of protracted people's war in India, or in depth understanding of relationship between mass line and agrarian revolution. Hardly any depth in reviewing crucial aspects of weakness in mass line, which prevents genuine base areas of development. Bernard does not sum up issues like the mistakes of introduction of Mao thought in the manifesto of organizations like Andhra Pradesh Radical Students Union and Virasam or inability to form independent mass organizations formed with a broader base which did not directly propagate party politics. There is no specific reference to how certain squad actions in erstwhile PWG era and even later reflected 'military' approach and not mass line and how mass organizations were not awarded adequate independence. In the end he hardly gives any prospect of a victory of peoples war and does not summarize the cutting edge of the Maoist movement in Dandkaranya as compared to other region in the past.

He was over-critical of the Maoist actions in Jungle Mahal in Lalgarh against CPM. In my view he is over sympathetic to the work of C.P.M. in the agricultural sector and does not understand their social fascist nature.

There is also hardly any mention of the positive work of other revolutionary streams like Tarimela-Nagi Reddy Nagi Reddy or Chandra Pulla Reddy groups and He failed to reflect on the struggle of the Andhra Pradesh Coordination Committee of Communist revolutionaries in struggling against the left adventurism pervading in the practice and line of Charu Mazumdar led C.P.I.(M.L.) No reference to groups like C.P.I.(M.L.) New Democracy of Communist Party Re-Organization centre of India(M.L.) thus neglecting aspect of the overall re-organization of the genuine Communist party and how the C.P.I.(Maoist) would emerge as the true vanguard of the Indian people. In the summary of the repression on the Maoist movement in erstwhile C.P.I (M.L.) PWG era and recent repression on C.P.I (Maoist) he does not touch upon the crucial aspect of the proletarian party itself which is the backbone.

Also fails to touch upon the revolutionary democratic

movement in Punjab of the landless and landed peasantry, led by various Naxalite groups in recent times. No reference to the mass movement of the Punjab Students Union of the 1970's which had historic significance or to the communist revolutionary resistance movement to Khalistani fundamentalism in the 1980's and early 90's.

He misses out on an adequate coverage of the democratic right movement. He does not mention the formation of forums like All India federation of Organizations for Democratic Rights in 1982 which struggled against the wrong trends of civil liberties organizations nor movement not being linked to struggles of the broad masses and converted into Maoist or party forums. Hardly enough recognition to the significant work by Organization for Protection of Democratic Rights in Andhra Pradesh or Association for Democratic Rights, Punjab. Nor did he write on the emergence of historical fronts like All India Peoples Resistance Forum and later Revolutionary Democratic Front. Also touches very little on the aspect of liberation of Kashmir.

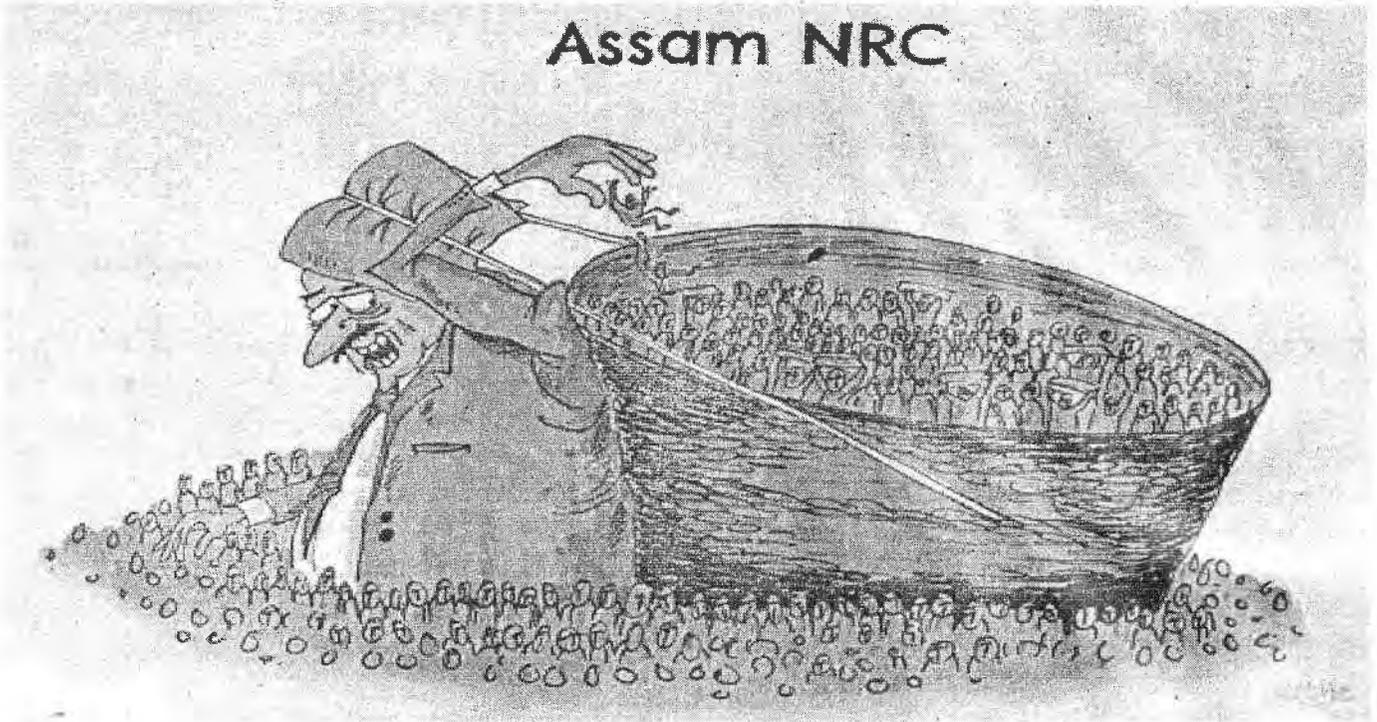
He has not given due credit to the erstwhile Maoist Communist Centre of India's achievements in Bihar which made almost the same contribution of the PWG in Andhra Pradesh and Telengana. He is critical of MCC's policy towards the Bhumihar caste without grasping line of the agrarian revolutionary movement as a whole which the erstwhile group was trying to apply. Reflects caste rather than class analysis. Needed to highlight in more precise detail how the MCC smashed the base of the landlord senas within their red army corpses and distributed thousands of acres of land with the krantikari Kisan Committees. It also had adequate coverage of the C.P.I (M.L.) Party Unity group in building agrarian revolutionary resistance through the Mazdoor Kisan sangrami samiti.

He also concludes the book with no coverage of the recent uprising of the peasantry in India comprising both the landed and landless sections and the massive suicides of framers in states like Punjab and Maharashtra and protests.

There is no agenda in the conclusion of how the Indian masses should combat the semi-fascist state.

In the end he hardly gives any prospect of a victory of people's war but still often refers to practice of 'new democracy.

Assam NRC



NRC in **Assam** and what it means.

Tamaghna Halder

Concerning the matter of human history, we can once again reiterate that history of the world is the history of class struggle. And we must also reiterate how the ruling classes has always tried to distort, make people forget their histories, and very often appropriate history itself after its own image. Marxism stands as an opposition to those tendencies not just as a political practical-critical argument, but also as a social and economic praxis.

A towering example of this distortion and appropriation would be the United State's repeated attempts to deify Martin Luther King Jr. as a figure of resistance, or how one should move politically. All the while trying to demonise movements (and methods) of Fred Hampton and Black Panther Party. The world history is full of such methods taken by the ruling classes. Close home; one can see how Kashmir's history is closely monitored and doctored all the time. The history of Makbool Bhatt has been a consistent memory among Kashmiris and the ruling classes have consistently tried to erase it. Not only Bhatt, but also the clause of plebiscite has

been denied to the people there. It has arrived at a point where Article 370 is on the table with the ruling classes trying to shut it down. The clause itself is not just a regulatory clause for autonomy but a nefarious history of annexation of Kashmir, which the ruling classes now are trying hard to erase from history.

However, it is possible that the Indian State has been enormously successful in only one province—the state of Assam. Roughly during mid-2018, the news outlets were covering one specific story. The story was about National Registry of Citizens, or NRC; and within the pages were also the stories about forty lakh citizens whose name didn't make it to the registers. Since 2014 the rise of RSS-BJP has been accompanied by a rise of violent riots, either as communal clashes or as caste violence. The NRC campaign has therefore provided ample grounds for all the communal, ethnocentric and caste politics to resurface, and once again spread its venom across throughout the country. In addition to that, NRC is being used prior to the elections as a tool to drive a deeper wedge between already tensed relations between communities. The 40,000 people who are displaced have become unsure about their own future, the looming crisis of communal clashes, and in general a grave situation exists in Assam as of now.

On both sides of NRC, for or against, are the common people, the working classes, and on both sides there are historical reasons for and against such demands. However, the people were not supposed to be so divided about the issue concerning the NRC, especially the downtrodden, the oppressed and the working classes. Historically speaking, they were supposed to come together and demand a separate statehood of Assam. The State, however, had other plans, and with careful manipulations of its agencies, it has succeeded in erasing all the memories of historical struggle and demands for separate statehood of Assam. One hand it had unleashed extreme state repression and wiped out armed resistance, on the other hand it ensured deeper wedges between different communities and drove a wedge in Barak and Brahmaputra Valley political demands. All of these are different ways of erasing and rewriting history of Assam, and what we see are the results of that. While BJP has been trying to make political profits out of this situation in an explicit ways, but in reality, all of the parliamentary organizations have jumped in to share their cuts from this nightmare. Hence, dear reader, let us take a brief look at history itself to make our positions clear about the present

conditions.

After the defeat of the Burmese army in 1826, the British annexed the province of Assam under Bengal Presidency. The British were immediately busy in exploiting the rich resources of Assam, namely the vast amount of minerals, forests, cultivable tracts for tea-plantation and of course the fertile lands were all immediately taken over by British owners. Large populations were forcefully dragged from Bengal and Chhotanagpur belts to work in the fields and plantations of Assam, in a while more people were moved in from Nepal to work in tea-plantations; all of these atrocities were committed to ensure an extremely cheap labour cost. In the year 1883, among the documented working classes, Assam had only 5.5% of Assamese people, 27% Bengali and 47% were collective population from Santhals, Oraon, Munda and other people from the Chhotanagpur belt. Later people from Mymensingh, Rangpur and Sylhet were moved in again to satiate the demand for cheap labour required to lay down Railway tracks. This is why people of Assam lost the chance to ensure basic necessities even as the working class, right there in the colonial period.

On the other hand, the paltry some of invested from otherwise huge profits were on schools, colleges and universities, and yet they were not to educate and make the people self-dependent. It was rather to further the imperialist motives and ensure a stable structure of exploitation, which is why they moved in a number of educated people from Sylhet and other parts of Bengal and employed them in these institutions. The important thing to note here is that the first college in Assam was found in the year 1901, Cotton College was found almost 75 years after British rule in Assam. This meant that by the time an Assamese educated class could rise, Bengali Babus had already taken over most of the government jobs and key positions, and in having enjoyed the crumbs thrown by colonizers, they reveled the British rule. Starting from the separate railway zone for Assam to any developmental measures in the regional areas, the Babus had always played a regressive role, and pushed Assam back to economic disparity again and again.

The economic problems were also the ones that created cultural problems. Certain section among the Bengali government employees made a pact with Henri Hopkinson, and established Bengali as the official language of Bengal. On one hand there was extreme

manner of impoverishment among the people, on the other hand this new assault on language and culture quite naturally drew ire from the Assamese people, and of course rage. It was this pent up rage that gave birth to Assamese nationalism, which in turn gave rise to anti-Bengali sentiments at the behest of political parties; it was nonetheless a successful carrying out of the "Divide and Rule" policy of the British. The economic and cultural impairment was so strong that up until 1909 there were no Assamese representatives in the "Legislative Council", even if there were but small victories for the recognition of the language in the year 1874.

The cultural problems were further driven on by communal differences. This was also one of the polarizations that the British also ensured in order to maintain their control. In 1874, when Assam was declared a 'non-regulation province' of the North-Eastern Frontier, the British intentionally included Sylhet, Kachhar, Gowalpara and other areas in Assam. This is why it was easier to create discontent between predominantly Vaishnavite Assamese and the Bengali Muslim population. What we see later as partition in 1947, the Assam experiment was just a part of it.

Along with the problems of livelihood and culture there was also the concern about land. On one hand the indigenous populations were evicted from their lands

to ensure more intense exploitation of forest lands. On the other hand the rise of plantation economy gave rise to demands for better food and basic necessities, which one must insist, was inhuman. This is why the British tried to lure in the higher skilled Bengali peasantry to move into Assam, and thus a large section of population from Mymensingha, Rangpur and other areas moved into Assam and settled in areas of Kamrup, Naugat etc. The new peasantry started to buy lands from the locals at dirt cheap rates and started their own agricultural practices. The riverine lands were redesigned to yield crops far better than before, and slowly the indigenous population lost their lands, and for most them it was but the only capital they had. In the year the Census report of 1921, Assam's then Commissioner C. S. Mullen had written that, "The way the Mymensinghas are taking over the lands of the valley, it seems unbelievable...in the last 25 years they have moved into different parts of the province and has started farming without much resistance". It must be remembered, however, that the very introduction of 'Line Protocol/System' set up in 1921 was supposed to protect indigenous populations as well as the Assamese from being evicted from their land under any pretext. All of it was wrote on papers, and flew like paper planes in the real world. The corrupt officers, employees and bureaucrats together formed a nexus to oust the very same people they had to protect from their lands.



Under the British rule, they ensured a steady flow of exploited resources into their coffers as well as the surplus generated by the cheaper labour resources; all these whiles they bred the rising tensions among the Assamese and the Bengalis, keeping them too busy to look out for the ruling colonisers. Nehru, after taking over office as a leader of independent India, made sure that India annexed as much as land possible in Assam to make it 'an integral part of India'. This means that after the British-Burmese pact, Assam lost its independence for the second time, and this time it was undertaken by Indian State. The Indian State followed the exact steps as the British rulers in its way of colonizing and exploiting the resources of North-Eastern states, whether its tea, minerals, oil or any other valuable resources were siphoned off to make profit from it. All this while the provinces themselves earned very little of the revenue they themselves generated.

In the year 1889, oil was discovered in Assam, not just for the first time in India but in entire Asia. Up until 1960s Assam was the only oil producing company in the entire country. By 1901 the British had already set up the refinery at Doigboi, and Bongaigaon and Guwahati refineries were set up a bit later after few hurdles. Instead of Bruma Shell, a company during the colonial period, the ONGC and Indian Oil were the ones who filled in those roles, and Assam gained a meager amount in return from those large profits. This is how the State ensured a steady exploitation of Assamese people, all the while maintaining extreme manners of communal, lingual and ethnic tensions. In the year 1960s, hundreds of people died in Bengali-Assamese conflicts. And in 1961 there were multiple cases of firing in Borak Valley, series of protests took place to demand the rights for Bengali language and eleven people were shot dead, and only a few days later eleven more people were dead after police fired on a rally which demanded rights for the Assamese language. Among the dead, ten were Muslims, and one of them was ethnically Manipuri. All these dates and people are still commemorated, and the Memorial is situated just outside Silchar. However, the memories of the second rally are almost erased, and that is how history is rewritten and exploited by the ruling classes.

Almost immediately starting from 1951 to 1971 people started migrating from East Pakistan (later Bangladesh) to a staggering number almost reaching over a lakh, that is, irrespective of their religion, caste and ethnicity. They migrated to Assam often in search of jobs, or to escape

floods, famines, ritos or sometimes the looming crisis of ethnic cleansing. The Congress government never intervened these large scale immigrations as it helped their own electoral gains; instead they made deals with already helpless migrants 'in exchange' for their electoral rights or some government jobs. However, these people are still the poorest among the poor, and are of the lowest rung even among the working classes.

The rising population and the steady decline of land lead to a condition of tensions, and the seething anger from right from 1826 in the hearts of Assamese people finally came out as unadulterated rage after 153 years, and thus in 1973 Assam saw its first Assamese nationalist movement. "All Assam Students Union" or AASU lead the movement, and within a span of six to seven years, 860 people lost their lives in conflicts and police firings. Most of the people who died were students. The State played well into sentiments of the movement, and pretty soon the Bengali working classes spewed their hatred against the Assamese people. The State gained its own ranks as the mutual discontent among the people rose, and the Hidutva politics added fuel to the already overbearing hatred amongst people. At one time, things became so violent that the Lalung community people ended up killing more than a thousand Bengali Muslims. Instead of trying to understand the pent up violence as a historical phenomenon, or rather as a phenomenon produced by history of oppression, Congress jumped headlong into the problem and started spewing Bengali nationalist sentiment. Major figures as Pranab Mukherjee, Gani Khan Choudhury and other leaders were part of this venom spewing approach. Notably the so-called Left in Bengal was also part of this politics; they had immediately started strikes and other political flexing to support the anti-Assam movement there. On one hand the politically lost AASU members and the repression upon them ensured for the State that the working classes will be divided in communal politics; on the other hand the State also bought or arm-twisted the leaders of the movement to appear for negotiations. In 1985, together with AASU leadership and Assam government, Delhi decided to initiate the "Assam Accord". It was stated in this accord that the people who had come after the year 1971 would not be granted citizenship of India, nor would they be able to vote. The horror unleashed on the lives of the people as NRC now, has its roots in the 1985 'Assam Accord'.

For many social scientists, the signing of 'Assam Accord' was nothing but a betrayal of the people of Assam. The

real political opponent of the movement was supposed to be Delhi, but Congress and the compromising section of AASU had turned the "outsiders" as political opponents. In this quagmire the question of rights was lost, the question about economic and political freedom of the Assamese people was also lost, what remained was but hatred against Bengalis. In reality all of these maneuvers were a ruse for electoral gains. Or else, how does one explain that the same AASU which called for boycott of the elections because of the voter's list in 1983, were ready to contest the next election? Right in the year of 1985, all questions of freedom were surrendered to Delhi's stately rooms and were exchanged for a xenophobic and communal politics. This was the same Assam Gana Parishad who is now the chief allies of BJP.

All was quiet in Assam, for a while. ULFA, or United Liberation Front of Assam, however, called the 'Assam Accord' and the 'Yandaboo Treaty' between the British-Burmese army as the same political message. These treaties were considered as betrayals of the Assamese people, and they continued to fight against the State for their demands. ULFA didn't just fight for the rights of Assamese, Bodo or Karbi people, rather they took historical note of the situation and called for the liberation of 'all people living in Assam' in their leaflets. The Indian State, however, brought out heavy repression on the people, and Human Rights were not paid any heed. The "Manobadhikar Shangram Samiti" or Human Rights Initiative of Assam has published several documents putting out evidences about how the military deployment (Codenamed 'Operation Bajrang') had resulted in thousands of unlawful killings and rapes in Assam. With tremendous amounts of human right's violations and torture the ULFA movement was destroyed in the nineties. Along with this there were also posters put up across Assam with the photographs of dead soldiers, asking about their human rights; and this entire campaign was targeted primarily against Human Rights activists. Just as the entire country now is filled up with laments for the 40 CRPF men killed in Pulwama, under which lays crushed the demands of freedom of the common people of Kashmir. And just like that the Indian State was successful in bringing all the organizations in the quagmire of parliamentary politics, while the exploitation continued as it already was.

For the last nine years Assam has 6 "Detention Camps", and the conditions there are to say the least, extreme

violations of human rights. We are well aware due to international media about Donald Trump's policy in America, especially of dividing children from the immigrant families. Indian government has been doing it for the past nine years in Assam, breaking all boundaries of International Law. These camps has a long history of inhuman treatments against people, and many a child had not been seen by their parents since the beginning of the camp. Hardly a day is allowed for people who are out on parole. All these violations have been taking place since a long time, and neither criticism nor any national news covers the plight of these people.

The "Assam Accord" that was created in order to strengthen the stranglehold of the State has not been implemented either. Although some people were always caught and deemed "outsiders", they were never recorded more than a thousand. For the first time in 2005, almost after a 25 years wait, the Supreme Court finally asked the government to complete its list, and also declared that providing the proof of citizenship is not going to be the duty of the State anymore, but of the individual people. And yet another 12 years went by silently, during which period very little was achieved. What then happened to hasten the 1985 plan by Congress under the current regime of BJP? In all its essence, the electoral compulsions and priorities are the same for Congress and the BJP, why then do we see this undaunted hastening of the plight of the people?

In 2014 Narendra Modi went to Assam and declared during his electoral run-up rally that he will deal with the "outsiders". How did he promise to do that? Along with NRS, the BJP government also brought in the "Citizenship Bill". According to this Bill, any number of people (whether or not with valid papers) from the neighbouring countries of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan can settle down and receive 'amnesty' of India after their 6 years long stay, that is, as long as they are Hindus. The reason provided was that in many of these nations, Hindus are minorities. In a similar way, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs can also stay in India, and the reason provided for it was that all these religions have their history in Ancient India. This means that the only people who won't get amnesty are the Muslims, and also Muslims from Bangladesh since they are not the minorities there. Thus it becomes clear that in an exchange for the gesture of amnesty to the Hindus, BJP is making sure that it would keep the 40 lakhs Hindu population of Assam under its grip. It's the same

reason why so many Gurkha people are not in the list of amnesty recipients, nor are the transgender people (who are otherwise deemed as Hijra community). This proves that the same network of exploitation that was set up by the British, fueled by Congress, is now guised with communal and ethnic tensions by Modi-Amrit Shah political enterprise; and the exploitation is but still intact.

However, the parliamentary politics has its own network of mysteries and tricks up its sleeve. The 'Citizenship Bill' was passed by the Loksabha in a breeze but was stopped because the tenure of Rajyasabha got over before it could be placed. Did the BJP not know when or at what date the tenure of Rajyasabha will be over? Was it not easy for BJP to pass it in Rajyasabha, as it did in Loksabha with such a majority? It would have but aided BJP as a fulfillment of promise in the coming Loksabha elections, why then did it deter from its path? Actually the Bill has its own set of problems. BJP tried to see the problems in North-East through the lens of religious difference alone. It is not just Assam, but all the North-Eastern states were subjected to heavy repression upon the questions of self-determination, and on the other hand the exploitations of its people and resources were kept unabated, thus violating the rules and codes of a united nation-state identity. This is why in a very historical and materialist manner; a state of economic and social anxiety exists throughout the

North-Eastern states. Instead of trying to solve this lack of economic and social security, all the parliamentary organizations have tried to distort this discontent to fulfill a larger political goal of reactionary politics. Under such a condition, the degree to which the people of North-East are worried about immigration (for the very same precarious nature of livelihood), they are not that worried about the religion of the immigrants. This is why when it came under public scrutiny, not just the opposition but also the local organizations which had previously collaborated with BJP, and even the allied organizations in the centre were angry with the BJP. The argument that came up over and over again is that the new bill which gives rights to immigrants of certain religion would actually end up inviting more immigrants to come to India. Thus the people will once again be economically and socially cornered in the land where they live.

This is precisely where BJP failed to understand the political impulse of the North-Eastern states. Their agenda was to rake up a communal polarization on the basis of religious difference, and consolidate Hindu voters after granting them citizenship rights selectively. BJP had probably anticipated that their move would result in a massive polarization for them in the 58 constituencies across Tripura, West Bengal and Assam in the coming 2019 elections. The error on their part was that instead of trying to take power on their own, they



had heavily relied on the alliances of local organizations. This is why it could neither implement its grand plan successfully, nor could it understand the situation in North-East, as it does in North India. The Chief Minister of Manipur had himself urged for a change in the Bill, even if he is but elected as a BJP minister. Thus, it is but clear how sharp the Manipuri resistance was against the introduction of the bill. When the resistance rose at a critical point, the BJP government then implemented section 144 and cracked down on the movement, and arrested several activists. Specifically the Meitei people of Manipur are quite anxious about losing their land to immigrants allowed by the BJP, as their lands are not secured because of the Manipuri laws regarding land-rights. The 'National People's Party' of Meghalaya severed their ties with BJP following the declaration of the bill. The cabinet rejected the bill despite member of BJP being present in it. Just like the neighbor states, Nagaland too rejected the bill in its cabinet within 20 days of its declaration in Loksabha, even if the BJP is but in power there. In Mizoram the bill was rejected as well, following the tensions rising from immigrations by the neighbouring Chakma population. John Luna, the chief leader of BJP in Mizoram has publicly declared that if the bill is not rewritten, he will disband the entire organization in the province. In Tripura, along with CPM and other opposition organizations, the 'Indigenous People's Front', an erstwhile ally of BJP has joined in protest against the bill. The BJP government has also put sedition cases against few members of its erstwhile allies.

Meanwhile Assam has also seen lengthy debates on the issue, thus the result might seem clear to the readers now about the outcome of the bill in Assam. BJP's ally 'Assam Gana Parishad' and many of the other allies of BJP have all turned and criticized the bill. The irony lies with the fact that all these organizations are quoting the very same "Assam Accord", and have restated that no one, no one would be granted rights of citizenship after the date of 24th March, 1971. This means that the very same "Assam Accord" that BJP used to bring the NRC into existence, is now being used against them. It is now clear why so many people consider the accord at similar level as the infamous 'Yandaboo Treaty'. The "Assam Accord" has thus played a crucial role in bringin about a handicap and nothing but sorrow in the lives of Assamese people, the manner from which escape seems bleak at this moment.

Therefore, BJP's stepping back on the bill are not accidental, but a careful consideration after the backlash it faced from

different corners of North-Eastern states. There are but three advantages for BJP in not passing the bill. Firstly, it can easily manipulate information and through propaganda promote the idea in North India that it could not pass the bill because of opposition in Rajya Sabha, especially to the Hindu voters. Already several members of BJP are saying that it is because of the anti-Hindu sentiment that the bill has been stopped, and that Pakistan was created for the Muslims but Hindus have no safe haven even in India. Secondly, the BJP will promote the idea (before elections that is) that only it can save the Hindu section of the people whose names were rejected from the list that was meant for granting citizenship. Meanwhile Himanta Biswa Sarma and Amit Shah has conducted large rallies in Assam, and citing Pulwama has asked to not make Assam 'another Kashmir'. In terms of realpolitic, Assam Gana Parishad has been steadily losing its power, so it was easy for BJP to promise that it will "pass the bill if it comes to power". Last but not the least, BJP can now take a slower path across all North-Eastern states following the ruckus that has already been created regarding the bill, and thus promising remedies and corrections in the bill, it will keep pushing its tentacles across the North-Eastern provinces. The same lie, and the same betrayal, will be repeated—over and again.

Caught in the trapeze of these electoral gains, the real questions are regulary lost. Perhaps, the most important question of them all. How does a poor, working class individual suddenly prove his or her citizenship of the nation? When the world has entered an age where capital can flow through nations so easily, why should a person who has crossed the borders to earn a livelihood or save his/her own life, be subjected to such bureacratc nightmares? Why must the questions of livelihood, or education, health, affording food and shelter take a backfoot at the question of their citizenship? The history of the world is the history of the class wars, and the wars waged against the oppressed and working classes. The ruling classes always try to distort the history, and sometimes it does succeed. However, in the end, it is but the struggle of the people that becomes victorious. The political demands, the right to self-determination and the political will of the people of Assam can be trodden down for a short while, but the people shall one day see through the fog and mire and liberate themselves. One day the Assamese people will look past the Bengali-hatred, and the working classes of Assam will walk shoulder to shoulder to a better tomorrow.

Exposing **Postmodernist's** agenda of abusing **Science**

Guruprasad Kar

POSTMODERNISM IS NOT A COHERENT PHILOSOPHICAL OUTLOOK. IT DEALS WITH VARIOUS KINDS OF DISCIPLINES. BUT THE MAIN THREAD RUNNING THROUGH ALL THESE POSTMODERNIST DISCOURSE, PLACES THE EMPHASIS ON THE FRAGMENTED NATURE OF THE WORLD AND OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE. THEY VIEW THE HUMAN BEING AND THEIR SOCIAL RELATIONS TO BE CONSTITUTED BY LANGUAGE. LANGUAGE IS ALL THAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE WORLD AND BEYOND IT THERE IS NO OTHER REALITY TO BE COMPREHENDED.

In the second half of the last century, a new form of idealism became popular among some of the so called leftists academicians in the advanced capitalist countries. This world view is popularly known as postmodernism. Postmodernists in the name of "sociology of scientific knowledge" deny that scientific facts have any necessary relation to causal processes and theoretical entities, which they claim to describe. Using various new disciplines of natural sciences they try to establish that science is mere construction but not a discovery of reality and what we consider as truth is nothing, but our acceptance of it with authority. Two physicists Alan Sokal and Jean Bricmont wrote a book entitled 'Fashionable nonsense' where they clearly showed that all the interpretations of natural sciences given by postmodernists are either devoid of meaning or gibberish. Those postmodernists even do not understand the meaning of those scientific laws and spout non-senses and thus creates mere confusions among the common people. Of course, Sokal and Bricmont confine themselves in defending the materialism developed in the period of enlightenment in Europe. But still the real development of modern sciences cannot be accommodated in the materialism of enlightenment, though progressive in its own time, is essentially mechanistic. For that we have to go beyond and bring forth dialectical materialism which sees the matter in its motion, in its change and finally it incorporates the dialectical features that remain in every material process causing the matter to move forward continually.

INTRODUCTION

Postmodernism is not a coherent philosophical outlook. It deals with various kinds of disciplines. But the main thread running through all these postmodernist discourse, places the emphasis on the fragmented nature of the world and of human knowledge. They view the human being and their social

relations to be constituted by language. Language is all that we know about the world and beyond it there is no other reality to be comprehended. Hence, there is no such universal concept like 'capitalist system', 'class struggle' or 'scientific communism'. Elen Meiksins Wood informs us that according to post modernism, "There is no such thing as a social system (e.g. the capitalist system) with its own systematic unity and "laws of motion." There are only many different kinds of power, oppression, identity and "discourse." Not only do we have to reject the old "grand narratives," like Enlightenment concepts of progress, we have to give up any idea of intelligible historical process and causality, and with it, evidently, and idea of "making history....Since there are no systems and no history susceptible to causal analysis, we cannot get to the root of the many powers that oppress us; and we certainly cannot aspire to some kind of united opposition, some kind of general human emancipation, or even a general contestation of capitalism, of the kind that socialists used to believe in. The most we can hope for is a lot of particular and separate resistances."

Actually the attack on grand narratives has essential implication in two correlated viewpoints; first one is the rejection to consider capitalism as world system that creates exploitation and oppression, economic crisis, incessant war for imperialist domination, increasing poverty in backward countries and the second one is to characterize any universal programme to dislodge the exploitative world capitalist system with the aim of establishing any egalitarian society as oppressive. In fact famous postmodernist Foucault is more explicit in expressing his view that categorically announces, "The history of power cannot be narrated from the twin sites of political economy and the state." Thus, it is implied that resistance to power can also not be organized as some project to change the nature of the state or politico-economic system. Foucault also opined that since Power is everywhere there is really no place where resistance can be distinguished from power itself, what is resistance is in reality another kind of power" (Post-modernism Today, by Siraj, 2003).

Though postmodernists deal with various subjects with the aim of negating any effort towards acquiring unified knowledge about reality, we, in this article, shall confine ourselves more or less in dealing with their opinion regarding natural sciences. In this case also, their claim is that natural science founded on the conviction that nature is governed by some

universal, immutable laws, is just an expression of the imperialistic and oppressive principles on which western society is based. Analyzing various incoherent opinions expressed by postmodernists, their common outlook can be paraphrased as

1. What makes a belief true is not in correspondence with an element of reality, but its adoption and authentication by the relevant community of enquirers.

2. Scientists at the research front cannot settle their disagreements through better experimentation, more knowledge, more advanced theories, or clearer thinking.

3. The truth about the natural world [is] what the powerful believe to be the truth about the natural world.

4. Science is socially located praxis that creates the reality it describes; it is not at all a detached description of a pre-existing reality external to its own practice. Thus science does not just describe or unravel 'facts', but actually constructs them through the active, culturally and socially situated choices scientists make in the laboratory.

SOKAL AFFIAR

In 1996, Alan Sokal, a physicist, wrote an article entitled "Transgressing the boundaries: toward a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity" for the postmodernist journal 'Social Text'. The article was published in the spring/summer 1996 issue on the "Science Wars". The article used various recent discoveries of (mainly) physics to make pseudo-profound assertions about science that any serious reader can understand it to be completely nonsense. But the article was so cunningly written by using postmodernist catchword (jargon) and by referring various postmodernist authors, the editors of the journal could not imagine that it might come from the opposite camp.

Sokal wrote "it has become increasingly apparent that physical "reality", no less than social "reality" is at bottom a social and linguistic construct, that scientific "knowledge" far from being objective, reflects and encodes the dominant ideologies and power relations of the culture that produced it, that truth claims of science are inherently theory laden, and discourse of the scientific community." Indeed,

Postmodernists associated with the journal 'Social Text' were so impressed by the article that, even after Sokal revealed that it was a hoax, one of the editors, Bruce Robbins, still felt it was a serious contribution to postmodernist philosophy.

In the same year Sokal wrote another article entitled "Transgressing the Boundaries: An Afterwards" where he informed that the article in the 'Social Text' was a hoax and it was written to expose those postmodernist thinkers who were abusing the content of many discoveries of natural sciences. The next year Sokal along with another Belgian physicist Jean Bricmont published in France a book entitled 'Imposture Intellectuals' where they showed that many leading postmodernist writers were spouting nonsense using some recent discoveries of science. In 1998, the book was published in the US under the title 'Fashionable Nonsense'.

After this incident many scientist including prominent personalities like S. Weinberg, N. D. Mermin, Meera Nanda, R. Dawkins, D. Albert, have expressed their reactions against the writings of postmodern intellectuals.

FEW EXAMPLES OF POSTMODERNISTS' ARGUMENTS FROM THE PAGES OF 'FASHIONABLE NONSENSE'

We all know that the theory of relativity has changed our concept of time and space in a fundamental way. But one of the famous postmodernist Jacques Derrida, in some context, made the following comment regarding general relativity; "The Einsteinian constant is not a constant, is not center. It is the very concept of variability – it is finally, the concept of the game. In other word, it is not the concept of something – of a center starting from which an observer could master the field – but the very concept of the game." The famous physicist Steven Weinberg in his review of Sokal's parody made the following comment, "This is absurd – the meaning of a mathematically defined quantity like π cannot be affected by the discoveries of physics, and in any case both π and G continue to appear as universal constants in the equation of general relativity." Actually all these high sounding words used by Derrida are meaningless jargons that neither speak science nor speak anything meaningful related to human knowledge.

No one will deny that the area of scientific research is

dominated by male scientists and many scientists still hold women to be incapable of reason and this view is reflected in various ways in scientific literature. But the postmodernists try to find the male domination in the scientific laws itself without caring whether the theory is true or false.

First we consider an argument quoted in 'Fashionable Nonsense' which was put forward by one leading postmodernist Luce Irigaray:

"Is $E = mc^2$ a sexed equation? Perhaps it is. Let us make the hypothesis that it is in so far as it privileges the speed of light over other speeds that are vitally necessary to us. What seems to me indicate the possibly sexed nature of the equation is not directly its uses by nuclear weapons, rather it is having privileged what goes the fastest."

Sokal clearly points out by saying "Whatever one may think about the "other speeds that are vitally necessary to us" the fact remains that the relationship $E = mc^2$ between energy (E) and mass (m) is experimentally verified to high degree of precision, and it would obviously not be valid if the speed of light (c) were replaced by another speed."

Actually this equation follows from the new concept of space and time in special theory of relativity. Actually, Einstein's two postulates (1) equivalency of all inertial reference frames and (2) the constancy of velocity of light in vacuum inevitably changed the concept of space-time and it modified the Newtonian mechanics as well. One of the consequences of this modification is the above mass-energy equation. It tells that any given quantity of mass is equivalent to a fixed quantity of energy and vice-versa. In any reaction, if some amount of mass is destroyed equivalent amount of energy will be created and vice-versa. Though Irigaray is afraid of the sexist character of the equation as it prefers the fastest velocity (symbolizing the supremacy of male), it is to be informed that not only any male but no material entity, according to the conclusion of special relativity would be able to achieve the velocity of light in vacuum.

But not only here, Irigaray further discovered masculine character of physics in its neglect to fluid mechanics. One of Irigaray's American interpreters summarizes her argument as follows:

"The privileging of solid over fluid mechanics, and indeed the inability of science to deal with turbulent

flow at all, she attributes to the association of fluidity with femininity. Whereas men have sex organs that protrude and become rigid, women have openings that leak menstrual blood and vaginal fluids.The problem of turbulent flow cannot be solved because the conceptions of fluids (and of women) have been formulated so as necessarily to leave unarticulated remainders."

In this case a hard fact has been presented but only to establish something vague. Sokal and Bricmont inform us in *Fashionable Nonsense*, "Besides, we know the equations – the so-called Navier-Stokes equations- that govern the behaviour of fluids in a vast number of situations. The main problem is that these nonlinear partial differential equations are very difficult to solve, in particular for turbulent flows."

Every person with even little scientific knowledge will understand that liquid substance has some peculiar properties (like it takes the shape of the container in which it is kept) compared with solid and hence it is more difficult to study the motion of liquid (kind of forces acting among the molecules) because of its complex nature. Ignoring this complexity and assigning the inability of developing good theory of fluid to male domination in academic arena actually belittle the importance of critically observing the really existing male domination across the society in general and scientific domain, in particular.

Further it seems from various postmodernist writings that just to draw attention they purposefully use the male-female relation even where the analogy is completely devoid of meaning. Already we have described Irigaray. Another postmodernist Lacan after some vague discussion regarding algebra equated the erectile organ to the square root of minus one. Richard Dawkins commented in an article published in *Nature*, "We do not need the mathematical expertise of Sokal and Bricmont to assure us that the author of this stuff is fake. ...You do not have to be a physicist to smell out the daffy absurdity of this kind of argument..."

Another postmodernist thinker Latour was quoted saying, "Since a settlement of a controversy is the cause of nature's representation, not the consequences, we can never use the outcome-Nature-to explain how and why a controversy has been settled." This leads Latour to some funny conclusions. Sokal and Bricmont wrote;

"Latour discusses what he interprets as the discovery in 1976, by French scientists working on the mummy of the pharaoh II, that his death (circa 1213 BC) was due to tuberculosis. Latour asks : 'How could he pass away due to bacillus discovered by Robert Koch in 1882?' Latour notes, correctly, that it would be an anachronism to assert that Ramses II was killed by machine-gun fire or died from the stress provoked by a stock-market crash. But then Latour wonders, why isn't death from tuberculosis likewise an anachronism? He goes so far as to assert that 'before Koch, the bacillus has no real existence.' He dismisses the common-sense notion that Koch discovered a pre-existing bacillus as 'having only the appearance of common sense.'"

Here is another ambiguous statement by one Postmodernist Andrew Ross. Sokal quoted him from the pages of 'Social Text', "I won't deny that there is a law of gravity. I would nevertheless argue that there are no laws of nature, there are only laws in society. Laws are things that men and women make, and that they can change."

What does this mean? This could mean that our understanding about the behaviour of nature changes over time and hence laws become more modified. But that is not the case with these vulgar postmodernists. The denial of objective reality outside our consciousness is the essence. Now look at the statement closely. If he means what he says, then it would imply that the law of gravity is something we legislate and is valid as long as we say it is valid and becomes invalid when we decide otherwise. So if we say it is no longer valid, can we then fly? When reacting to this comment, Sokal correctly asserted, "the laws of nature are not social constructions; the universe existed long before we did. Our theories about the laws of nature are social constructions. The goal of science is for the latter to approximate as closely as possible the former."

Postmodernists are seeking not only to overthrow science but our idea of rational thinking itself. They see the modern way of reasoning in the scientific area as inherently repressive. They search for liberating sciences and put their hopes on the new sciences like chaos theory, quantum mechanics in physics and Godel's incompleteness theorem in mathematics. They think that chaos theory (based on nonlinear mathematics) eliminates determinism from physics and its emergence represented the demise of linear

mode of thought in all fields.

About chaos theory Sokal and Bricmont inform us, "There are many physical phenomena governed by deterministic laws, and therefore predictable in principle, which are nevertheless unpredictable in practice because of their sensitivity to initial condition.... These phenomena are expressed figuratively by saying that a butterfly flapping its wings today in Madagascar could provoke a hurricane three weeks from now in Florida." So the examples of deterministic systems with high sensitivity to initial conditions show that these two features are not contradictory, they are perfectly compatible. Actually the ultimate paradox is that the existence of chaotic dynamical systems in facts supports universal determinism rather than contradicts it if we confine ourselves in the classical world.

While postmodernists have used chaos theory, Godel's incompleteness theorem and quantum mechanics to establish their point, quantum mechanics needs a careful discussion as this subject (at least in its standard interpretation) contains some counterintuitive ideas hitherto absent in the subject of natural sciences.

The matter with quantum mechanics has been more complicated not only because of its some peculiar features but due to some of the statements made by the founders of the subject itself that go beyond the essence of their discoveries. For example, Heisenberg stated, "We can no longer speak of the behavior of the particle independently of the process of observation. As a final consequence, the natural laws formulated mathematically in quantum theory no longer deal with the elementary particles themselves but our knowledge of them. Nor is it any longer possible to ask whether or not these particles exist in space and time objectively..." In a similar vein, Neils Bohr commented, "An independent reality in the ordinary physical sense can...neither be ascribed to the phenomena nor to the agencies of observation."

In particular, these ambiguous statements and various other features of quantum mechanics have been used to justify the position of Postmodernism in the following way;

1. Complementarity shows that reality is composed of contradictory truths and hence no particular objective truth can be ascribed to reality.

2. Uncertainty relation shows that reality itself cannot be conceived to exist.

3. Quantum mechanics as a whole (specially, by its measurement postulate) shows that the reality is brought into existence and maintained by the action of consciousness.

This subject being a new development in science, we shall discuss it in little details for clarification in order to find the hollowness of the tricky conclusions of postmodernist thinkers.

QUANTUM MECHANICS : LAWS IN SUBATOMIC WORLD

The historical origin of quantum mechanics is related with Planck's successful theory of black body radiation. When a black body emits heat, it comprises radiation (in the form of waves) of various frequencies. The distribution of total energy (that is radiated) among the various frequencies was known from the experiments. But the problem was that the distribution could not be explained by classical theory. Max Planck showed that if one assumes that light for a given frequency is emitted not continuously but in the form of packet, then the whole thing can be explained. This packet is called quanta and its energy is proportional to the frequency of the radiation. Then total energy of a given frequency of radiation is nothing but total no. of packets of that frequency that have been radiated. Later Einstein showed that this is indeed the case and not only in emission but when light is absorbed, it is absorbed in the form of packet. Using it he could explain the photo electric effect for which he was awarded Nobel Prize. So what is established by these discoveries is that light has particle character (property of being localized in a place). But does it mean that light does not possess wave character (property of spreading everywhere)? No, the wave property of light has been confirmed by Young's interference experiment in 1801. But thing did not stop here. In some experiments subatomic particle showed wave character in terms of interference. In this way the mechanical separation between two opposed properties gets blurred where earlier it was thought that particle is particle and wave is wave and one mutually excludes another. In such a situation, when the old physics could not capture this new truth within its fold, the necessity of some new formalism arose that could absorb these features of subatomic

world in its new axioms. This compulsion gave birth to the new subject called quantum mechanics.

Naturally, in this new subject of quantum mechanics, many old concepts had to be given up. In earlier mechanics, the state of a particle would mean definite values of its position and momentum and values of other dynamical variables can be calculated from them and these values are revealed in measurement. But in quantum mechanics, the state has to be described in terms of a wave function (an abstract mathematical object called vector in Hilbert space) and this function keeps all the information about the particle that nature permits. Then one can obviously ask; what about the value of position and momentum of the particle at a given moment. Quantum mechanical state does not answer this question (if it could be answered then it would be reduced to classical mechanics). Some interesting features of quantum mechanics can be stated in the following way;

1. The state in quantum mechanics does not provide prior values for dynamical variables that would be revealed in future measurement. The state in quantum mechanics encapsulates the probabilities of various possible results of a measurement that can be performed in future. Hence once the state is fixed, these probabilities are also fixed.
2. Position and momentum cannot be simultaneously measured. Similarly, the wave property and particle property cannot be verified simultaneously for a single entity. This is the essence of Bohr's complementarity principle.
3. If for a given state, result of position measurement can be more precisely determined (probability close to one), then the result of momentum measurement becomes very uncertain and vice-versa. This is the essence of uncertainty relation of Heisenberg.
4. Quantum dynamics incorporates both determinism and indeterminism. A quantum system, when left to itself, the state evolves deterministically but whenever there is a measurement performed on the system, the state suddenly jumps to new state which is termed as collapse of the wave function.

Still one can assert that it may be the case that individual particle possesses definite values for position and momentum, but quantum state (as it describes the statistics of measurement result) cannot capture that

element of reality for the individual particle. Many physicists including Einstein used to think that quantum mechanics, though consistent, is incomplete and there must be an underlying complete theory to be discovered in future that will reduce present form of quantum theory to be a statistical theory. But later discoveries have shown that even if one assumes the existence of such complete theory (Individual particle possesses definite value for position, momentum and for other dynamical variables and measurement only reveal those pre-existing values), then the statistics calculated for composite system (system comprising two or more systems) based on such theory which is further consistent with relativity principle i.e. local, will be different from that of quantum mechanics (Bell theorem, 1964). The statistics obtained from experimental results, found in 1980's onwards, support the results of quantum mechanics implying that quantum mechanics cannot be replaced by some local realistic theory.

Do all these things in quantum mechanics at all support the concept that reality is created by observer's consciousness? Here of course there is uncertainty and hence the result of every measurement is not predetermined (unlike what happens in classical mechanics) but one can calculate the probabilities of various possible results (which are pre-determined) and it has nothing to do with human will. Here values of dynamical variables are not objective but wave functions are objective that encapsulate the probabilities of measurement results. Very recently, it has been proved that wave functions are indeed objective. On the other hand, the uncertainty in quantum mechanics is a predictive law about the behaviour of concrete phenomena that can be tested and confirmed like other physical principles. The quantum probabilities cannot be reduced to subjective probabilities as happened in classical statistical theory. One only should be careful that the objective truth that exists independent of human will in the subatomic world is not same as that in classical world.

QUANTUM MECHANICS REJECTS MECHANICAL MATERIALISM

Quantum mechanics of course rejects the concept of mechanical materialism which follows a rigid logic and rejects mutually exclusive trends from a single object. Quantum mechanics shows that mutually

exclusive properties like wave nature and particle nature can reside in a single entity like photon or electron. So the material entity can manifest itself sometime as particle, sometime as wave, but not both at the same time (complementarity). Some people are afraid that this could be a manifestation of denial of objective reality but it is not. Same kind of confusion occurred among some philosophers when Einstein provided his mass-energy equation.

Einstein's theory of relativity showed that mass can be transformed into energy and vice-versa which established that energy and mass are different forms of matter and one form may transform into another. This discovery was interpreted by some idealist philosophers that 'matter has disappeared'. But careful analysis of Einstein's mass-energy relation does not allow drawing such conclusion. Here one confuses the matter as a philosophical category, with mass, a physical properties of matter. The philosophical concept of matter reflects only one property, objectivity, i.e. the capacity to exist independently of our consciousness. Mass and energy are physical properties, where mass is the measure of inertia and energy is common measure of various kinds of motion of matter. In Einstein's equation, the point concerns mass, not matter. Therefore it does not follow that matter (a

philosophical category) is transformed into energy (a scientific category); the equation is an expression only of the quantitative relation of mass and energy.

Similarly some people think that existence of material particle necessarily implies that it will have definite position and momentum. But existence of reality, independent of our consciousness, is a philosophical statement about the world and this reality should not be confused with some property of matter (scientific category), discovered at some particular historical stage. Identifying the objective existence of a material particle with the existence of definite value of position and momentum is a feature of classical physics but one has to give it up in face of new condition created first by new empirical results and then by its rational development to a new discipline namely quantum mechanics.

POSTMODERNISM: ESSENTIALLY OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLE

The general claim of the postmodernists is not something new. The essence of their thinking had appeared long back through various idealist

philosophies. The more recent trend which maintained this kind of thinking is positivism. The first major contribution of the Vienna school was the construction of the philosophy of positivism, largely due to Mach, which asserted that science was simply the most convenient mode of arranging sense impressions, and that any discussion of the real material world independent of our consciousness was pure and useless metaphysics. But the essence of this world outlook was first propounded by an idealist philosopher Berkley in more clear terms.

The old materialism maintained;

1. That the 'immediate objects' of knowledge are our own ideas.
2. These ideas are produced by the action upon us of external material things, and that at least our ideas of primary qualities are copies of the qualities of external bodies.

Berkley accepted the first proposition (a), and then set out to prove that the materialist addition (b) was absurd. Once Berkley's position is accepted, the correspondence between knowledge and external objects does not arise. Whatever new terms are used by Mach and others, the essence remains same as in Berkley's idea. Though positivism appeared in the first place in the field of natural sciences, its implication was not limited in this field only. It marked a general retreat or withdrawal of intellectuals from concrete to abstract problems and from naturalistic to formal approach. The essence of this approach was a reluctance to face real social facts. Behind this there were real material conditions that developed at that time in society. Social facts were becoming increasingly hard for bourgeois intellectuals to face.

Interestingly if one filter the essence of postmodernism from its diverse manifestations, one sees that here also the denial of identity between knowledge and external world is their central point. But postmodernists have cleverly used some new discoveries of natural sciences and interpret them in their own way. Old materialism, which is incapable of accommodating opposite trends in a single object (dialectics), cannot be a strong weapon to fight out the idealism of postmodernists.

Moreover, the denial of objectivity to scientific discoveries by postmodernists is conducive to propagation of unscientific beliefs by various 'Hindu right wing' fringe groups working in India. The established scientific theories like 'Darwin's theory

of evolution' are identified with the hegemonic 'western culture' and in opposition to this hegemony they propagate vague history of scientific discoveries in ancient India. If all beliefs are to be given equal importance, then fighting against this trend will be identified as oppressive by postmodernists. It is to be informed that these fringe groups have been dominant social and political forces for some time and they have been continuously attacking religious minorities, lower caste people, scientific minded academicians, democratic people and trying to weaken scientific culture for past few years. In this way they are also trying to silence all the struggle against imperialist plunders of the cheap labour and natural resources of the country that have increased manifold in the period of globalization.

SOKAL AND BRICMONT DEFENDS MATERIALISM OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT ERA.

The materialistic philosophy that was born during enlightenment in Europe, though progressive in its own time, is not the highest form of materialism. The enlightenment refers to the philosophical and the intellectual development in Europe of the 17th and 18th centuries. Enlightenment philosophers of the 18th century struggled to subject all the despotic and backward institutions of that time to the acid test of reason. This struggle helped break through the medieval and religious rubbish that crippled development of productive force and human thought for long.

If one looks from the class perspective, one sees that this materialist philosophy served the interest of capitalist class (then a progressive social group oppressed by feudalism) by throwing feudal establishment and in this way establishing capitalist relation in society which again served the further development of science and hence productive force of the society.

Sokal and Bricmont through all their arguments have defended materialism in its most general form concerning the existence of external world and the ability of human thought to increasingly comprehend it. But the truth is that not all the enlightenment figures were thoroughly materialist and most importantly materialists of enlightenment were limited in their outlook.

1. It seeks to reduce all processes to the same cycle of mechanistic interactions and so cannot account for development, for the emergence of new qualities (like evolution in animal kingdom) and new types of processes of nature.

2. It cannot account for social development, nor can it give any account of human social activity and finally leads to an abstract conception of human nature.

3. It propounds the existence of absolute truth and maintains that human being can comprehend this truth by using the power of reasons. It holds that source of true knowledge is reason or abstract thought.

Sokal and Bricmont, being adherent follower of old materialism, cannot accept that opposite properties can exist in a single entity. In Fashionable Nonsense, they write, "For example, a sociologist friend asked us, not unreasonably: Isn't it contradictory for quantum mechanics to exhibit both 'discontinuity' and 'interconnectedness'? Aren't these properties opposites? The brief answer is that these properties characterize quantum mechanics in very specific senses—which require a mathematical knowledge of the theory to be properly understood—and that, in these senses, the two notions do not contradict one another."

But in quantum mechanics how one can avoid the existence of contradictory aspects like wave property and particle property, determinism and randomness for the same subatomic particles. These are supported by experimental facts. Quantum mechanics did not introduce contradictory aspect rather the empirical findings forced the physicists to construct the subject in such a way that it can accommodate these contradictory aspects.

Sokal and Bricmont need not be afraid of contradiction in matter. Not only in quantum mechanics, contradiction as a philosophical category, exists in every process either social or natural. For example, in capitalist society proletariat and bourgeoisie are in a contradiction with each other, but this proves neither that proletariat and bourgeoisie don't exist, nor that capitalism doesn't exist as a social system.

As Joseph Green points out that the contradiction (in natural science) is not something which is to be driven out by mathematical formulation. It is a powerful

philosophical category by which one can understand things in their motion and hence can appreciate the possible transformations that things may undergo in future. The existence of contradictory aspects in subatomic particles is not something passive (waiting to be driven out by proper mathematical formulation) but has useful application. Actually various new discoveries in information processing including quantum cryptography (whose security is established from quantum laws) have been made by constructively exploiting the above contradictory aspects of quantum mechanics.

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM: AGENT OF REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE

After the working class became an independent force in the capitalist society in the middle of nineteenth century, there was another revolution in the philosophical outlook of materialism. This was discovered by Marx and Engels and it is known as 'dialectical materialism'. New discoveries in various disciplines of science and increased empirical knowledge about society created the material basis for developing the materialist outlook further. But the capitalist class after establishing its safe rule became conservative even in the struggle for further democratization of society by destroying the remnants of feudal values and practices. In this context the rein of democratic movement went to the hand of the proletariat class who can survive only by selling their labour power and has nothing to lose. So this class became the leading social force which has the potential of developing the philosophy further by accommodating all the new truths that were being established in various disciplines. The dialectical materialism, that was discovered, apart from holding the basic propositions of materialism contains the followings;

1. Matter is always in motion. There can be no matter without motion. Motion is the mode of existence of matter.
2. The driving force of this motion of matter is generated within the material process itself. The source of this driving force is the inner contradiction i.e. the struggle between opposites or conflicting tendencies, which are in operation in every process of nature and society. In simple words 'development' is the struggle of opposites.

Regarding the relation between external world and

knowledge, it asserts that

3. The source of knowledge is human practice.
4. Rational knowledge is higher form of knowledge distilled from scattered empirical knowledge achieved through human practice. Human thinking plays (by using category of reasons till achieved) the central (active) role in the motion from empirical knowledge to rational knowledge.
5. The truth of rational knowledge, thus formed, cannot be verified by further reasoning, it has again to be verified in higher practice which either establishes the truth of the rational knowledge (at least for the time being) or falsity of it. The other possibility is that the knowledge is partially correct and needs modification.

Dialectical materialism agrees that the subjective influence like social values, conventions and class-influenced outlook and methods can and do distort perceptions of the actual truth of things and when doing sociology of science, it is important to recognize and identify these subjective distortions. But this in no way establishes that knowledge has no correlation with objective truth. Knowledge, in general, is relative due to objective historical limitations and hence there is no final truth. That's why (rational) knowledge goes from lower to higher as time progresses. But at particular instance knowledge, verified in practice, has also an aspect of absoluteness as it cannot be compared with some 'other knowledge' achieved by some other method than one suggested in dialectical materialism.

On the basis of dialectical materialism, Karl Marx, for the first time, could analyze the actual production relation of capitalism that is working behind the market and exposed its inherent contradiction that inevitably would lead it to being a fetter to further development of productive force of the society. He also discovered the historical process by which the capitalist system can be abolished by establishing the dictatorship of the working class, a transitional society and leading the class struggle towards creating the communist society. This transitional society namely 'socialism' was established first in Russia and then in China but in the fierce class struggle between working class and capitalist class in the transitional society, the capitalist class has been able to defeat the working class and turns socialism back to capitalism in both the countries. But this defeat in no way, invalidate

Marx's theory of revolution as capitalism cannot get rid of the inherent contradiction that continually pushes the working people towards making social revolution as it did in the past. Moreover, with the experiment of establishing socialism Lenin and Mao Tse Tung had further developed the understanding of dialectical materialism along with the understanding of the science of class struggle in socialism.

CONCLUSION

The idealist philosophy has survived till date though there had been great advancement in natural sciences specially, in 20th Century. In particular, development of postmodern thought in the second half of 20th Century shows that idealist philosophy does not linearly decline with progress of natural science. Rather, as long as class society survives, the idealist philosophy keeps appearing with its various forms and always to be promoted by the existing ruling class. Postmodern thought is one of such jargon which is exclusively idealistic though, surprisingly it arose first among the left intellectuals of the west out of pessimism created in a situation where revisionists has weakened the labor movement and capitalist roaders captured the power in Soviet Union and turned it into an imperialistic power. In this overall background of pessimism, the ground for such philosophy has been even more fertile with a rather optimistic view of capitalist prosperity that was in view for some time in developed countries after second world-war. As Wood observed the postmodernist worldview imbued with the terms like 'language', 'discourse' and 'culture' was rooted in the golden age of capitalism with the dominance of consumerism, the multiplicity of consumption patterns and proliferation of life styles.

Today we are living in a world where monopoly finance capital rules every aspects of social life. The reality that is created by this system is horrendous. On one hand the huge achievements of sciences have created the possibility to satisfy all the basic requirements of the people of the globe and on the other hand, the free market system propounded by various imperialistic organization like International Monetary Fund, World Bank, World Trade Organization are creating the worst (economical and social) situation among the vast masses of the poor of the backward countries. Then who would be afraid to see the reality as it is?

Of course, those who want to control the planet by the power of their capital. So whatever the postmodernists think about their so-called revolutionary ideas, their views ultimately serve the interest of the miniscule powerful group in some or other way. This powerful group has a universal programme (free market with enormous political and military power) of exploiting the people and hence they abhor any other universal programme (for creating an egalitarian society) which exclude their mode of operation.

In the face of such savage attack on working people in the period of globalization, postmodernism discourages any kind of united opposition as in their opinion there is no unified system to be opposed. In particular, Foucault was categorical in believing that there is no one source of power like the state or political economy. Power is manifested in each context like regulation of sex, production system etc. without any necessary correlation among them. As there is no point of origin where the wielding of power starts from, there is no point of pressure at which resistance could be organized. Each discourse of power produced its own point of tension and conflict and resistance could only be multiple, local and transitory. Even they dilute the concept of resistance itself when they say that power is everywhere and hence there is no place where resistance can be distinguished from power itself. What is resistance is in reality another kind of power which is again a kind of oppression.

Whatever postmodernist revolution means, in practice, postmodernist thinking has been conducive to proliferation of numerous Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) in backward countries mainly funded by various imperialist institutions. These NGOs when working on some local problems discourage people to get at the root of the various oppressive powers and in this way work in favour of the imperialist finance capital by obscuring the fact that it, in some or other way, encourages every possible reactionary forces in various corners of the world for its own survival.

Postmodernists have no weapon to fight dialectical materialism apart from some general assertion of their own choice. And they do it. They reject any grand narrative or theory of universal nature as it, according to their opinion, is oppressive towards local knowledge without exception. But whatever the postmodernists think the world capitalist system specially, in the period of globalization, is vehemently approaching towards

its further moribund condition, towards faster decay by developing parasitism to its extreme. In such situation working people of the world would not sit idle by the advices of postmodernists but will get more and more unified through their struggles against reaction appearing in various fields at the national and international level to destroy the capitalist system world over.

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