



Vol No. 31 | Issue No. 04 | April 2020 | Price 30/-

# PROUT

A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis



ISSN2321-6786



"Lack of consciousness about rights and responsibilities drives social beings towards a tragic end". The women's rights movement must overall be the most inspiring liberation movement the world has ever seen.



Scan the code with  
mobile/tab using  
QR Code reader

31

INSTEAD OF RECTIFYING  
THEMSELVES, POLITICIANS WANT TO  
ACCOMPLISH EVERYTHING THROUGH  
THEIR GRANDILOQUENCE

36

THE SHORTAGE OF WATER HAS  
BROUGHT FARMING TO A VIRTUAL  
HALT FORCING MEN TO MIGRATE TO  
OTHER STATES

**READ & SUBSCRIBE**

**PROUT**

A Vibrant Magazine that Informs & Inspires

# PROUT

**PROGRESSIVE UTILISATION THEORY**

Propounded by - Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

**PROUT - Cry of the Suffering Humanity**







## What is PROUT :

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

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

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

## Main principles of PROUT and Neo-Humanism

-  **Neo-humanism** : Neo-humanism expands the humanistic love for all human beings to include love and respect for all creation - plants, animals and even inanimate objects. Neo-humanism provides a philosophical basis for creating a new era of ecological balance, planetary citizenship and cosmic kinship.
-  **Basic Necessities Guaranteed To All** : People can not strive toward their highest human aspirations if they are lacking the basic requirements of life. PROUT believes that access to food, shelter, clothing, education and medical care are fundamental human rights which must be guaranteed to all.
-  **Balanced Economy** : Prout advocates regional self-reliance, cooperatively owned and managed businesses, local control of large scale key industries, and limits on the individual accumulation of excessive wealth.
-  **Women's Right**: PROUT encourages the struggle against all forms of violence and exploitation used to suppress women. PROUT's goal is coordinated cooperation, with equal rights between men and women.
-  **Cultural Diversity**: In the spirit of universal fellowship PROUT encourages the protection and cultivation of local culture, language, history and tradition.
-  **World Government**: PROUT supports the creation of world government with a global constitution and a common penal code.



# Contents

VOLUME 31 | ISSUE 04 | APRIL 2020



## Women's Rights

11

### Feature

#### 08 COMMUNALISM

The Dangers of Communalism



#### 17 UNORGANISED SECTOR SHORTCHANGED

Pension Scheme for Unorganised Workers Is Yet Another Illusion



#### 21 SOCIAL ISSUES

Questioning the 2003 Citizenship Rules : The Villain of NPR-NRC



#### 27 CHILDREN'S DANGERS

By 2030, 2.3 Billion People Are Projected to Live in Fragile or Conflict Affected Contexts



#### 34 HOLISTIC LIVING

Astrology and Vegetables



#### 31 TRUE DEMOCRACY

Partyless Democracy



#### 35 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

How Mining Ruined Lives and Livelihoods



#### 38 HIDDEN AGENDA

Toxic Agriculture and the Gates Foundation in Environmental Protection



#### REGULARS

05	Editorial	46	Activities
06	Letters	50	Prabhat Samgiita
07	Inspirational		

# Fundamental Principles of PROUT

Human expressions are multilateral. The ways of life are multifarious. Amidst these multifarious activities the picture of human beings that we get is their culture. The ways of expression may differ from one group of people to other: some eat with their hands, some use spoons, yet others use sticks, but everyone has to eat. Human culture is, therefore, one and indivisible. The use of expressions such as Hindu culture, Muslim culture, Indian culture or European culture is absurd. Those who hold these partisan ideas are not well-wishers of humanity.

– Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

1

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

2

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

3

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

4

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

5

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

## Editor

A'ca'rya Santosananda Avadhuta

## Editorial Board

A'ca'rya Acyutananda Avadhuta / A'ca'rya Vedaprajananda Avadhuta / Sohail Inayatullah / Steven Landau

General Manager : Pranav Koul

Circulation Manager : Ramkesh Choudhary

Correspondents : Kanhu Charan Behura / Ravindra Singh

Layout & Design : Suman Kumar

## Rate (INDIA)

Newstand Price	- ₹ 30/-
Annual Subscription	- ₹ 324/-
Two Years Subscription	- ₹ 612/-
Three Years Subscription	- ₹ 864/-
Five Years Subscription	- ₹ 1350/-
Ten Years Subscription	- ₹ 2520/-

## Overseas (BY AIRMAIL)

Annual	- US\$ 45
--------	-----------

## Overseas (By Paypal)

US	- US\$ 45
Others	- US\$ 50

Payments in India may be made by cheque favouring **Neo-Humanist Education Foundation** mailed to **Acarya Santosananda Avadhuta**, Prout Bhawan, JC-48, Khirki Extension, Main Road, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi -17  
For outstation remittance from non computerized banks/branches add Rs 30.00 for bank clearance charges.  
Or amounts may be deposited directly to any branch of the State Bank of India as per details below:

**Neo-Humanist Education Foundation, State Bank of India, Malviya Nagar Branch, C-30 Malviya Nagar, New Delhi 110017**  
A/C No. 30379188250 IFSC SBIN0001493

Overseas remittances may be made by Paypal using id **prout.am@gmail.com**  
or electronic bank transfer referring above details and **Swift Code SBININBB382**



Head Office : Prout Bhawan, JC-48, Khirki Extension  
Main Road, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi - 110017  
Mobile No. : 09212199658, 9810625082 Email : prout.am@gmail.com



For enquiries, please contact :  
Mobile No(s) : 9999626164, 9350860274  
Email : proutcustomercare@gmail.com

Printed & Published by A'ca'rya Santosananda Avadhuta on behalf of Neo Humanist Education Foundation and printed at Royal Press B-82, Okhla Industrial Area Phase-1, New Delhi-110020 and published from PROUT Bhawan, JC-48, Khirki Extension, Main Road, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi - 110017  
Editor : A'ca'rya Santosananda Avadhuta





FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

# DELHI RIOTS

The recent riots in North East Delhi in which 53 persons lost their lives, nearly 500 injured and crores of rupees of public and private property vandalised and destroyed showed how we as a society are vulnerable to mob violence. People in effected parts are living in camps or left their homes in fear of fresh violence. That this happened when the President of the US the most powerful nation in the world was on a state visit to India makes it all the more sinister due to its timing, planning and execution. But what stands out most of all has been the inability of the administration and law enforcing agencies to prevent and limit the violence in time. Both have vast powers for maintaining law and order under the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 and could have easily anticipated the breach of peace and used these powers as in the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir to effectively to curb rabble rousing and violence by the detention of leaders and others. In Delhi similar timely action would have saved many lives.



Another aspect that is shocking is, when Delhi burned none of its 80 elected leaders (70 MLAs, 7 Lok Sabha and 3 Rajya Sabha) were seen on the ground to quell tempers and calm nerves. Each one of them whilst on taking oath of office swore allegiance to the Constitution of India to uphold and protect the sovereignty and integrity of the country. But as people's representatives, they broke that very oath by pitching community against community, religion against religion spreading fear among the citizenry with their divisive and inflammatory utterances. That apart they being missing in action cannot claim to have discharged the duty the electorate hoped they would do.

Among all this mayhem and sea of darkness there were islands of light. The residents of Delhi despite who in an age old tradition of living together in harmony took it upon themselves and stepped in to protect their neighbours. Even people from different parts of Delhi unaffected by the riots came as citizen volunteers to reach out and provide shelter, food and assistance. When all this arson and violence was going on, it was the self restraint by these individuals that preserved the remaining feelings of community and social harmony presently under severe stress. The feeble and belated police action was too little too late compared to what the citizens did.

But even while it is essential to get to the root of the Delhi violence, and hold the guilty to account, it is a warning that the current mood can translate into trouble elsewhere. Delhi has shown the perils of inflammatory political rhetoric, the partisan role and incompetence of the police; and the dangerous use of social media.

Yet one may not forget who is to really blame? Is it victory of wealth over intellect? Over 50 years ago, Prout's founder Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar said: "In any type of communal or other reactionary-instigated conflict, there are wealthy bosses on both sides behind the riots and fracas. The bosses themselves never take up spears, lances or axes and fight. Neither the shūdra masses nor the warlike ksātriyas are responsible for the problem of the millions of refugees in different countries, for the heart-rending cries of the mothers, wives, sons and daughters of the soldiers who died on the battlefields, for the blazing flames of communal (fanatic religious) riots, for communalism itself, provincialism, nationalism and casteism. The responsibility lies with a small group of shrewd vipras [intellectuals bought over by the capitalist vaeshyas' money power] who, out of petty self-interest, instigate the shudras and ksatriyas to commit heinous acts. Vested interests cannot tolerate and use all their strength to oppose. The greater the conflict between person and person, between community and community, between state and state, the greater is their advantage".

Rest of the country would be well advised from Delhi's lessons to nip the evil of brewing tensions in the bud before they escalate.



## Science and Humans of the Future

A fascinating peep into the likely lives and affairs of future humans by Prout's founder. The aspect about laboratory babies will surely boggle the mind's of today's humans.

- Tanya Romanova,  
Bucharest, Romania

## Corona Virus Covid 19

The editorial is noteworthy. Since then there's been a worldwide spread of the infection. WHO has declared it Pandemic. Worldwide as per latest figures there are 9829 deaths and 236,915 confirmed cases across 160 countries. China leads with 3199 deaths and 80,778 infections. I belong to New Delhi and am presently working in Shanghai. I have myself along with many others in the city been confined to home as many others, even though it is out of Wuhan. China with such strict measures has controlled the virus and new cases are presently down to zero. On the other hand in Europe, the number of deaths in Italy has overtaken China. In Italy 3,405 have died (mostly elderly people) and 41,035 infections as compared to China's 3,249 deaths and 81,154 infections. Iran has the next highest with 611 deaths and 12,729 infections. In fact the total number of cases in the rest of the world has overtaken China. India has almost 200 infected and 4 deaths due to the virus. The authorities are battling to contain the spread of infection and prevent its present Stage II to jump to Stage III.

The prime Minister recently addressed the nation and Govt. has instituted many effective public health safety measures in India and also to help Indians stranded in China and Iran. All must follow Govt advice, ensure strict personal hygiene and avoid going into crowded places.

- Ashish Singh, Shanghai, China

## Abolish Death Penalty

This feature could not have come at a more appropriate time with the public outcry and extensive media coverage regarding executing the death sentence to 'Nirbhaya' case's four convicts (ref article 'Light of a Tigress' in Prout Feb 2013 issue). It is true that death penalty being awarded over thousands of years has not acted as deterrent in criminal minds. It should be abolished as no aspect of law of nature can allow a society of human beings to take the life of another human. That cannot be considered as cardinal justice.

- Sarla Thakur,  
Patna, Bihar

## Earthly Resources Rational Distribution

Very apt poem based on Prout philosophy, which gives in a nutshell the reasons for instituting Prout economics in society. The picture in the background of a poor and frail old man eating off a newspaper page is heart rending indeed.

- Tarique Halim,  
Hyderabad, Telangana

## Destroyed South East Asia

When skyscrapers, malls and enormous hotels are surrounded by miserable houses and slums what can any onlooker feel and say? It's a sad tale of woes of the poor people of South East Asia have to face at the hands of rich elites. They need new lives of culture and dignity. The present status quo should never be allowed to continue.

- Rita Glorious,  
Jakarta, Indonesia

## Social Status of Dalits

It is a sad state of affairs that the highest number of crimes committed against Dalit women sexual harassment, assault and verbal insults. The picture of the young girl on page 23 tells its own story. Faster judicial redressal system for crimes committed against Dalits is the only answer.

## Smart Cities Inequalities

This reminds me of the poem 'Smart Cities Smarter Slums' published in July issue last year. It's all very well to create smart cities with all the modern facilities of transport and communications which helps only a section of well to do people, but what about the slums, can't they be made smarter by providing normal amenities of proper housing, sanitation and drinking water?

- Arundati Bhaskar, Agra, UP.

## Union Budget Exclusions

It's indeed very strange that the Finance Minister chose to exclude the poor SC/STs from the vision of Aspirational India. This shows the mindset of people in positions of power about the weak and marginal sections of society.

- Charu Nautiyal,  
Joshimath, Uttarakhand

## Privatization

In USA Defence manufacturing is more or less privatized. This is what is being introduced in India. How far this would be successful needs to be seen. Selling out of assets and stakes in Public Sector Undertakings albeit on grounds of them being non-performing needs to be proceeded with caution.

- Benu Sarbhadhikari,  
Belgaum, Maharashtra

## Labour Reforms Rajasthan

An interesting and well researched article. Labour reforms should benefit labour and not the other way round. The example of Rajasthan should be studied deeply and corrective measures taken immediately.

- Sarabjit Singh,  
Amritsar, Punjab



# The People's Advent

'Tis coming up the steep of Time,  
And this old world is growing brighter!  
We may not see its dawn sublime,  
Yet, high hopes make the heart throb lighter  
We may be sleeping in the ground,  
When it awakes the world in wonder,  
But, we have felt it gathering round,  
And heard its voice of living thunder,  
'Tis coming! yes, 'tis coming.

Tis coming now, that glorious time,  
Foretold, and sung, by prophets hoary,  
For which, when thinking was a crime,  
Souls, leapt to heaven, from scaffolds gory.  
They passed, nor see the work they wrought,  
Now the crown'd hopes of centuries, blossom!  
But the live lightning of their thought  
And daring deeds, doth pulse earth's bosom,  
'Tis coming! yes, 'tis coming.

Creeds, Empires, Systems, rot with age,  
But, the great People's ever youthful!  
And it shall write the Future's page,  
To our humanity more truthful!  
The gnarliest heart, hath tender chords,  
To waken at the name of "Brother"  
And time comes when, brain-scorpion words,  
We shall not speak to sting each other,  
'Tis coming! yes, 'tis coming.

Out of the light ye Priests, nor fling,  
Your dark, cold, shadows, on us longer!  
Aside! thou world-wide curse, called King!  
The People's step, is quicker, stronger,  
There's a Divinity within  
That makes men great, whene'er they will it,  
God works with all who dare, and win,  
And the time cometh to reveal it,  
'Tis coming! yes 'tis coming.

Freedom! the tyrants kill thy braves,  
Yet in our memories live the sleepers,  
And, tho' doom'd millions, feed the graves,  
Dug by Death's fierce, red-handed, reapers;  
The World shall not for ever bow  
To things, which mock God's own endeavour:  
'Tis nearer than they wot of now,  
When flowers shall wreath the sword for ever,  
'Tis coming! yes, 'tis coming!

Fraternité! Love's other name,  
Dear, heaven-connecting link of Being!  
Then shall we grasp thy golden dream,  
As souls full-statured, grow far seeing,  
Thou, shalt unfold our better part,  
And in our life-cup yield more honey!  
Light up with joy the poor man's heart,  
And Love's own world, with smiles more sunny.  
Fraternité, thou'rt coming!

Aye, it must come, the Tyrant's throne  
Is crumbling, with our hot tears rusted:  
The Sword, earth's mighty have leant on,  
Is cankered, with our heart's blood crusted;  
Room! for the men of mind make way,  
Ye robber Rulers, pause no longer;  
Ye cannot stay the coming day,  
The world rolls on, the light grows stronger,  
'Tis coming! yes 'tis coming.

*- Gerald Massey*



*Spartacus who in 73 BC led a slave revolt against Romans.  
(Sculpture, Louvre Museum, Paris)*

# The Dangers of Communalism



*Scenes from 1947 partition of India*

British government started a programme to encourage communal division amongst the people based on caste, scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, Muslim and non-Muslim.

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

**I**s the division of people into castes and communities natural Balkanization or artificial Balkanization? Natural Balkanization is just like one cell becoming two. Artificial fissiparous tendencies are unnatural. So is the division of people into castes and communities a process of natural Balkanization or artificial fissiparous tendencies?

Amongst the inimical forces, there are certain parties which are goaded by certain forces, by the spirit of certain fissiparous tendencies, and there are also some

persons goaded by these fissiparous forces. How can this problem be solved? How can we check these belligerent parties from implementing their outdated ideas, which may cause the physical disintegration of the country? What should be done? What should be our short term and the long term policy? The approach should be both physical and psychic. Will simply economic theory do or is something more required? Education is a long term programme. What should be done immediately in the physical and psychic realms? The country is



passing through a critical juncture, so you should be well educated.

There is a theory of politics called “divide and rule”. Just to undermine the independence of India, the British government started a programme to encourage communal division amongst the people based on caste, scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, Muslim and non-Muslim. They wanted to encourage divisions between Muslims and non-Muslims. General people, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes – these were the divisions. Our leaders should not have accepted such divisions. Rather, at that time they should have said that preference should be given on the basis of socio-economic backwardness, not on the basis of castes or creeds. But certain political parties were based on caste prejudices or communal sentiments, which is why they supported the British government.

During the struggle for independence, a great blunder was committed by Mahatma Gandhi. In order to show his innocence, he said that he would not support the communal award, but nor would he vote against it. That is, indirectly he

supported it. What happened to the country after this was due to the himalayan blunder committed by Mahatma Gandhi. At that time he should have said, “No. I do not support the communal award.” He did not say this because his party workers and party leaders were eager to become ministers, so they pressed him for provincial autonomy. But Mahatma Gandhi neither supported it nor opposed it. He committed a great blunder. What has happened in the country after this is the result of what Mahatma Gandhi did. At that time he should have said that we can neither split the country nor disintegrate it.

As a result of the communal award, the country was trifurcated into Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. This was the result of the blunder of Mahatma Gandhi, and he did it under the pressure of his party leaders. They wanted to become ministers, as there was scope in the government of India at that time for wresting provincial autonomy, attaining ministership, creating two new provinces – Orissa and Sind – and separating Ceylon and Burma from India.

Provincial autonomy was

promulgated in the year 1935, but it was implemented in 1937. Sind agreed to provincial autonomy because in Sind a particular party, a minority party of India, was in the majority. Orissa was created out of physical convenience rather than mental necessity. It was very difficult for the people of Orissa to go to the capital town Patna, as they had to go to Patna through Calcutta. This is why they demanded that either Orissa should be included in Bengal, or there should be a separate province. Their demand was that Orissa should not remain in Bihar, because in order to go to Patna the people had to travel through Calcutta. The creation of Orissa was not bad, but the creation of Sind was bad. These were the poisonous effects of the enactment of provincial autonomy by the Government of India in 1935.

As an example of the communal approach of the Government of India, take the case of Bengal. At that time reservation in the Bengal assembly was for 250 seats. 250 seats were created as part of provincial autonomy. Of these 250 seats, 120 were for Muslims, 80 were for non-Muslims, 25 were for



*Remembering Noakhali 1946*

British merchants – for the British businessmen of Calcutta to contest elections – a few were for Zaminders, a few were for universities, and a few were for labour leaders. The total: 250. In Bengal at that time, 45% of the population was Muslim and 55% was non-Muslim. That is, the land of Bengal was not only physically divided but also mentally divided, as a result of which Bengal was divided on the basis of communal consciousness, which is unnatural. Communalism is unnatural. Again today, the foolish leaders, the political leaders, are encouraging this very sentiment. And I fear that if it is not controlled in the proper time – it is the most opportune moment to control it – if it is not controlled in the proper time, the country will face further disintegration.

Factually, as per the Government of India plan at that time, India was trifurcated. Bengal was bifurcated. The Punjab was bifurcated. Assam was bifurcated. Sind and North West Frontier Province went out of India. This was the result of the communal award. The foolish leaders, the stupid leaders, supported the communal award. They had not learnt the lessons of history.

The policy was divide and rule. One party said “Jai Hind” and another party said “Takasime Hind.” One party said “Victory to India;” another party said “Divide India.” These were the slogans of the time. It was not a healthy atmosphere. This sentiment was not even geo-sentiment. It was based on emotion and mean selfishness. Henceforward, healthy politics disappeared from India. Nehru supported partition because his dream was to become Prime Minister of the land – of either undivided India or divided India.

Montague Chelmsford saw that the forces were divided and was not sure whom to give power to. In 1935, provincial autonomy was granted. Ceylon and Burma, which were parts of India, are now inimical to India. During partition – during

**The limitation of riots, moral questions aside, is that they cannot win and their participants know it. Hence, rioting is not revolutionary but reactionary because it invites defeat. It involves an emotional catharsis, but it must be followed by a sense of futility.**

**Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Montague Chelmsford's time or during 1935 – the Government of India granted autonomy. A senior Muslim leader of India pronounced Montague Chelmsford as “Montague Chilmford” because he could not pronounce “Chelmsford.” At that time there was no mutual faith, there was want of mutual understanding. That is why the country was divided. Otherwise, the British could not have divided the country. There was both physical disintegration and psychic – psycho-social – disintegration for want of proper education.

Most of the minorities could not rely on the Hindu majority of the country. That is why – out of fear complex – they wanted to divide the country. The Hindu minorities of Bengal and the Punjab could not rely on the Muslim majority. That is why they wanted the partition of those two provinces. The same psychology is prevalent today. At that time there was not even a wee bit of political education or political consciousness in the country.

As per provincial autonomy, the Chief Minister of the provinces were known as the Prime Minister. There was no Prime Minister of India. India was loosely controlled by India House, London.

The Native States were beyond the 1935 award. This is the reason why the communal position of the Native States was better than that of the rest of India. There was hardly any communalism in Kashmir where Muslims lived under the Hindu Raj. Similarly, the Hindu

majority state of Hyderabad was under a Muslim leader, and there was hardly any communalism. The reason was that the Native States were free from the communal award. The British communal award was not applied there.

Serpents are exhaling venom everywhere... It is the right moment. It is the proper moment. It is the most opportune moment.

*Nāginiira cāridike*

*fushiteche bishakta nishvas*

*Shantir lalit vani shonaibe*

*bartha parihas*

*Bidāy nebar belā tai dāk diye jai*

*Danaver sathe jārá samgrāmer tare prastut hateche ghare ghare.*

“Serpents are exhaling venom everywhere. The sweet gospels of peace sound like empty mockery. That is why on the eve of my departure from this world, I send out a clarion call to those who are preparing in every house to fight against the demons in human form.”

Human expressions are multilateral. The ways of life are multifarious. Amidst these multifarious activities the picture of human beings that we get is their culture. The sum total of different expressions of human life is called Saṁskṛti or culture. The ways of expression may differ from one group of people to other: some eat with their hands, some use spoons, yet others use sticks, but everyone has to eat. Human culture is, therefore, one and indivisible. The use of expressions such as Hindu culture, Muslim culture, Indian culture or European culture is absurd. Those who hold these partisan ideas are not well-wishers of humanity.

Serpents are exhaling venom everywhere. Now at this critical juncture, should we go on preaching the gospels of peace? No, no, no, no! So, before my departure from the world, said Rabindranath, I have made the necessary preparations for the fight against these demons. Do you all follow? What Rabindranath said 60 years ago is also true in this last portion of the twentieth century.

October 20, 1990, Calcutta ●





# Women's Rights

In the Vaeshya Era, "As a result of excessive wealth the vaeshyas lose their self-control and character; and many unfortunate women are forced by poverty to descend to sinful occupation."

■ Ácárya Acyutánanda Avadhúta

**S**hrii P.R. Sarkar was a spiritual master who gave the world its most advanced system of spiritual practices and its most advanced cosmology; he was also a social philosopher and social architect who gave the world the most advanced political and economic guidelines it has ever known. The political and economic guidelines came in the form of two overlapping schools of thought, the

Progressive Utilization Theory (Prout) and Neohumanism. And a key part of the political and economic guidelines involved the establishment of women in the full rights that they deserve.

There are many complexities involved in explaining the historical oppression of women that occurred virtually everywhere in the world, but that oppression rested most importantly on three foundations: 1)

the relative physical weakness of women, 2) nature's assignment to women of the childbearing role, and 3) women's greater sentimentality. Shrii Sarkar has said that men "[took] advantage of their sentimental female hearts. . . . a proper socio-psycho-analysis shows, I should say, that women have not really lost their freedom; rather, they have trustingly placed their destiny in the hands of men. . . . out of feelings of helplessness or in response to their heartfelt sentiments."

Women's sentimentality is of vital importance to the human race. "Through the dispensation of God, men's deficiency is balanced by women's sentimentality . . ." Due to that sentimentality, especially if amplified by what Shrii Sarkar calls *kaeshik*, "women can perform extraordinary feats that men cannot." But if the relation between men and women ever becomes a power struggle (which it should not but sometimes does), women's sentimentality can place them at a disadvantage in that struggle, as has been explained.

Shrii Sarkar has explained that under the dominance of all human psychological types – *ksatriyas*, *vipras*, and *vaeshyas* – for millennia of patriarchal society, men have oppressed women to different degrees. "In the Ksatriya Era women were considered as men's precious wealth. Although women did not have the same rights and privileges as men, they commanded considerable social prestige. But in the Vipra Era women were relegated to the status of animals and cattle." Things did not improve in the Vaeshya Era, and moreover "As a result of excessive wealth the *vaeshyas* lose their self-control and their character on the one hand; and many unfortunate women are forced by poverty to descend to this sinful occupation [prostitution] on the other hand."

Since the worst phases of the Vaeshya Era, much progress has been made on this planet in the direction of women's rights. The



potentialities of women that had been wasted for centuries have started to be utilized. The sources of the progress have been complex and the early sources are to a large extent beyond my expertise, but as examples of the sources, industrialization and world wars brought women out of the home and into the workplace; increasing mechanization lessened the advantage men had had in terms of greater physical strength; in Russia, Lenin and the Bolsheviks supported women's equality; and developments in media – first radio, then television – helped remove women's ignorance.

Probably the greatest advances, or at least the greatest widespread advances, occurred in Western democracies once women themselves began to organize independently of men. In the USA, what is known as the "first wave of feminism" secured voting rights in 1920 after seventy years of struggle. That first wave of feminism also made progress in access to higher education and to professions.

### Rights and Responsibilities

The second wave of feminism in the USA, starting in the 1960s, saw women securing further rights in the workplace, and also rights in relation to their husbands and in relation to

health care, and also securing sexual freedom and a right to abortion. However, in his article "Women's Rights" Shrii Sarkar wrote, "life. . . . means real liberty and not license to commit anything good or bad." Elsewhere he wrote: "Lack of consciousness about rights and responsibilities drives social beings towards a tragic end." The women's-rights movement must overall be the most inspiring liberation movement the world has ever seen. But in this second wave of feminism we see for the first time, along with all the inspiring progress, some tragic failures of responsibility:

1. Many second-wave feminists supported some of the negative aspects of the sexual revolution, which started at around the same time as that second wave. The sexual revolution is not identical with second- and third-wave feminism, but there is much overlap. As part of that sexual revolution, there are now, for instance, many secular people who believe that everyone can engage in whatever amount and forms of sexual activity they like without risking their psychological and physical health. That is, such secularists believe that one can trust one's impulses; one can trust one's impulses toward sexual activity, and



if there is any harm in any excess, the fading of the impulse will automatically save them from such excess. But Shrii Sarkar counseled careful restraint over impulses toward sexual activity. He was opposed to sexual activity outside of marriage, and even within marriage advised “the more restraint the better.”

2. Second-wave feminism undermined belief in the value of motherhood and the family. Second-wave feminists tended to create disrespect for stay-at-home mothers, and disbelief in the necessity of fatherhood. Yet for example, the high rate of violent crime, drug abuse, and incarceration among young African-American men in the USA today is usually attributed in part to the absence of those young men's fathers as they grow up.

3. Most negatively of all, second-wave feminists, a few years after they began their movement, made legal abortion a part of their movement, and not only a part of their movement, but its cornerstone. Prout writings do not include an official statement regarding abortion, but my research on Shrii Sarkar has convinced me that he

thought it should normally be illegal. For one thing, what is wrong with killing, according to Shrii Sarkar, is that it deprives a living being of the conscious life it would have had. Even if a living being is not conscious yet, but is likely to be in the future, killing it deprives it of the conscious life it would likely have had. Thus it is normally wrong to kill an innocent born person (as no one disagrees), and to treat unborn persons differently would require some special justification which Shrii Sarkar seems to feel does not sufficiently exist.

We should ensure that progress in women's rights continues full speed, but that, in order to continue without negative effects, it should continue under spiritual guidance.

The women of the earth in the late 1960s, and their supporters, certainly did need to address a terrible inequality that stems from nature's assignment to women of the childbearing role (mentioned above). That role, for thousands of years and still now, has been a liability in terms of human power relations. But first let's note that that liability would have been a surprise to people of a more primitive age.

Shrii Sarkar has explained that for a long matriarchal period in human history, the tribal rulers were the clan-mothers, and that they possessed such status partly “because women were revered for their child-producing capacity.”

In more recent millennia and in the present, though, when a woman becomes pregnant (which can happen to any woman but not to a man), the woman is under tremendous pressure to become one child's or multiple children's main parent – a job that historically has been unpaid and not highly respected, and that might severely curtail her opportunities to develop her abilities and to achieve in any other area of life. Yet though the tendency toward this inequality was the “fault” of nature only and not a human failure, the problem was not insuperable. Any failure to overcome the problem is indeed the fault of human beings.

There is more than one possible strategy for overcoming the inequality, so that in effect, the second-wave feminists faced a choice: should they 1) demand a greater sharing of the child-raising role (which would mean in part that





women on a more widespread basis would be giving their newborns for adoption), and demand greater rewards and respect for the child-bearing and child-raising role, which would be one way of bringing them equality with men; or should they 2) redistribute the oppression they had historically suffered, and turn their unborn children into a new oppressed group, by legalizing and to an extent normalizing abortion? As part of the latter option, should they begin to refer to the unborn children they sacrificed as “tissue” or “a clump of cells”, in order to justify the practice of abortion?

At a meeting of NOW (the National Organization of Women) in 1967, the big majority rejected the former option and chose the latter option. Those women in their struggle had the help of many men, including a majority of the justices on the United States Supreme Court, and Hugh Hefner, publisher of *Playboy* magazine, who financed some state-level court cases. Serrin Foster, the present president of Feminists for Life, even says that the initial idea of legalizing abortion came originally from men. It is clear that the former option described above would harm the interests of selfish men, while the latter option would serve the interests of selfish men.

The NOW members who were in the minority in relation to that

fateful decision walked away from NOW and formed Feminists for Life.

### Further Waves of Feminism, and Me Too

Third-wave feminism is going on now, but to try to describe and evaluate it would be beyond the scope of this article. And the term “fourth-wave feminism” has now sometimes made an appearance, though used in quite different ways. Some pro-life feminists call their movement “fourth-wave feminism”.

In October 2017, the *New York Times* accused a Hollywood producer of the sexual harassment of several actresses and other women involved in the film industry. Over the following months, many more women added their voices, saying, in effect “Me too,” and finally the producer faced criminal indictments. The Me Too movement encouraging women to go public with their accusations of harassment had existed before October 2017, but it was at that time that it became well-known; and besides that producer, various other well-known men, including a US senator, soon became accused and lost their jobs.

The Me Too movement seems to have had much long-overdue success in addressing a particular social malady. Sometimes the movement may have gone too far; some men, for example, have

become afraid to hire women for fear that the women will eventually accuse them of something they have not done. But overall, the movement seems to have made good progress in an important area of women's rights.

### Rights That Remain Unwon

The most urgent further frontiers in women's rights vary from one part of the world to another, but on a worldwide basis, the most crucial issues are persistent violence against women; the lack of economic self-reliance; persistent discrimination in education; and sex trafficking and other sex-related offences, with all the negative psychological effects that accompany them. (Often the sex-related offences are violent to one degree or other, and thus are included also in the violence against women.) Regarding education, in Western countries there are sometimes complaints of discrimination in education against boys, but the problems behind these complaints are, so far, minor compared to discrimination against girls in less-developed countries.

The most common kinds of violence against women are the abortion of unborn women, and domestic violence. In most of the world, abortion is the most common cause of premature death for both females and males, far exceeding the death rate from war or from any disease, or traffic fatalities, or suicide, etc. Sex-selection abortion and infanticide targeting unborn girls and newborn girls has a seriousness out of proportion to the numbers involved, because of the mentality it reflects and perpetuates, but by far the greatest actual numbers of deaths among girls at those ages occur because of a decision to eliminate an unborn child regardless of its gender. Thus even if we completely put an end to sex-selection abortion, it would do little to save unborn girls. To save them, abortion itself has to be much reduced if not stopped. ●

*Courtesy “Sagnik – Global Girls' Proutists Magazine”*



# MEN MUST RESTORE RIGHTS SURRENDERED BY WOMEN

Like most other living beings  
Among humans too physically  
Females are weaker than males  
Yet in society their value is no less  
However selfish men ignore this  
Take full advantage of this weakness  
Though publicly men eulogise women  
As epitomes of motherhood  
Privately they relegate and treat them  
As domesticated cattle and sheep.

At the dawn of creation  
Among ancient humans this wasn't so  
That's why even today primitive races  
Show no lack of magnanimity  
When it comes to women's freedom  
While the so called progressive men  
Have in every sphere of their lives  
Substantially curtailed women's rights  
And kept them wholly subservient  
To their own whims and fancies.

Ancient women were free  
And faced no unequal restrictions  
As compared to men  
Under the guise of social purity  
In spite of that we find even today  
Among those so called backward races  
Their social purity is  
Over a hundred times more  
Than what exists in the  
So called progressive societies.

No good will come to human society  
If women are kept subservient to men  
For forcible curbing of freedom  
Turns human minds hostile  
And purity goes the devil's way  
In individual life purity is equal  
For both men and women  
And to justify that necessity  
Real spiritual vision is indispensable  
Not eloquent phrases or religious exhibitionism.

It is true that over the years due to  
Lack of competence in certain spheres  
Women have gradually forfeited their rights  
Those who think some special abilities  
Are the only criteria to have rights

Actually want women to be wageless slaves  
Under strict supervision of men  
Besides that overflowing emotions  
Of kind and generous women's hearts  
Are partly responsible too.

Women gradually surrendered their all  
To their husbands sons and brothers  
Attaching no importance  
To their own self interests  
Is it unreasonable to expect  
From a society of men and women  
And not that of animals  
This their large heartedness  
Must be duly appreciated respected  
And humbly acknowledged.

Both men and women  
Are ordinary human beings  
Women have good qualities of the heart  
Those who take advantage of  
People's simplicity or ignorance  
Are veritable demons in human form  
And those who deceive by taking  
Advantage of people's emotions  
Inspired by the ideal of sacrifice  
Are worse than even demons.

Freedom is restored by struggle  
No one offers it on a platter  
For freedom is no gift  
It is an absolute birthright  
Women have not really  
Lost their freedom but have  
Left their own destiny  
Into the hands of the men  
As a very sacred trust  
And in good faith.

So it hardly calls for feminists' protests  
Like the trade union movement  
As it is not a case of granting rights  
But one of recognising women's rights  
If any agitation is called for at all  
Such rational and humanitarian initiative  
Must be men's for it is their responsibility  
Today realising that no one should be deprived  
Men must gradually restore women's rights  
Which they generously surrendered in the past.

*- Arun Prakash*

## FREE MIXING LIBERTY AND LICENSE

It goes without saying  
That liberty and license  
Are not the same thing  
Freedom of women is good  
But license in the name of freedom  
Should not be indulged in  
License on the part of  
Both men and women  
Can break the social structure  
In a very short time.

This simple truth must be recognised  
By rational judgment  
And humanitarian considerations  
With not a hint of sentimentality  
There are divergent views  
Among lawmakers about  
Free mixing of men and women  
This without self control is unhealthy  
For society was so in the past  
And holds true even now.

It is true that absence  
Of intermixing is equally unhealthy  
For it creates suppressed hunger  
A particular yearning or curiosity  
This results in illicit mixing  
And keeps purity at bay  
The system which permits no mixing  
Smothers the mind  
Men get harmed morally  
But loss to women is tremendous.

As a result women are  
Compelled to lead lives  
Of shame as social outcasts  
Yet efforts to save daughters  
With veils locked up at home  
Are absurd to say the least  
What is therefore required  
Is healthy mixing of women and men  
Governed by a well judged  
Code of self control.



*Nautch girls circa 1880*

*These two poems are based on  
Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's discourses*

*- Arun Prakash*





The new scheme, similar to other programmes launched by the Modi government, shows how divorced Lutyens Delhi is from the dust and grime of real India.



# Pension Scheme for Unorganised Workers Is Yet Another Illusion

■ Sudhir Katiyar and Bharat Dogra

**T**he NDA government in its last budget before the election has announced an ambitious pension scheme for unorganised sector workers. Given its tendency for hyperbole, the scheme is already being touted as the largest pension scheme in the world with 100 million potential beneficiaries. It would do well to ponder the fate of the similar schemes that were launched in the

very first year of the Narendra Modi government, much like the Shramev Jayate programme that was launched with much fanfare for this very category of workers.

Under the scheme, all the unorganised sector workers were to be issued social security cards (UWIN, or Unorganised Workers Identification Numbercards). “The workers will be assigned a unique identity so as to give them social

security benefits including health insurance and old age pension,” the business newspaper *Mint* reported in February 2015, i.e. four years ago. BJP ministers held fairs and collected thousands of forms that are mostly gathering dust.

**The current scheme is likely to meet a similar fate.**

The Atal Pension Yojna, with features very similar to the new

scheme, was launched on May 9, 2015 – targeting this very sector with similar hyperbole. The scheme struggled from the very beginning. The scheme had a target of covering some 2.2 crore people by December 2015. However only about 6.5% of the target was achieved by due date. Three years after its launch, the scheme had a subscriber base of 1.1 crore people – no doubt a substantial number by itself, but still a minuscule proportion of the vast mass of 41.6 crore workers estimated to form the workforce in the unorganised sector according to the 66th round of NSSO in 2011-12. It is a telling commentary on the polity of our time that in its rush for 'political surgical strikes' before the upcoming elections, the government has launched a new scheme with more or less the same features that were the cause of the failure of its previous scheme.

### Unrealistic goals

The latest scheme can be critiqued on two major grounds. First is that the contributions are not linked to employment of workers and are voluntary in nature. For a large number of reasons, detailed below, the workers are not likely to welcome the scheme and deposit their contributions. The second is that by the age of 60 year when the pension benefits are supposed to

start flowing in, a large chunk of workers will not be alive any more to claim benefits. Social security schemes all over the world and even in India are linked with employment. The social security deductions are made from the employee salary with a corresponding deduction from the employers. However in the new scheme, the contributions are to be made by the workers. To expect workers to deposit their contributions regularly over a period of 20 to 30 years is asking for the impossible.

The state record is so erratic and so anti worker that to expect the workers to deposit any part of their hard earned income in a scheme from which benefits will flow after 20 to 30 years is completely unrealistic. To illustrate, even right now PF deductions are being made from wages of millions of contract workers without their being even aware of it. Employees Provident Fund Organization is aflush with hard earned money of unorganised sector workers for which there are no claimants.

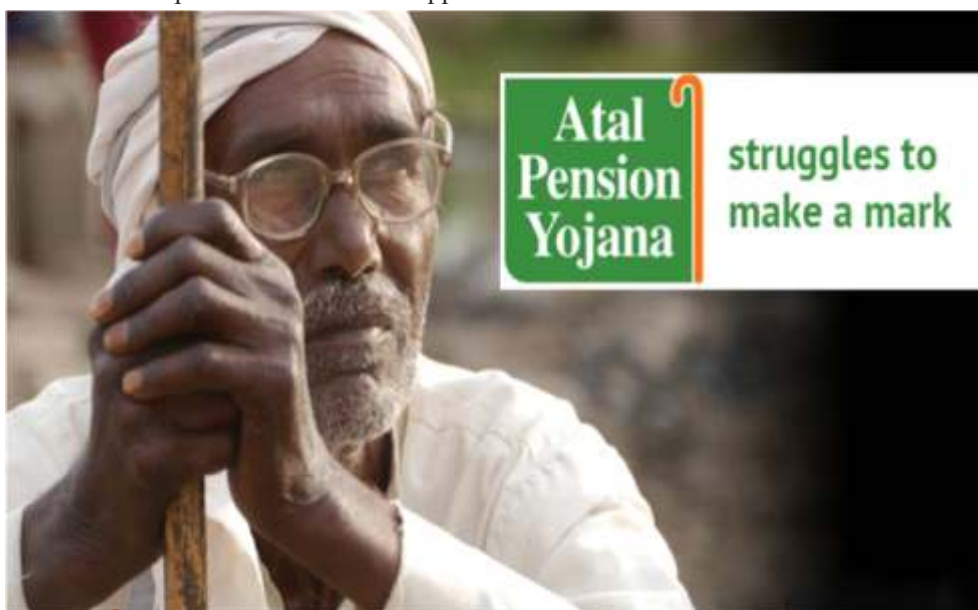
To give another example, every state has launched contributory pension schemes for unorganised sector workers that are defunct and it is impossible to claim back the contributions made by the workers. Another major ground of critique is

that by the age of 60 years when the pension funds would start flowing, majority of the workers who have paid premium for 20 to 30 years would not be alive to avail benefits. This provision shows how divorced Lutyens Delhi is from the dust and grime of real India.

While an age of 60 years is good for giving post-retirement benefits to middle classes, it is completely unrealistic for hard working informal sector workers. The current average life expectancy in India is 68.8 years and for rural males it is 65 years. However, life expectancy in India varies sharply with socio-economic status. The scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities, who supply the maximum number of workers to the informal sector, have distinctly lower life expectancies than that of normal upper-caste middle-class Indians.

A paper written by S.K. Mohanty and F. Ram from International Institute for Population Studies titled 'Life Expectancy at Birth Among Social And Economic Groups in India' showed that the life expectancy amongst scheduled tribes in 2006 was 60.3 years. For the poor scheduled tribes, it was as low as 56.9 years. It can be assumed that the unorganised sector workers fall in the poor category. For poor scheduled castes, life expectancy was 63 years.

While there would have been a slight increase in this over the last decade, the life expectancy for males in these two categories will be lower than the average. These figures can be tweaked in a number of ways, but one thing is very clear: a large majority of the informal sectors will not be alive at 60 years to claim benefits. In fact, the life expectancy for manual workers, who form the bottom of the pile like construction, brick kilns, quarrying, is likely to be even lower. Even a cursory glance at any workplace would reveal that majority of the work force in jobs that require hard manual labour is below 40 years.







Mariam

Manmod

There are no more jobs after you cross into middle age. A pension scheme for unorganised sector workers should begin at 55 years or even earlier.

But then is there no way that unorganised sector workers can be provided social security? Actually good models exist that are working. The Maharashtra Mathadi and Other Manual Workers Act 1969 provides such a model. More than 30 Mathadi Boards are functional in Maharashtra providing social security to lakhs of head load workers of Maharashtra, though Mathadi workers there are now apprehensive about the future of the boards. The Act regulates employment, establishes a employer-worker relationship and links the social security benefits to employment. These three elements – regulations of employment, establishing an employer – worker relationship, and linkage of social security are the three pivots crucial for any social security scheme for unorganised sector workers. Otherwise there can only be jumlas.

### Maternity benefits and food security

Finally, with regard to maternity benefits as well, there is nothing in

this budget that takes the country towards providing universal maternity entitlements or towards increasing the coverage of maternity benefits to women in the unorganised sector. The Maternity Benefits Act covers only women in the organised sector. The maternity benefits scheme that is available for all women is the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) which currently gives Rs 5,000 to women for their first birth. This scheme is supposed to deliver the entitlement of at least Rs 6,000 for all pregnant and lactating women, as included in the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

This scheme is also very inadequate as the benefits aren't much and are not linked to wages. It also leaves out more than half the births in the country, which are of second or a higher order. The revised budget for this scheme for 2018-19 was halved from the initial allocation of Rs 2,400 crore to Rs 1,200 crore showing its poor implementation and coverage. This year the budget allocation is Rs 2,500 crore, which almost the same as the budget for last year.

A letter written to the finance minister before this budget (and also

the last) by 60 economists recommended that the full-fledged implementation of this scheme requires Rs 8,000 crore in the Union budget. Therefore, one cannot expect any increase in coverage or amount this year as well in terms of maternity benefits for women in the informal sector.

### Construction Worker Pensions

Mariam spent her younger days toiling as a construction worker. When she could no longer work as an elderly person, she got the benefit of a special pension meant for construction workers. This pension of Rs 3,900 per month became the main source of her subsistence and ensured dignity. Then about five months ago this pension stopped coming.

Since then, her food intake has reduced and she has had to bear the indignity of travelling to wherever she can find a meal. She has difficulty in walking and even sitting properly due to pains and stiffness, so one can imagine the extent of her recent difficulties.

Manmod and his wife Nirja are elderly, retired construction workers. Till about five months ago, both were getting a pension meant specifically for construction workers, adding up to around Rs 7,500 or so. This had become the sole means of their sustenance.

This support collapsed about five months ago when this pension stopped coming without any explanation being given. Like Marian, their food intake has declined and they have not been able to afford essential medicines at the time of illness.

Supporting himself with a stick and with trembling hands, Jagannath holds out a bank pass book to make his point that the pension which was the sole support for him and his wife has stopped coming. He is old as well as affected by disability.

Bahram Singh and Ram Pyari are two other workers similarly affected. Both were also down with typhoid during this period of deprivation and as a result have gone

into debt. Somewhat similar is the case of Bhagwan Dass who suffered from a heart ailment during this period.

For Virendra Singh the period of going without the pension is to not five but 15 months. Both he and Umesh Singh had been union leaders of construction workers.

What is common to all these elderly, retired construction workers is that they all live in JJ Colony Bawana in outer Delhi. Within this single labour colony there are over 100 such workers. In addition, there are 22 workers here who stopped getting this pension 15 months back. Most are elderly and the sudden stop in the monthly inflow of cash could prove severely harmful to them, even resulting in the death of some.

During the same period when these pensions stopped, educational help for children as well as other benefits provided to construction workers also stopped.

### How?

This tragic situation is related to two factors, one national and the other more specific to Delhi. These pensions and other benefits were being provided to these construction workers under two legislations enacted in 1996 for welfare and social security for construction workers all over the country. Briefly, these laws stipulate that a cess on construction is levied and boards are set up in all states to use the proceeds

of this cess to provide many-sided welfare benefits to workers.

Despite powerful vested interests trying to block the implementation of these laws, constant mobilisation of workers supported by favourable court decisions (including those by the Supreme Court) led to a slow but steady progress of these laws. By June 2018 as much as Rs 37,483 crore plus interest had accumulated in the form of cess-collected funds, out of which Rs 9,492 crore had been disbursed to nearly one crore workers in the form of various benefits.

The potential is several times more. However, before workers' struggles could take this forward, a big cloud of uncertainty and the possibility of great dilution of existing laws emerged in the form of the codification of the labour laws taken up by the Union government.

In this phase of uncertainty and doubts a general stagnation and laxity in the implementation of these laws has been seen, contrary to the directions given in 2018 by the Supreme Court for stronger and speedier implementation of the 1996 laws for welfare of construction workers.

In Delhi a new factor was added as the pretext of an investigation in corruption complaints was used to deny further benefits to many construction

workers. Upendra Singh, one of the senior most members one of the most highly committed and old unions, the Nirman Mazdoor Panchayat Sangam, has seen many struggles. He says, "The saddest part is that the most honest unions and activists have suffered the most. First they suffered due to corruption. Now the ongoing investigation of corruption is used in practice to keep denying benefits to the same people who have already been victimised a lot and have suffered a lot."

### Remedies

In this distressing situation, the National Campaign Committee for Central Legislation on Construction Workers (whose founder chairman was Justice V.K. Krishna Iyer) has said that while remedial action for re-starting benefits, including pensions denied arbitrarily to several construction workers, should be initiated immediately, the larger threat of dilution of existing protective laws should be faced with increasing mobilisation of workers all over the country.

It held that this threat has critical importance not just for over seven crore construction workers but also several other sections of workers covered by similar type of protective laws. The national coordinator of this Committee, Subhash Bhatnagar has devoted his entire life to this campaign of construction workers. He says, "This is a critical time for defending gains achieved after several decades of struggle. This is a time for greater and greater unity. This is a time for intellectuals coming forward to protect the threatened gains of workers."

The failure to implement labour law over the last 25 years has been the most significant route through which workers' rights have been undermined. All trade unions have long been demanding that non-payment of minimum wages and such other violations of basic rights be made cognisable offences. ●

*The author is a  
freelance journalist*





# Questioning the 2003 Citizenship Rules

## The Villain of NPR-NRC

S.G.Vombatkere



### Why examine the 2003 Citizenship Rules?

During the tenure of Vajpayee's BJP-led NDA-1 government, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, by Notification G.S.R.937(E) on 10.12.2003. Its infirmities – discussed here – were not rectified/amended/changed by Manmohan Singh's two successive Congress-led UPA governments (2004-2014), or by Modi's first (2014-2019) BJP-

led NDA-2 government. The peculiar features of CAA-2019 under the current NDA-3 government drew attention to the 2003 Rules, by means of which a National Population Register (NPR) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) are created.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs is reported to have cautioned government that the entire Census process may get stymied due to public dissatisfaction and fears that the NPR exercise clubbed with

Census would lead to the NRC. It is remarkable that the Committee did not recognize that the 2003 Rules were made precisely for this purpose.

### The NPR process

The NPR process begins at the “local” level, i.e., village, town or city ward or other demarcated area. Enumerators, following “Instruction Manual for Updation of National Population Register (NPR) 2020” acquire details of locally residing persons by door-to-door visits. They then make step-by-step modification

The outcomes of the nation-wide NPR-NRC program may be seriously debilitating from the social and economic perspectives, from local through state to national level.

/correction of the NPR Data Booklet and NPR Schedule. A local officer or revenue officer of the town or city ward or village, functions as Local Registrar of Citizen Registration, and prepares the Local Register of Indian Citizens. The details of each enumerated person are compiled at the local level by the Local Registrar to prepare the Population Register.

After “due verification of details” of the persons listed in the Population Register, the Local Registrar prepares the Local Register of Indian Citizens as a Draft. During the verification process, particulars of individuals whose Citizenship is doubtful, are entered by the Local Registrar with “an appropriate remark” in the Population Register for further enquiry. In cases of doubtful Citizenship, the individual or the family are informed after the verification process is over.

### Infirmities of the 2003 Rules

A detailed critique of the 2003 Rules [NOTE] brings out many infirmities:

(a) Inviting objections from any person against inclusion of any person in the Register permits individuals to motivatedly cause harm to others at no risk to themselves. It provides opportunity to implement political agendas, settle personal scores, blackmail and corruption. Given the current atmosphere in the country, there is high probability bordering on certainty, of a religious/politically motivated person/group raising objection to inclusion of particular persons/families in the Local Register.

(b) An objector is even accorded the position of “aggrieved person” having the benefit of the same two levels of appeal by an excluded person to get his/her name included. Further, there is no penalty on the objector if a frivolous or motivated objection is proven wrong. This demonstrates the exclusionary character of the 2003 Rules.

© Exclusion from the Local Register would cause the excluded

person to suffer at personal, family and economic levels. He/she would appeal to officials at distant Taluk & District headquarters, spending scarce money for travel-accommodation-food for days together at Taluk or District HQ. This disruption of life adversely & irretrievably affects persons from rural socio-economic situations, ruining their mental peace, family life, livelihoods, earnings, children's schooling, etc. It reduces a citizen to a supplicating, grovelling individual, destroying his/her individual dignity.

(d) Given the reality of public services in our country, the verification/scrutiny powers accorded by the 2003 Rules to officials at different levels to arbitrarily exclude a person/family with devastating finality, provide opportunity for corruption.

(e) When they do not have documents necessary to prove citizenship, citizens will scramble to obtain them. This will give impetus to the fake document industry –

## NPR gazette notification & Rule 3 of 2003 Rules under which it was notified

New Delhi, the 31st July, 2019

S. O. 2753(E).— In pursuance of sub-rule (4) of rule 3 of the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, the Central Government hereby decides to prepare and update the Population Register and the field work for house to house enumeration throughout the country except Assam for collection of information relating to all persons who are usually residing within the jurisdiction of Local Registrar shall be undertaken between the 1st day of April, 2020 to 30th September, 2020.

3. National Register of Indian Citizens. – (1) The Registrar General of Citizen Registration shall establish and maintain the National Register of Indian Citizens.

(2) The National Register of Indian Citizens shall be divided into sub-parts consisting of the State Register of Indian Citizens, the District Register of Indian Citizens, the Sub-district Register of Indian Citizens and the Local Register of Indian Citizens and shall contain such details as the Central Government may, by order, in consultation with the Registrar General of Citizen Registration, specify.

Source: Gazette notification of July 31 and Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003



already a thriving industry creating fakes for currency, education certificates, Aadhaar cards, etc. – and opportunities for lobbyists, touts, agents and corrupt officials.

(f) The people affected due to “defect in documentation” (not available/ never prepared/ lost in natural disaster, transit etc./ spelling discrepancy/ name different as for married woman/ no corroboratory document/ enumerator or local official not accepting validity, etc.) would suffer indignity and socio-economic loss of having to appeal twice, and accept the disenfranchisement of finally failing, followed by 5-years in a detention camp. According to CAA-2019, he/she would need to prove that he/she is Hindu/Sikh/ Xian/Jain/ Buddhist/Parsi – Muslims being outside the ambit of this law – and further prove (obviously falsely in most cases) that he/she has come from Afghanistan/ Pakistan/ Bangladesh. All this would need to be done from inside the detention centre, within the same official system which disenfranchised them, all making for more opportunities for the touts, etc.

(g) Assam's NPR-NRC experience has ended with nearly 2-million people unable to prove their citizenship for want of documents necessary and acceptable to enrolment officials. NRC at national scale would involve many tens of millions.

(h) The negative effect on local economies due to fall in productivity of people absent from job/ occupation for producing the document(s), checking the published Local Register, paying touts, etc. and going for appeal is obvious. Every state's unproductive expenditure will increase for infrastructure for detention centres and running cost of maintaining inmates, salaries, etc. The cumulative downstream effect on State and National economies can be imagined.

(i) The social turmoil due to the difficulties faced by millions of people in proving their citizenship would inevitably heighten existing



levels of social unrest.

(j) Aadhaar was started as an “identity” to obviate all other identity documents. Even today, people queue-up at Aadhaar centres for fresh enrolments, correction of errors, changes in details, re-validation of biometrics, etc. Due to the time required to capture biometrics and confirm demographic data, an operator in an Aadhaar centre handles about 30 persons in a working day. This inevitably results in long queues and absence from work (typically more than once) for applicants. If the Aadhaar experience is any indication, the NPR-NRC process would be at least as traumatic for people. An individual failing in the Aadhaar process can mean denial of benefits until Aadhaar is obtained, but failing in the NPR process involves a devastating finality with no recourse.

### Bottom line

The NPR-to-NRC process as defined in the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, enables motivated or targeted exclusion of persons/families in the NRC. The outcomes of the nationwide NPR-NRC program may be seriously debilitating from the social and economic perspectives, from local through state to national level. In order to identify illegal immigrants, there is little justification for government to put the entire population through the mill to prove their citizenship, according to Rules loaded with

infirmities. The 2003 Rules are perverse, unjust and prone to misuse, and deserve immediate de-notification. In the national interest the entire NPR-NRC process needs to be reviewed with public consultation.

### Detailed critique of the Rules

Rule 4(3) states that for “preparation and inclusion in the Local Register of Indian Citizens, the particulars collected of every family and individual in the Population Register shall be verified and scrutinized by the Local Registrar”, who “may be assisted by one or more persons”. According to Rule 4(4), during the verification process, if the particulars of an individual are deemed doubtful, that person's name is entered in the Population Register with “appropriate remark”. He then prepares the Local Register of Indian Citizens as a Draft. In case the Local Registrar notes a person's “doubtful Citizenship”, the individual or family will be informed after the verification process is over. The method or basis for verification and scrutiny for inclusion are not mentioned, and are apparently discretionary. Discretion to be exercised at “local” level is prone to misuse because the official exercising discretion or the persons assisting him would be acquainted with or have knowledge about particular person/families.

According to Rule 4(5)(a), every person or family against whose name the Local Registrar has entered “doubtful” in the Population Register, “shall be given an

opportunity of being heard by the Sub-district or Taluk Registrar of Citizen Registration, before a final decision is taken to include or to exclude their particulars in the National Register of Indian Citizens". The reason for "final decision" at the Sub-district or Taluk level to include or exclude a person/family in the National Register of Indian Citizens is unclear. It leaves opportunities for misuse of discretion.

According to Rule 4(5)(b), after the hearing, the Sub-district or Taluk Registrar shall finalize his findings within 90-days of the entry being made, and according to Rule 4(6)(a), the Draft of the Local Register of Indian Citizens shall be published by the Sub-district or Taluk Registrar, "for inviting any objections or for inclusion of any name or corrections for the family or individual particulars collected and proposed to be finally entered in the National Register of Indian Citizens". Also, Rule 4(6)(b) reads: "any objection against a particular entry or for inclusion of a name, or corrections if any, in the Local Register of Indian Citizens may be made within a period of 30-days from the date of publication of the draft of the Local Register of Indian Citizens, spelling out the nature and reasons for the objection". This is a publication for residents in the "local" area to check. A person who finds his/her name excluded would file objection and ask for inclusion. But "for inviting any objections or for inclusion of any name" enables any person to object to inclusion of another person's name. This provides avenue for motivated misuse to exclude a person/family from the Local Register.

According to Rule 4(6)©, after hearing opportunity is given to the person/family marked as "doubtful" by the Sub-district or Taluk Registrar of Citizen Registration, "the Sub-district or Taluk Registrar shall consider such objections and summarily dispose off[sic] the same within a period of 90-days, and thereafter submit the Local Register



of Indian Citizens so prepared to the District Registrar of Citizen Registration who shall cause the entries in the Local Register of Indian Citizens, to be transferred to the National Register of Indian Citizens". The official considers objections and "summarily" disposes of the objection. This is arbitrary exercise of power to exclude a person/family from the Local Register of Indian Citizens. It is effectively final, because he then submits it to the District Registrar of Citizen Registration, who in turn transfers the entries from the Local Register of Indian Citizens to the National Register of Indian Citizens. The excluded person has no recourse except going to a court of law, which few have access to or can afford.

Rule 4(7)(a) reads: "Any person aggrieved by the order of the Sub-district or Taluk Registrar under sub-rule (5) or sub-rule (6), may prefer an appeal within 30-days from the date of such order, to the District Registrar of Citizen Registration". An aggrieved person would be one whose name was excluded from the finalized Local Register of Indian Citizens, for being marked "doubtful" by the Local Registrar. But under Rule 4(6), it can also be a person who has

objected to inclusion of a particular person/family in the published Draft of the Local Register of Indian Citizens. Thus, a person who has objected earlier but whose objection was proved wrong during verification at the "local" level, is given an opportunity to resolve his "grievance" against the inclusion of a person/family in the list. This reinforces possibly malafide objections. Justice demands that if an objection against inclusion is received and found to be false during verification/scrutiny, the objector should be prosecuted, but in an inversion of justice, this Rule gives him/her status of "aggrieved person", providing him/her another opportunity to raise objection against inclusion of another person.

According to Rule 4(7)(b), "The District Registrar of Citizen Registration shall take a final decision, after giving an opportunity of being heard to the person so aggrieved, within a period of 90-days from the date of appeal". Finally, according to Rule 4(7)(c), in case the appeal is allowed, the particulars shall be entered in the National Register of Indian Citizens. This is yet another "final decision". If this final appeal is disallowed, the appellant's name is



not included in the Local Register of Indian Citizens, and therefore finally omitted from the National Register of Indian Citizens, with no other recourse. But the appellant could also be any person (by Rule 4(6)(b)) who has objected to an individual/ family being included in the Draft register. Thus, a person who has objected earlier but whose objection was proved wrong by verification/ scrutiny at the Sub-district or Taluk level, is given yet another opportunity at the District level to resolve his "grievance" against the inclusion of a person/family in the list. This magnifies perverse injustice as it provides further opportunity for engineering motivated exclusion of any person/family.

Under Rule 6, every individual must get himself registered with the Local Registrar of Citizen Registration during the period of country-wide initialization of the National Register of Indian Citizens, which would be notified by the Registrar General of Citizen

Registration. Failing to do so for any reason like long absence (migrant labour, travel, etc.) will be a violation, attracting penalty.

Under Rule 7, it is compulsory for every Citizen of India to assist the officials responsible for preparation of the National Register of Indian Citizens under Rule 4, and get himself registered in the Local Register of Indian Citizens during the period of initialization. Further, it is the responsibility of every Citizen to register once with the Local Registrar of Citizen Registration and to provide correct individual particulars to that authority. Assigning responsibility to "every Citizen" is strange, because this is even before the individual has passed the verification/scrutiny process to become a citizen. This may be a mere technicality, but it shows inconsistency in the Rules.

Under Rule 8, the District Registrar, Sub-district or Taluk Registrar or the Local Registrar of Citizen Registration may, by order,

require any person to furnish any information within his knowledge in connection with the determination of Citizenship status of any person and the person required to furnish information shall be bound to comply with such requisition. An official calling upon any person to provide any information within his knowledge about any other person concerning that other person's citizenship status reinforces the comments on Rules 4(5), 4(6) & 4(7). It amply demonstrates that far from calling for information to include a person/family in the Register, it is prone to motivated influence on officials to cause exclusion from the Register.

According to Rule 10(1)(iv), the name and particulars of a Citizen may be removed from the National Register of Indian Citizens by an order of the Registrar General of Citizen Registration or any officer authorized by him in this behalf. the particulars provided by the individual or the family found to be incorrect subsequently, thereby affecting the Citizenship status of the person. It is unclear how the information is "subsequently" found to be incorrect, except by invoking Rule 8, commented upon earlier.

Under Rule 16(5), the Registrar General of Citizen Registration or any officer authorized by him at any time may call for any records for examination, and issue directions regarding inclusion or exclusion of any individual or family particulars from the Population. This is arbitrary power given to the Registrar General, who could be influenced by powerful persons to review any person's record of Citizenship.

Under Rule 17, any violation of provisions of rules 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 14 shall be punishable with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees. This appears to be a relatively minor cash penalty (although not for a poor person) but it can extend to that person being excluded from the Register of Citizens, which is serious.

Finally, under Rule 13, every





citizen (every individual whose name is in the National Register of Indian Citizens) will be issued with a National Identity Card whose twelve particulars (described in Rule 3(3) (i) to (xii)) are entered in the National Register of Indian Citizens. The NIC is yet another identity card following Aadhaar.

### **Responsibility of the State or the citizen?**

It is ordinarily understood that “burden of proof” is a legal duty. In crimes committed against the State, the Prosecutor in a court of law performs the legal duty of proving that a crime has been committed, producing the accused person in court, and proving that he has committed the crime.

In the matter of illegal immigration, the illegal immigrant commits a crime against the State. The police or other State authority detects a person suspected to be an illegal entrant into the country, investigates into his residence and other connected matters, and registers a case. The State (Prosecutor) charges the person for illegal entry/residence/immigration and proves that the accused is guilty as charged. The accused either pleads guilty and accepts the verdict

of the court, or else produces evidence and arguments in his defence to the satisfaction of the court that he is not an illegal immigrant. Indeed, in *Md. Alimuddin v. State of Assam*, 1992 [Cri.L.J.3287], it was held that even if the defence evidence was false, so long as the prosecution does not discharge its initial burden of proving the case beyond all reasonable doubt, it cannot derive advantage from the falsity of the defence version. Thus, it is the legal duty of the State to prove its case even if the defendant is shown to be a liar.

However, if Government rules that every individual needs to prove that he is a bonafide citizen to the satisfaction of the State, the State in effect accuses every individual of being an illegal entrant/resident/immigrant. It would be the legal duty of the State to prosecute every individual and to discharge its burden of proving the charge. A layperson like the present writer may be excused if he thought this would create an unmanageable situation for a population of 130-crores, and that it would be logical and sensible for the police or other State authority to deploy its intelligence and investigative forces

to identify suspected illegal entrants/ residents/ immigrants and proceed against them.

However, by notifying the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003 [Rules, for short hereinafter], the State has initiated creation of a National Population Register (NPR) as part of the door-to-door Census process, leading to creating NRC. In this process, every individual is expected to provide/produce specified documents to satisfy the State official that his name deserves to be entered in the NRC. A person whose name is not found in the NRC is not a citizen.

As an analogy, it is like the Police expecting all Mohalla residents to provide proof of their innocence in a murder that took place in that Mohalla. Such an expectation assumes that all residents are felons unless they can prove otherwise. It insults the dignity of the individual, displays Police inability to detect and apprehend the murderer, and transfers the burden of proving innocence onto the accused. The NPR-NRC process requires all resident individuals/families to prove their citizenship and in default be deemed as illegal immigrants. It creates a situation which puts all of India's population to untold trouble, misery, expense and loss, for each of them to provide/produce documents to prove to the satisfaction of an official that he/she deserves to have his/her name included in the NRC.

It is a process fraught with infirmities, making implementation of the Rules violative of the dignity of the individual, prone to error and misuse of official power, unjust and unfair. What follows is an attempt to show how the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, are essentially exclusionary in character because the burden of proof of citizenship is on the individual. ●

*The author is a retired Major General of the Indian Army, may be reached at [sg9kere@live.com](mailto:sg9kere@live.com)*



# By 2030, 2.3 Billion People Are Projected to Live in Fragile or Conflict Affected Contexts



Our children stand on the precipice of a climate crisis

## Countercurrents Collective

A World Health Organization (WHO)-United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)-The Lancet Commission report said: Rising inequalities and environmental crises threaten political stability and risk international conflict over access to resources. By 2030, 2.3 billion people are projected to live in fragile or conflict affected contexts. The commission's report – *A future for the world's children?*, published

online on February 18, 2020 (19)32540-1) – has warned: “Climate change, ecological degradation, migrating populations, conflict, pervasive inequalities, and predatory commercial practices threaten the health and future of children in every country,” a new report warned.

### Not a single country working to ensure children's future

The WHO-UNICEF-The Lancet Commission report has found: Not a single country on the planet is

properly working to ensure safety, wellbeing, health and suitable environment for their children. The commission's report was released on Wednesday. “Despite dramatic improvements in survival, nutrition, and education over recent decades, today's children face an uncertain future,” said the report. The report recalled that successful societies invest in their children's futures and protect their rights. However, many politicians and governments in the world still do not consider such an investment as a priority. It said: Even

in rich countries, many children, especially in marginalized groups including indigenous people and ethnic minorities still suffer from hunger or live in conditions of total poverty.

The experts based their work on the observation of and recommendations for four key areas: the investment in children's health and education, greenhouse gases, the issue of "commercial harm" done to children, and the role decision-makers ought to play to protect children. The report said: "Our children [...] stand on the precipice of a climate crisis." The report said: Wealthy countries are threatening the future of all the children in the world through carbon pollution.

### **Unhealthy commodities**

The report observed the largely negative impact the commercial sector on the well-being of children in all countries, with companies promoting "addictive or unhealthy commodities," such as fast food, sugar-sweetened beverages, alcohol, tobacco, gambling, and social media. Companies make huge profits from marketing products directly to children and promoting addictive or unhealthy commodities, all of which are major causes of non-communicable diseases.

### **Profit motive**

The commission's report said: The commercial sector's profit motive poses many threats to child health and wellbeing, not least the environmental damage unleashed by unregulated industry. Children around the world are enormously exposed to advertising from business, whose marketing techniques exploit their developmental vulnerability and whose products can harm their health and wellbeing. Children's large and growing online exposure, while bringing benefits in terms of information access and social support, also exposes them to exploitation, as well as to bullying, gambling, and grooming by criminals and sexual abusers.

### **Industry self-regulation does not work**

The report said: Industry self-regulation does not work, and the existing global frameworks are not sufficient. The commission suggested: A far stronger and more comprehensive approach to regulation is required. The commission called for the development of an Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (i.e., an additional component to the treaty that must be independently ratified), to protect children from the

marketing of tobacco, alcohol, formula milk, sugar-sweetened beverages, gambling, and potentially damaging social media, and the inappropriate use of their personal data. It said: Countries who have led the way in protecting children from the harms of commercial marketing, supported by civil society, can support a protocol for adoption by the UN General Assembly, providing impetus for further legal and constitutional protections for children at national level.

### **Many hungry children in rich countries**

Even in rich countries, many children go hungry or live in conditions of absolute poverty, especially those belonging to marginalized social groups — including indigenous populations and ethnic minorities. Too often, the potential of children with developmental disabilities is neglected, restricting their contributions to society. Additionally, many millions of children grow up scarred by war or insecurity, excluded from receiving the most basic health, educational, and developmental services.

### **Wealthy countries' GHG emission**

Wealthy countries generally have better child health and development outcomes, but their historic and current greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions threaten the lives of all children. The ecological damage unleashed today endangers the future of children's lives on our planet, their only home. As a result, our understanding of progress on child health and wellbeing must give priority to measures of ecological sustainability and equity to ensure we protect all children, including the most vulnerable.

The commission said: The poorest countries have a long way to go towards supporting their children's ability to live healthy lives, but wealthier countries threaten the future of all children







through carbon pollution, on course to cause runaway climate change and environmental disaster. Not a single country performed well on all three measures of child flourishing, sustainability, and equity.

### **Except the USA**

The rights and entitlements of children are enshrined within the CRC ratified by all countries, except the USA. The report recommended that the CRC adopt a new protocol to protect children from commercial harm. The world's countries agreed in 2015 on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to leave future generations with a cleaner and healthier world. Yet the SDG agenda is so far still paralyzed. The report's authors are: Helen Clark, Awa Marie Coll-Seck, Anshu Banerjee, Stefan Peterson, Sarah L Dalglish, Shanthi Ameratunga, Dina Balabanova, Maharaj Kishan Bhan, Zulfiqar A Bhutta, John Borrazzo, Mariam Claeson, Tanya Doherty, Fadi El-Jardali, Asha S George, Angela Gichaga, Lu Gram, David B Hipgrave, Aku Kwamie, Qingyue Meng, Raúl Mercer, Sunita Narain, Jesca Nsungwa-Sabiiti, Adesola O Olumide, David Osrin, Timothy Powell-Jackson, Kumanan Rasanathan, Imran Rasul, Papaarangi Reid, Jennifer Requejo, Sarah S Rohde, Nigel Rollins, Magali Romedenne, Harshpal Singh Sachdev, Rana Saleh, Yusra R

Shawar, Jeremy Shiffman, Jonathon Simon, Peter D Sly, Karin Stenberg, Mark Tomlinson, Rajani R Ved and Anthony Costello.

### **Children at the heart of SDG**

The Commission urged placing children, aged 0–18 years, at the centre of the SDGs: at the heart of the concept of sustainability and our shared human endeavor. Governments must harness coalitions across sectors to overcome ecological and commercial pressures to ensure children receive their rights and entitlements now and a livable planet in the years to come.

### **Invest in children's health**

“Early investments in children's health, education, and development have benefits that compound throughout the child's lifetime, for their future children, and society as a whole. Successful societies invest in their children and protect their rights, as is evident from countries that have done well on health and economic measures over the past few decades.

### **Long-term vision**

Decision makers need a long-term vision. Just as good health and nutrition in the prenatal period and early years lay the foundation for a healthy life course, the learning and social skills we acquire at a young age provide the basis for later

development and support a strong national polity and economy. High quality services with universal healthcare coverage must be a top priority.

The benefits of investing in children would be enormous, and the costs are not prohibitive: an analysis of the SDGs suggests a financing gap of US\$195 per person. To ensure stronger economic and human development, each government must assess how to mobilize funding using instruments that help the poorest proportion of the population to meet this gap for children, and frame these as the most powerful investments a society can make.

### **Not just monetary**

Investments are not just monetary: citizen participation and community action, including the voices of children themselves, are powerful forces for change that must be mobilized to reach the SDGs. Social movements must play a transformational role in demanding the rights that communities need to care for children and provide for families.

### **Government's duty**

Government has a duty of care and protection across all sectors. Countries that support future generations put a high priority on ensuring all children's needs are met, by delivering entitlements, such as paid parental leave, free primary

health care at the point of delivery, access to healthy — and sufficient amounts of — food, state funded or subsidized education, and other social protection measures. These countries make sure children grow up in safe and healthy environments, with clean water and air and safe spaces to play. They respect the equal rights of girls, boys, and those with nonconforming gender identities. Policy makers in these countries are concerned with the effect of all policies on all children, but especially those in poorer families and marginalized populations, starting by ensuring birth registration so that the government can provide for children across the life course, and help them to become engaged and productive adult citizens.

Countries might provide these entitlements in different ways, but their realization is the only pathway for countries to achieve the SDGs for children's health and wellbeing, and requires decisive and strong public action. Since threats to child health and wellbeing originate in all sectors, a deliberately multisectoral approach is needed to ensure children and adolescents survive and thrive from the ages of 0–18 years, today and in the future. Investment in sectors beyond health and education — such as housing,

agriculture, energy, and transport — are needed to address the greatest threats to child health and wellbeing.

### **Political commitment**

Political commitment at executive level is needed to coordinate across sectors and leverage synergies across the life course, ensuring universal health coverage; good nutrition and food security for all; thoughtful urban planning; safe and affordable housing and transport; clean energy for all; and equitable social welfare policies. Multisectoral governance might take different forms in each country, but it will require strategic partnerships, cabinet level coordination across ministries, and management of diverse partners, with clear roles for each, including for non-state actors and the private sector.

### **Heads of state and PMs**

Heads of state or prime ministers must designate a crosscutting government ministry or equivalent to ensure joined up action and budgeting for pro-child policies and to demand harmonized assistance from global stakeholders, whose support is currently fragmented and inefficient. The report suggested to measure: How countries' GHG emissions are destroying their future. The commission assessed the

feasibility of monitoring countries' progress through a new child flourishing and futures profile, developed on the basis of survive and thrive SDG indicators reported by 180 countries, territories, and areas, and future threats to children's wellbeing using the proxy of GHG emissions by country. It complemented the profile with existing measures of economic equity.

### **Children, hope for the future**

Children and young people are full of energy, ideas, and hope for the future. Children are angry at the state of the world. Worldwide, schoolchildren and young people are protesting about environmental threats from fossil fuel economies. The commission said: We must find better ways to amplify their voices and skills for the planet's sustainable and healthy future. The SDGs require governments to place children at the very centre of their plans to address this crisis.

### **No time to lose**

This Commission concluded that there's no time to lose and no excuses if we fail. A new global movement for child and adolescent health is today an urgent necessity. ●

*Dr Bhan of the commission passed away in January 2020.*





# Partyless DEMOCRACY

Abhishek

THE DEMOCRACY IS RULE  
OF THE PEOPLE

TODAY WORLD, PEOPLE, SOCIETY  
AND THE GOVERNMENT NEED  
PARTYLESS DEMOCRATIC RULE

Party politics is one of the factors which stands, or tries to stand, in the way of human unity.

Democracy is projected as 'by the people, of the people, for the people' but it's actually **"buy the people, off the people and for the people"**.

In current scenario, party is supposed to collect its own fund. These funds come from big corporates, foreign funding agencies, politicians themselves and other small contributions. These fundings are basically investment in disguise to get bigger returns, which comes at expense of common man's interests. If the businessman buys top politicians of ruling party, he can get anything in favor. All other members of the party have to follow their leader's command and can't voice their dissension.

#### Demerits of current system

Prout philosophy states, "Party politics is one of the factors which stands, or tries to stand, in the way of human unity. In fact, party politics is even more dangerous than disease-causing germs. In party politics all the refined attributes of the human mind, such as simplicity and the spirit of service, slowly but surely get totally destroyed. Party affiliation commands more



respect than individual ability; service to self, not service to people, is the main motto; ministerial office, rather than human welfare, is considered superior; and mass deception, political somersaults, etc., are most common phenomena."

"Instead of rectifying themselves, politicians want to accomplish everything through their grandiloquence. By identifying the weaknesses in others and by resorting to bombastic language, they incite one section of people against another so that they can usurp the seat of power and cling to it. Human beings will have to remain vigilant against persons of this type."

### Recent examples

- Tussle in Maharashtra for CM post and they are projecting we want to give good government to the people while they themselves are more interested in power and money.
- Karnataka going to have 3 deputy CMs, which is not for people's welfare but to appease powerful vote clusters.
- CBI and Enforcement Directorate (ED) is used

against opposition parties to get political benefits for their own party. If someone joins their party, all cases against them will be subdued.

- In present politics, even bitter political opponents work in collusion in all wrong doings. MPs and MLAs increase their salaries. They just malign each other to win votes but go hand in gloves. No real action is taken for other parties' crime until the guilty is hiding ruling party's wrong doings.
- Creating new posts like Deputy CMs and other posts to appease powerful political clusters to save their chair at the cost of taxpayers' money.
- Horse trading. Buying other party's elected representatives is a common practice. \*Before Karnataka elections, there was cash crunch.
- Providing due undue benefits to the corporate houses that fund their election campaigns.
- Giving natural resources license to big corporates and the local rightful people are forced to work as laborers.

Current system of crony capitalism need to be changed or replaced that democracy truly represent its basic essence of 'by the people, of the people, for the people'.

### Proposed Solution

To replace the present manipulative election system, we can follow the following steps:

The party based electoral system should be abolished. A candidate should contest as an independent candidate in election for their respective constituency. A common program can be funded by election commission from exchequer. These candidates should share their agenda in TV and radio shows and all the commitments should be recorded. There will be debates and discussions that how they will fulfill their commitments. People should ask them directly how candidate's programs and policies are going to improve the condition of constituency and how those policies will be implemented. A strict mechanism should be followed that no candidate should be able to bribe or mislead the voters. If individuals are funding a



candidate, then the elected person is obliged to favor them at the cost of voters interest.

Candidates should not be allowed to do any other publicity and strict vigilance should be maintained.

Only those people should be allowed to vote who understand political, social and economic impact of policies and decisions. An electoral college should be formed of such politico-socio-economically aware people. A test may be conducted to check socio economic knowledge and understanding of voters and then they should become part of Electoral College and allowed to vote. It seems very harsh and impractical at the moment because we have grown with mindset of universal franchise, anyone above age of 18 years is eligible for voting. Will we ever ask a hockey player to select a cricket team if he does not know the basics of cricket? An effort should be made to educate remaining people so that they can also be socio-politico-economically aware and can vote in forthcoming elections. These people should be uplifted to become part of Electoral College. Voting should be mandatory for members of Electoral College.

Each person should stand for a

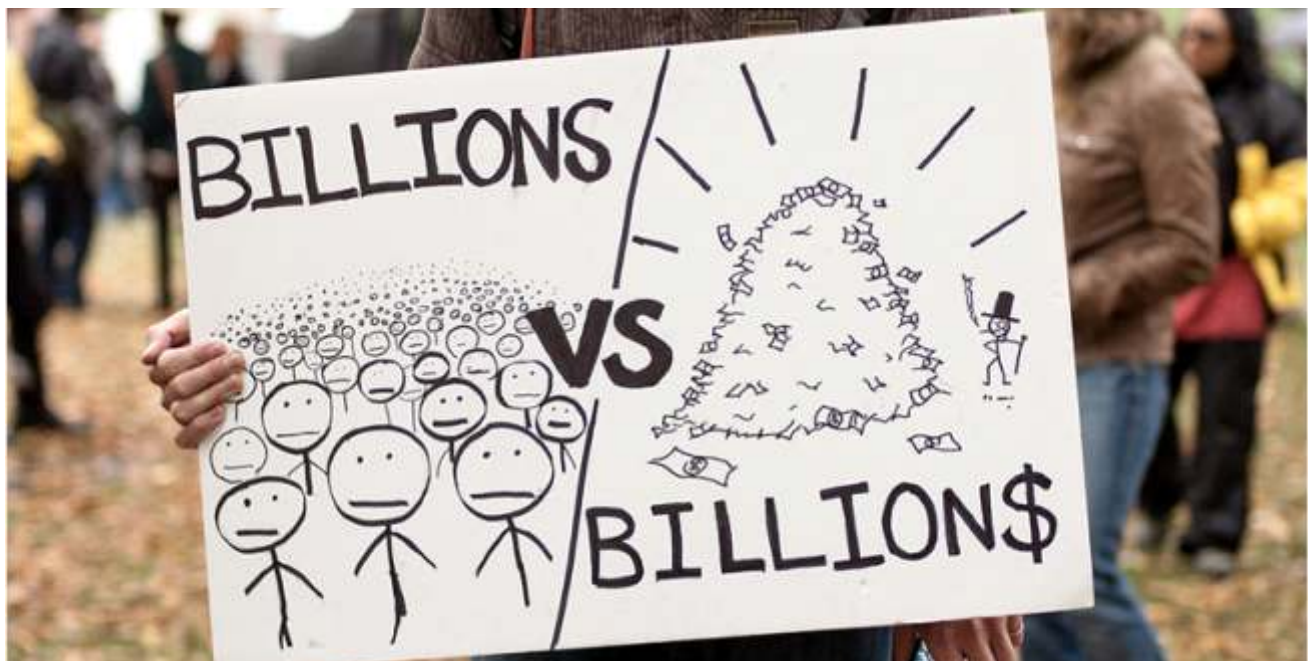
particular post which he is expert in and has leadership qualities. Let's say textile minister, then he should have decent knowledge on production, processing and marketing of textiles. It should not be that an elected person is allotted some ministry for which he does not know the basics. Complete development plan and all the projects should be visible online with estimated budget and time bound completion. People should have right to vote against a proposed project. If people feel, it is wastage of money like bullet train, big statutes, then they should have right to vote against the project. A cheaper method can be found like e-voting.

There should be quarterly assessment and all the elected persons have to answer to the people if they have concerns on his style of functioning, delayed projects and over expenditure etc. If an elected person is unable to deliver his promises in stipulated timeframe, then he should be penalized monetarily and sent to prison for making false promises. This will help in avoiding non serious candidates and pave the way for only serious candidates those know what is feasible and will promise accordingly. Discussions in parliament and legislative

assemblies will be based on everyone's input and not by party head's instructions where only a handful of people make all the decisions. A healthy discussion will incorporate more views and alleviate concerns from different sectors. Country or state should not run by whims of few self centred politicians.

Recall or Impeachment should be allowed against any elected member even before completion of his tenure if he is found to indulge in corrupt practices or not performing his duties. Political institutions are responsible for economic development of area as well. It should not be just about building roads and railways. E.g. Helping in setting up industry based on raw materials in those areas. Legislative, Administrative, Judiciary and Public exchequer should be separate. None of these institutions should be allowed to interfere in each other's work. Government appoints people who obey their dictums which jeopardizes the purpose of these very institutions.

Audit department should be absolutely independent just like the Judiciary. ●





# Astrology and Vegetables

 Tanvir Fatima

**A**strology has been an important part of holistic belief. Emotional or psychological stress is a common phenomenon in competitive environment seen everywhere. So astrology is the utmost need of the time. Each planet have a different and precise function in human life depending on its position in the horoscope. Planets really affect a person's thought his behaviour and his action too. Here I am describing the role of Mercury or Budh in human life. Mercury is the smallest and fastest moving planet in the solar system. It is the planet of business, communication, agility and intelligence. In fact every planet

gives its equal number of positive and negative effect. Sometimes your behaviour and mental level shows the effect of weak planet.

My work on astrology is not to predict what has to happen but to avert the negative consequences of it which in fact is the enemy of creativity and suggest the path of resistance. The effort seldom goes to waste if proper planning is done to tame the energy of malefic planet. If you wish to achieve something distinguished in life it is better to work hard than blame it on fate. The ability to take right decision is given by Mercury and brain development is determined by Mercury. When Mercury is weak it causes money to

be spent very quickly. It also causes skin problem, allergy, weak immune system, weak teeth, speech problem, blister on tongue and ulcer in mouth.

Here I would like to share an astounding method for reducing or eliminating the malefic effect of weak Mercury. By eating some green vegetables we can strengthen our Mercury. There are three humble vegetable of India. These are spinach or palak, pumpkin or kashifal and karela the bitter gourd. The role of these vegetables for improving mercury is paramount. It is a truth universally acknowledged that Chinese and Italian food in India is now almost as popular than Indian desi food. Even butter chicken is nearly passe. However if the women are indeed sincere towards safeguarding their family health they should use innovative ways to cook delectable recipes from these vegetables. The colour associated with Mercury is green and Wednesday is its day so one must eat these vegetables on Wednesday. ●







*Labourers crush stones at illegal stone quarries. (Pic: Gurvinder Singh)*

# HOW MINING RUINED LIVES AND Livelihoods

■ Gurvinder Singh

**K**oley Kisku, a primary school student at Ranipur village at Rampurhat block in Birbhum district of West Bengal suffers from a thyroid gland related ailment that has partially affected his ability to speak. His school mates say that the 11-year-old could speak normally till a few years ago but he began to lose his voice. Nowadays, he sits quietly in a corner, unable to mingle with other kids.

Koley is not alone in this predicament. Around 86 pupils who

study at Ranipur Lalbazar Primary School that offers education from pre-primary to class IV often miss classes due to various illnesses like diarrhoea. Dirty water from a village pond which is used to cook the mid-day meal for them is found to be the primary cause for this.

## **Dirty pond water as the culprit**

The school headmaster concedes that the water is not cleaned or purified of germs before it is used for cooking. "Our staff member walks

about one kilometre every day to bring water from the pond to cook the meal. Students contract ailments by consuming mid-day meals. We have informed the administration and education department several times but nothing has been done about the situation. We have to depend on the pond as the water level here has gone down due to overconsumption by stone quarries and crushers functional in the area," says Sk Jinnar Ali, the school headmaster. Moreover, the school

---

**Illegal stone quarries have changed the face of Birbhum district where villagers are finding it difficult to survive due to contaminated water and pollution.**

---

lacks separate toilet facilities for girls and boys.

Ali says that even the students of an Anganwadi of a nearby Kastogora village are being served mid-day meal made from the same contaminated water.

Locals complain that the water level has receded up to 180 ft and the situation worsens during summers. “The water level has been receding drastically and sometimes it is not possible to get water even at a depth of 200 ft. The stone quarries have been taking away most of the water. We often get dirty water to drink. The situation turns pathetic during summers when we have to travel a distance of 10 kilometres on a bicycle carrying plastic jars to bring water. We often face the danger of being bitten by venomous snakes or being harassed by men,” says Reba Mudi adding that the underground water level also remains low during the rest of the months of the year.

### **Farming suffers due to shortage of water**

The shortage of water has brought farming to a virtual halt in Ranipur forcing men to migrate to Kolkata or other states of the country to earn their livelihood.

Sixty-year-old farmer Sudhir Mudi says that he has been doing odd jobs due to the water crisis. “It doesn't make sense to think of farming when people are not getting water for drinking. Women have to walk or cycle to far-flung areas to collect water and often indulge in verbal clashes with people of other localities who do not allow us to take the water as they also face the same crisis. The stone quarries and crushers have ruined us but the administration has remained mute spectators. Most of the farmers have already migrated in search of livelihood but a few still remain due to old age.”

But this situation is not restricted to Ranipur. Several villages in Birbhum district of West Bengal are facing severe water crisis with each passing year thanks to the stone quarries and crushers that have proliferated in the area destroying the ecology of the district and turning several waterbodies dry.

### **How mining ruined a district**

The history of mining in Birbhum goes back to over 150 years when it was first started at Nalhati by the descendants of Maharaja Nandakumar who was a diwan

during the colonial era and was the first victim of hanging after being accused of forgery in 1775.

The mining spread to other areas of Birbhum in the later years but was largely disorganised and private players were involved. In the late 1960s, the state government decided to offer employment to tribals and began to lease mines exclusively to them. There was a severe movement against the stone quarries and crushing units destroying the environment between 2003-09.

As a result, the government intervened and mining was stopped briefly in 2010. A tripartite agreement was also signed between the quarries and crusher owners but it lasted for only a few days and soon the illegal activities began and people began to face similar atrocities. Indiscriminate mining has severely affected the water quality in the area.

Now, the situation has reached a saturation point where people in some villages do not take daily bath and instead save the water for livestock. Khepa Baski who lives in Bortolla village turns emotional every time he sees the dry canal near



**Koley Kisku (in blue) has his midday meal with other children in school. (Pic: Gurvinder Singh)**





**Water levels recede in the wells. (Pic: Gurvinder Singh)**

his house which is now being used as a playground by children or as grazing ground for livestock. “The canal used to overflow with water till a few years ago but the shortage of water at the Massanjore dam in Jharkhand has strictly limited the release of water. The canal has ankle deep water in the monsoon while the rest of the year, it remains dry. It is hard to believe now that it was once a lively canal.”

Another villager Dara Singh Tudu says he skips bath often for a week to arrange water for livestock. “We can live without bathing but the livestock needs water to drink. Villagers, including women, defecate outside due to the water crisis,” he says.

“Once a quarry or a crusher starts on a spot, it doesn't take long for the surrounding land to get destroyed by the stone and stone dust. The water level starts depleting and the dust settles everywhere. Most of the people have been compelled to sell their houses at throwaway prices after they found it difficult to consume the water laced with dust and got affected with diseases,” says Anil Saha (32) who runs a hotel close to a quarry at Nirisa village in Rampurhat block of the district. “There are some villages in Birbhum where water is supplied through water tanks as the underground water is not available,” he says.

### **Illegal stone quarries make lives hell**

Kunal deb, secretary of Uthnau, a non-governmental organisation, which has been working for nearly two decades to mobilise the Santhal community against stone quarries and crushers claims that the water level has been receding at an alarming rate in Birbhum district. “We have done a study on the water level in the district and found that it has been decreasing by 15 ft on an average in a decade due to the massive exploitation done by quarries and stone crushing units. The situation might take a turn for the worse if things are not checked as already several pockets are reeling under water shortage.” ●

**The exploitation of subterranean water reserves is contributing to desertification in many parts of the world, and as the subterranean water level recedes, the soil near the surface dries out and plants wither and die. This has already happened in many parts of Rajasthan. Afforestation is the only solution to desertification. Human beings have suffered from water scarcity and drought in the past, and this problem will continue unless proper care is taken in the future.**

**-Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar**

As part of its hegemonic strategy, the Gates Foundation says it wants to ensure global food security and optimise health and nutrition.

# TOXIC AGRICULTURE AND THE Gates Foundation in Environmental Protection

Colin Todhunter

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation was launched in 2000 and has \$46.8 billion in assets (December 2018). It is the largest charitable foundation in the world and distributes more aid for global health than any government. One of the foundation's stated goals is to globally enhance healthcare and reduce extreme poverty. The Gates Foundation is a major funder of the CGIAR system (formerly the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research) – a global partnership whose stated aim is to strive for a food-secured future. Its research is aimed at reducing rural poverty, increasing food security, improving human health and nutrition and ensuring sustainable management of natural resources.

In 2016, the Gates Foundation was accused of dangerously and unaccountably distorting the direction of international development. The charges were laid out in a report by Global Justice Now: 'Gated Development' Is the Gates Foundation always a force for



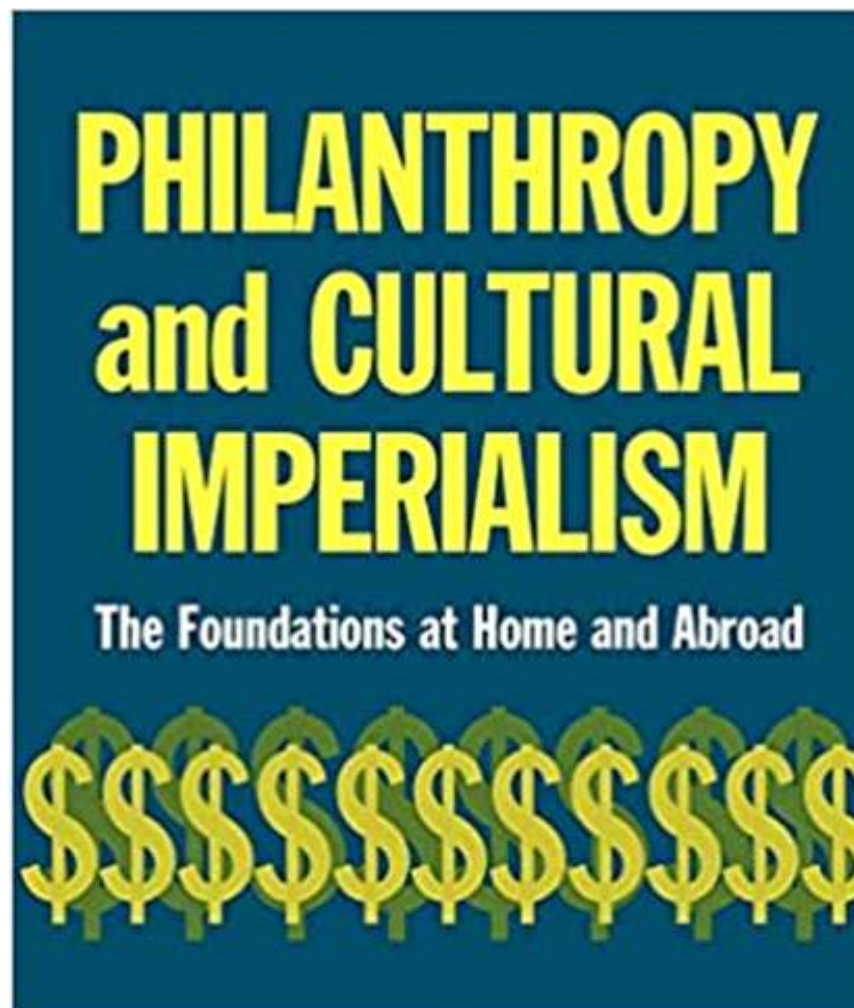


good?' According to the report, the foundation's strategy is based on deepening the role of multinational companies in the Global South. On release of the report, Polly Jones, the head of campaigns and policy at Global Justice Now, said: "The Gates Foundation has rapidly become the most influential actor in the world of global health and agricultural policies, but there's no oversight or accountability in how that influence is managed."

She added that this concentration of power and influence is even more problematic when you consider that the philanthropic vision of the Gates Foundation seems to be largely based on the values of 'corporate America': "The foundation is relentlessly promoting big business-based initiatives such as industrial agriculture, private health care and education. But these are all potentially exacerbating the problems of poverty and lack of access to basic resources that the foundation is supposed to be alleviating." The report's author, Mark Curtis, outlines the foundation's promotion of industrial agriculture across Africa, which would undermine existing sustainable, small-scale farming that is providing the vast majority of food across the continent.

Curtis describes how the foundation is working with US agri-commodity trader Cargill in an \$8 million project to "develop the soya value chain" in southern Africa. Cargill is the biggest global player in the production of and trade in soya with heavy investments in South America where GM soya monocrops (and associated agrochemicals) have displaced rural populations and caused health problems and environmental damage. Cargill is one of the few companies that controls the global trade and supply of agricultural produce.

According to Curtis, the Gates-funded project will likely enable Cargill to capture a hitherto untapped African soya market and eventually introduce GM soya onto



the continent. The Gates foundation is also supporting projects involving other chemical and seed corporations, including DuPont, Syngenta and Bayer. It is effectively promoting a model of industrial agriculture, the increasing use of agrochemicals and patented seeds, the privatisation of extension services and a very large focus on genetically modified crops.

What the Gates Foundation is doing is part of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) initiative, which is based on the premise that hunger and malnutrition in Africa are mainly the result of a lack of technology and functioning markets. Curtis says AGRA has been intervening directly in the formulation of African governments' agricultural policies on issues like seeds and land, opening up African markets to US agribusiness. More than 80% of Africa's seed supply comes from

millions of small-scale farmers recycling and exchanging seed from year to year. But AGRA is promoting the commercial production of seed and is thus supporting the introduction of commercial (chemical-dependent) seed systems, which risk enabling a few large companies to control seed research and development, production and distribution.

The report notes that over the past two decades a long and slow process of national seed law reviews, sponsored by USAID and the G8 along with Bill Gates and others, has opened the door to multinational corporations' involvement in seed production, including the acquisition of every sizeable seed enterprise on the African continent.

#### **Gates, pesticides and global health**

The Gates Foundation is also very active in the area of health, which is ironic given its promotion of

industrial agriculture and its reliance on health-damaging agrochemicals. This is something that has not been lost on environmentalist Dr Rosemary Mason. Mason notes that the Gates Foundation is a heavy pusher of agrochemicals and patented seeds. She adds that the Gates Foundation is also reported to be collaborating in Bayer's promotion of "new chemical approaches" and "biological crop protection" (i.e. encouraging agrochemical sales and GM crops) in the Global South.

After having read the recent 'A Future for the World's Children? A WHO - UNICEF - Lancet Commission, Mason noticed that pesticides were conspicuous by their absence and therefore decided to write to Professor Anthony Costello, director of the UCL Institute for Global Health, who is the lead

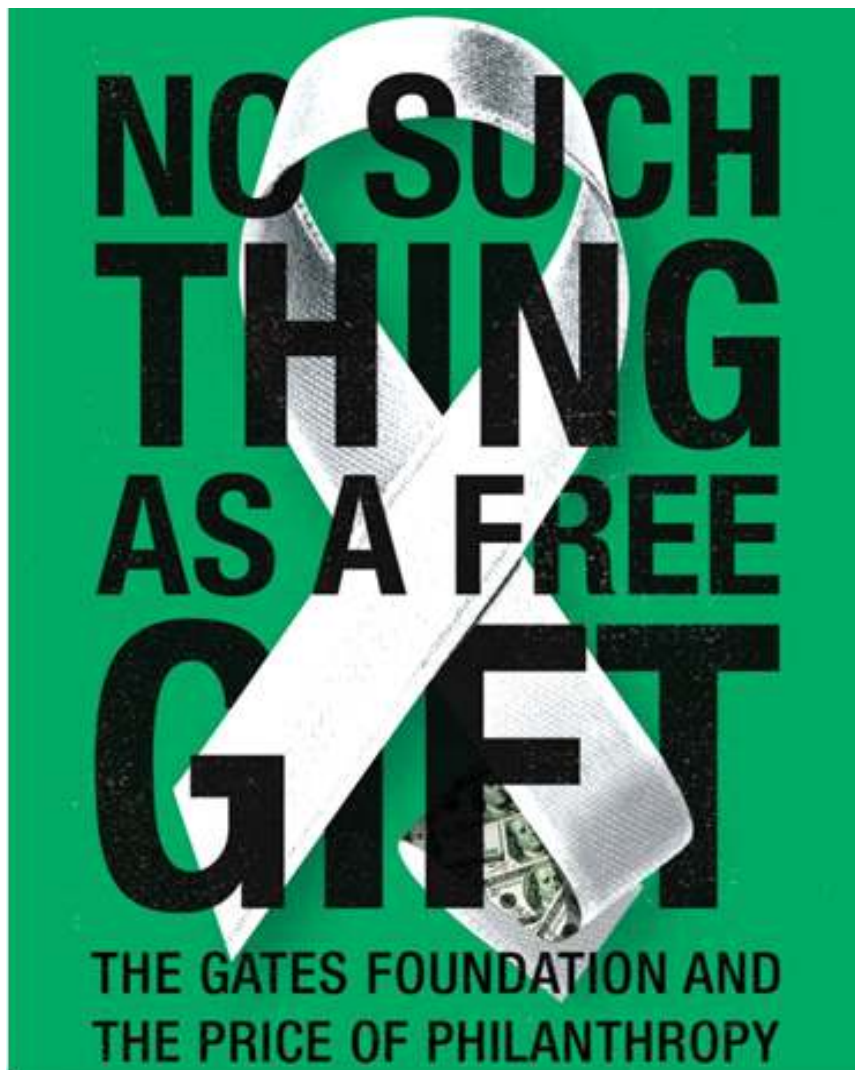


author of the report. In her open 19-page letter, "Why Don't Pesticides Feature in the WHO-UNICEF-Lancet Commission?", she notes in

the Costello-led report that there is much talk about greater regulation of marketing of tobacco, alcohol, formula milk and sugar-sweetened beverages but no mention of pesticides.

But perhaps this should come as little surprise: some 42 authors' names are attached to the report and Mason says that in one way or another via the organisations they belong to, many (if not most) have received funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The Gates Foundation is a prominent funder of the World Health Organization and UNICEF. Gates has been the largest or second largest contributor to the WHO's budget in recent years. His foundation provided 11% of the WHO's entire budget in 2015, which is 14 times greater than the UK government's contribution. Perhaps this sheds some light onto why a major report on child health would omit the effects of pesticides. Mason implies this is a serious omission given what the UN expert on toxics Baskut Tuncak said in a November 2017 article in the Guardian:

"Our children are growing up exposed to a toxic cocktail of weedkillers, insecticides, and fungicides. It's on their food and in their water, and it's even doused over their parks and playgrounds. Many governments insist that our standards of protection from these





pesticides are strong enough. But as a scientist and a lawyer who specialises in chemicals and their potential impact on people's fundamental rights, I beg to differ. Last month it was revealed that in recommending that glyphosate – the world's most widely-used pesticide – was safe, the EU's food safety watchdog copied and pasted pages of a report directly from Monsanto, the pesticide's manufacturer. Revelations like these are simply shocking.”

Mason notes that in February 2020, Tuncak rejected the idea that the risks posed by highly hazardous pesticides could be managed safely. He told *Unearthed* (GreenPeace UK's journalism website) that there is nothing sustainable about the widespread use of highly hazardous pesticides for agriculture. Whether they poison workers, extinguish biodiversity, persist in the environment or accumulate in a mother's breast milk, Tuncak argued that these are unsustainable, cannot be used safely and should have been phased out of use long ago.

In his 2017 article, he stated: “The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the most ratified international human rights treaty in the world (only the US is not a party), makes it clear that states have an explicit obligation to protect children from exposure to toxic

chemicals, from contaminated food and polluted water, and to ensure that every child can realise their right to the highest attainable standard of health. These and many other rights of the child are abused by the current pesticide regime. These chemicals are everywhere and they are invisible.” Tuncak added that paediatricians have referred to childhood exposure to pesticides as creating a “silent pandemic” of disease and disability. He noted that exposure in pregnancy and childhood is linked to birth defects, diabetes, and cancer and stated that children are particularly vulnerable to these toxic chemicals: increasing evidence shows that even at 'low' doses of childhood exposure, irreversible health impacts can result. He concluded that the overwhelming reliance of regulators on industry-funded studies, the exclusion of independent science from assessments and the confidentiality of studies relied upon by authorities must change.

However, it seems that the profits of agrochemical manufacturers trump the rights of children and the public at large: a joint investigation by *Unearthed* and the NGO *Public Eye* has found the world's five biggest pesticide manufacturers are making more than a third of their income from leading products, chemicals that pose

serious hazards to human health and the environment. Mason refers to an analysis of a huge database of 2018's top-selling 'crop protection products' which revealed the world's leading agrochemical companies made more than 35% of their sales from pesticides classed as “highly hazardous” to people, animals or ecosystems. The investigation identified billions of dollars of income for agrochemical giants BASF, Bayer, Corteva, FMC and Syngenta from chemicals found by regulatory authorities to pose health hazards like cancer or reproductive failure.

This investigation is based on an analysis of a huge dataset of pesticide sales from the agribusiness intelligence company *Phillips McDougall*. This firm conducts detailed market research all over the world and sells databases and intelligence to pesticide companies. The data covers around 40% of the \$57.6bn global market for agricultural pesticides in 2018. It focuses on 43 countries, which between them represent more than 90% of the global pesticide market by value. While Bill Gates promotes a chemical-intensive model of agriculture that dovetails with the needs and value chains of agri-food conglomerates, Mason outlines the spiraling rates of disease in the UK and the US and lays the blame at the door of the agrochemical corporations that Gates has opted to get into bed with. She focuses on the impact of glyphosate-based herbicides as well as the cocktail of chemicals sprayed on crops.

Mason has discussed the health-related impacts of glyphosate in numerous previous reports and in her open letter to Costello again refers to peer-reviewed studies and official statistics which indicate that glyphosate affects the gut microbiome and is responsible for a global metabolic health crisis provoked by an obesity epidemic. Moreover, she presents evidence that glyphosate causes epigenetic changes in humans and animals – diseases skip a generation then appear. However, the mainstream



*Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation building*

narrative is to blame individuals for their ailments and conditions which are said to result from 'lifestyle choices'. Yet Monsanto's German owner Bayer has confirmed that more than 42,700 people have filed suits against Monsanto alleging that exposure to Roundup herbicide caused them or their loved ones to develop non-Hodgkin lymphoma and that Monsanto covered up the risks.

Mason says that each year there are steady increases in the numbers of new cancers and increases in deaths from the same cancers, with no treatments making any difference to the numbers; at the same time, she argues, these treatments maximise the bottom line of the drug companies while the impacts of agrochemicals remains conspicuously absent from the disease narrative. She states that we are exposed to a lifetime's exposure to thousands of synthetic chemicals that contaminate the blood and urine of nearly every person tested – “a global mass poisoning.”

### **Gates Foundation in perspective**

As part of its hegemonic strategy, the Gates Foundation says it wants to ensure global food security and optimise health and nutrition. However, Rosemary Mason alludes to the fact that the Gates Foundation seems happy to ignore the deleterious health impacts of agrochemicals while promoting the

interests of the firms that produce them, but it facilitates many health programmes that help boost the bottom line of drug companies. Health and health programmes seem only to be defined with certain parameters which facilitate the selling of the products of the major pharmaceutical companies which the foundation partners with. Indeed, researcher Jacob Levich argues that the Gates Foundation not merely facilitates unethical low-cost clinical trials (with often devastating effects for participants) in the Global South but also assists in the creating new markets for the “dubious” products of pharmaceuticals corporations.

As for food security, the foundation would do better by supporting agroecological (agrochemical-free) approaches to agriculture, which various high-level UN reports have advocated for ensuring equitable global food security. But this would leave smallholder agriculture both intact and independent from Western agro-capital, something which runs counter to the underlying aims of the corporations that the foundation supports – dispossession and market dependency.

And these aims have been part of a decades-long strategy where we have seen the strengthening of an emerging global food regime based on agro-export mono-cropping

linked to sovereign debt repayment and World Bank/IMF 'structural adjustment' directives. The outcomes have included a displacement of a food-producing peasantry, the consolidation of Western agri-food oligopolies and the transformation of many countries from food self-sufficiency into food deficit areas.

While Bill Gates is busy supporting the consolidation of Western agro-capital in Africa under the guise of ensuring 'food security', it is very convenient for him to ignore the fact that at the time of decolonisation in the 1960s Africa was not just self-sufficient in food but was actually a net food exporter with exports averaging 1.3 million tons a year between 1966-70. The continent now imports 25% of its food, with almost every country being a net food importer. More generally, developing countries produced a billion-dollar yearly surplus in the 1970s but by 2004 were importing US\$ 11 billion a year.

The Gates Foundation promotes a (heavily subsidised and inefficient – certainly when the externalised health, social and environment costs are factored in) corporate-industrial farming system and the strengthening of a global neoliberal, fossil-fuel-dependent food regime that by its very nature fuels and thrives on, among other things, unjust trade policies,

**Human beings' desire to acquire things from others knows no bounds. Their hopes are never quenched, but their spirit of giving to others is very meagre. Generally when people do give something to others, the intention of charity or service is absolutely secondary; their predominant feeling is to receive something in exchange. In other words, they have extreme greed to garner fame by one hand and give charity by the other. A sadhaka will have to adopt the opposite course to get rid of the burning flames of greed, he/she will have to develop an infinite desire to give to others with no intention at all of obtaining anything from them. You will have to establish yourselves in the realm of infinity by smashing the fetters of unit ego.**

**-Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar**





population displacement and land dispossession (something which the Gates Foundation once called for but euphemistically termed “land mobility”), commodity monocropping, soil and environmental degradation, illness, nutrient-deficient diets, a narrowing of the range of food crops, water shortages, pollution and the eradication of biodiversity.

At the same time, the foundation is helping powerful corporate interests to appropriate and commodify knowledge. For instance, since 2003, CGIAR (mentioned at the start of this article) and its 15 centres have received more than \$720 million from the Gates Foundation. In a June 2016 article in *The Asian Age*, Vandana Shiva says the centres are accelerating the transfer of research and seeds to corporations, facilitating intellectual property piracy and seed monopolies created through IP laws and seed regulations.

Besides taking control of the seeds of farmers in CGIAR seed banks, Shiva adds that the Gates Foundation (along with the Rockefeller Foundation) is investing heavily in collecting seeds from across the world and storing them in a facility in Svalbard in the Arctic — the ‘doomsday vault’. The foundation is also funding Diversity Seek (DivSeek), a global initiative to take patents on the seed collections through genomic mapping. Seven

million crop accessions are in public seed banks. Shiva says that DivSeek could allow five corporations to own this diversity and argues: “Today, biopiracy is carried out through the convergence of information technology and biotechnology. It is done by taking patents by ‘mapping’ genomes and genome sequences... DivSeek is a global project launched in 2015 to map the genetic data of the peasant diversity of seeds held in gene banks. It robs the peasants of their seeds and knowledge, it robs the seed of its integrity and diversity, its evolutionary history, its link to the soil and reduces it to ‘code’. It is an extractive project to ‘mine’ the data in the seed to ‘censor’ out the commons.”

She notes that the peasants who evolved this diversity have no place in DivSeek — their knowledge is being mined and not recognised, honoured or conserved: an enclosure of the genetic commons. This process is the very foundation of capitalism — appropriation of the commons (seeds, water, knowledge, land, etc.), which are then made artificially scarce and transformed into marketable commodities. The Gates Foundation talks about health but facilitates the roll-out of a toxic form of agriculture whose agrochemicals cause immense damage. It talks of alleviating poverty and malnutrition and tackling food insecurity but it bolsters an inherently unjust global food regime which is responsible for

perpetuating food insecurity, population displacement, land dispossession, privatisation of the commons and neoliberal policies that remove support from the vulnerable and marginalised, while providing lavish subsidies to corporations.

The Gates Foundation is part of the problem, not the solution. To more fully appreciate this, let us turn to a February 2020 article in the journal *Globalizations*. Its author, Ashok Kumbamu, argues that the ultimate aim of promoting new technologies — whether GM seeds, agrochemicals or commodified knowledge — on a colossal scale is to make agricultural inputs and outputs essential commodities, create dependency and bring all farming operations into the capitalist fold. To properly understand Bill Gates’s ‘philanthropy’ is not to take stated goals and objectives at face value but to regard his ideology as an attempt to manufacture consent and prevent and marginalise more radical agrarian change that would challenge prevailing power structures and act as impediments to capitalist interests. The foundation’s activities must be located within the hegemonic and dispossessive strategies of imperialism: displacement of the peasantry and subjugating those who remain in agriculture to the needs of global distribution and supply chains dominated by the Western agri-food conglomerates whose interests the

Gates Foundation facilitates and legitimises.

### In India

The Gates Foundation has become infamous in India for such controversies as testing new vaccines on the poorest Indians. In addition, the Foundation has a global partnership with Monsanto, the agricultural corporation linked with the large number of farmer suicides, the wearing down and erosion of the soil in many parts of the country and the attempt of corporations to patent Indian seeds and plants. Gates is known for advocating GM crops in India and elsewhere, in particular the GM banana.

The fact is, that nearly every single party has been an active collaborator with the Gates Foundation. The influence of Gates and the multi-million contracts associated with demonetization have show how illusory is the nature of Indian sovereignty (swaraj). In 2018 when reports emerged of how GM (BT) products were being illegally and widely used by many companies in the food industry, the government refused to take action, nor is there any new proposed legislation to deal with this subversion of India's food supply. Unsurprisingly the Foundation in September 2019 gave a special award to the PM. Furthermore January of this year, the Cabinet approved a partnership of the Department of Health with the Gates Foundation. This is in-line with the



proposed further corporatization of the Indian health infrastructure.

As of now there is no action against the illegal growing of GM crops in the country. BT/GM brinjal has been reported many times to being grown across the country. Instead members from all parties from the NCP, to the Congress and the present government have called for legalizing this criminal assault on the genetic makeup of Indian agriculture. In January of this year, the government once again

promised to issue an advisory would be published soon to deal with this illegal agriculture. Nearly 10 years have gone by while various governments have all failed to protect the crops and soil of the country. Despite an advisory that may or may not have been issued, the fact that the politicians of nearly all parties are either complicit in GM crop agriculture or are GM advocates, the chance of action at the grassroots level seems slim indeed.●





# Psychic Equilibrium for Peace

Shrii Shrii Ānandamúrti

Psychic equilibrium is peace. It is therefore to be seen what brings about psychic equilibrium and what disturbs it. Spiritual practices will bring psychic equilibrium, and a belief in superstition will disturb it. Hence, for the preservation of peace, spiritual practices and fighting against superstition are necessary.

Relief from duhkha [suffering] is the main desire, and without the fulfillment of this desire peace is not possible. This remission is called nivrtti [the cessation of suffering]. Nivrtti is of two types: one is called [sámayikii] nivrtti [the temporary cessation of suffering], and the other atyantikii nivrtti [the permanent cessation of suffering]. One thing which helps in getting remission, or nivrtti, is called artha [that which provides temporary liberation from mundane desires]. But artha is purely physical, so it can bring only physical and temporary remission. For everlasting freedom from duhkha, Paramártha [that which provides permanent liberation] is the only remedy. Paramártha does not bring only temporary remission, but everlasting freedom from duhkha. Atyantikii nivrtti can be obtained only by Paramártha which relieves one of all duhkha: physical, mental and spiritual. This Paramártha can only be obtained by sadhana, that is, spiritual practices. For maintaining peace psychic equilibrium is necessary, and for maintaining this equilibrium freedom from all duhkha forever is necessary. Freedom from duhkha or atyantikii nivrtti can be obtained only from Paramártha, and Paramártha can be achieved only by sadhana, or spiritual practices.

In the Marga spiritual practices begin when the child reaches the age of five. From the very beginning of a child's life, he or she is initiated into spiritual practices. With the advance of the child's life the spiritual practices also advance, bringing within their scope not only the mental sphere, but also bodily development.

The sadhana, or spiritual practices, of the Marga do not teach forsaking the world. They teach the right and correct use of all property, crude or subtle. Our sadhana is a systematic and scientific method for physical, mental and spiritual progress and advancement by which permanent psychic equilibrium, and thus everlasting peace, is established.. ●



Madhukar Nistane said that Vidarbha has been a victim of persistent neglect since the formation of Maharashtra. A paltry sum of the state budget is allocated to Vidarbha. In the last







15 years, about 45000 farmers have committed suicide in 11 districts of Vidarbha. Agriculture is in bad shape and industries are practically non-existent. Every government has been insensitive to the needs and aspirations of the vidarbhis. But now Vidarbha will not tolerate this apathy and injustice !

PBI has been continuously agitating for statehood to Vidarbha for many years. After a demonstration at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on 3rd October 2019 last year, the party has intensified its agitation by giving a memorandum in this regard to all MPs from Vidarbha region.

After the demonstration, the agitators submitted a memorandum of their following demands to Balubhau Dhanorkar, MP from Chandrapur Lok Sabha constituency :

1. A proposal for the creation of separate Vidarbha state should be tabled in the parliament.
2. Yavatmal to Tipeswar, train service to be started.
3. Construction of Yavatmal-Kinwat National Highway be announced.
4. Sub-Divisional Officer's (Mahsul) Office be set up in Ghatanji.
5. Ownership rights should be given to encroachers.





## April 2020: PBI (Bihar) will Contest from Maximum Seats : Shiv Narayan Prasad

In view of the forthcoming Bihar Legislative Assembly elections, Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta, national convener of Proutist Bloc, India toured Bihar from 7 to 12 March. He, along with state president Shiv Narayan Prasad, took stock of the preparations of the party in various legislative assemblies.

**Patna :** On March 7, a meeting of the State Committee was held at the residence of general secretary Prem Shankar in Patna, which was attended by the members of the State Committee: general Secretary Prem Shankar, general secretary Ravi Shankar Singh, finance secretary Dinesh Kumar, public relations secretary Dr. Pramod, Patna District president Shravan Kumar, Patna metropolitan president Vishwaraj Dev, Patna district general secretary Vishal Raj and other members, besides the state president and the national convener,

It was decided unanimously that PBI will contest in all 243 seats of the state in the upcoming Vidhan Sabha elections. It was decided that party workers would be prepared to send the party's message to people, and in the coming months, the party would focus more on raising funds, besides holding regular public meetings.

**Begusarai :** On 8 March, a meeting was held at the residence of Arvind Kumar Yadav, Secretary, Begusarai District Committee of PBI, in which all the members of the District Committee including Jyoti, Omprakash Singh and Virendra Kumar were present, besides Shiv Narayan Prasad and Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta. It was decided that a massive membership drive would be conducted; a bank account of district committee would be opened and sufficient funds would be collected for the smooth functioning of the party and for contesting the upcoming elections.

**Araria :** On March 11, district committee meeting was held at the residence of PBI's National Patron Acharya Vishveshwar in Araria district. In addition to Shiv Narayan Prasad and Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta, district





# ACTIVITY

president Acharya Krishna Kumar, Nageshwar Mandal, Kirtyanand, Mahendra Mandal, Ganesh, Rajendra And other members were present.

The committee agreed that in the upcoming Vidhan Sabha elections, PBI must work to win Sikti vidhan sabha seat. All kinds of preparations for the contest were discussed thoroughly: from membership campaigns to election canvassing and raising funds required to contest elections. The district committee resolved to raise a good amount of funds.

**Madhubani :** On 12 March, state president and national convener attended Madhubani District Committee meeting. District president Dharmendra Kumar, organizing secretary Sunil Kumar Yadav, general secretary Ramakant Yadav and other committee officials were present in the meeting.

The committee decided to field a candidate from Madhubani assembly constituency in the upcoming elections. The names of potential candidates were also discussed. The state president also sought information regarding membership drive. The national convenor, while expressing his views on propagation of the party's ideology, election strategy etc, motivated the committee to work with more discipline and greater enthusiasm.



## Proutist Bloc, India (PBI) National Convention

18-19 July 2020

Maharana Pratap Auditorium, Near Dinkar Golambar

Arya Kumar Road, Rajendra Nagar, Patna, Bihar

Phone: 7004666315, 9304803118, 9973904282,  
9999626164, 9212199658

[pbi.org.in](http://pbi.org.in)

Email: [proutistblocindia@yahoo.com](mailto:proutistblocindia@yahoo.com)

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarker

# TAKING UP THE WEAPON FOR DHARMA YUDDHA (WAR)

KÁRÁR KAPÁT ÁGHÁTE BHÁUNGIÁ,  
ÁLO NIYE ELE KE GO ATITHI  
AJÁNÁ PATHIK TUMI E BHÁVE ÁSIÁ,  
SARÁLE TAMISRÁR BHIITI  
ÁLO NIYE ELE KE GO ATITHI

KONO ÁSHÁ JE KARENI BHÁŚÁ JÁR MÚKA CHILO  
PRATIVÁDA JÁNÁYENI AVICÁR SAYE CHILO  
TÁREO SMARAÑA KARE GÁNDHIVA TULE DHARE  
SHONÁLE JIIVANER GIITI,  
ÁLO NIYE ELE KE GO ATITHI

MUHUR MUHU BÁJE TAVA JAY BHERI  
AHARAH CHOTE SE JE DIGANTA VIDÁRI  
EK KE ANEK TUMI ANEKER EK HARI  
TOMÁR KARUNÁ JÁCI NITI,  
ÁLO NIYE ELE KE GO ATITHI

The Prison doors You have broken  
With just one blow  
Coming with such effulgence  
O Who is Our Guest who has Come?  
O Unknown Traveler,  
Coming with such an overwhelming bháva (ecstatic mood)  
Wiping out all fear of darkness and crudity.  
O Who is Our Guest who has Come?

Those who were without any hope,  
Whose languages who could not manage to be established  
Which had become dumbfounded and mute  
Who suffered so much injustice  
But did not think to express any protest  
In remembrance of all this You have taken up  
The Gandiiva (divine bow for Dharma Yuddha-war)  
And made them listen to the Songs of True Living  
(As a Dignified Human being)  
O Who is Our Guest who has Come?

Again and again resounds Your victory drums  
Day in and day out rush forwards  
Piercing all the directions.  
You are the Singular amidst plurality  
Amidst plurality You are the Singular  
Lord who steals all our sins (Hari)  
Unto Your Karuna (compassion)  
We pray and offer ourselves.  
O Who is Our Guest who has Come?