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# PROUT

A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis



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PBI Launches Fight  
for Statehood  
to Vidarbha

The Missing  
Women  
of Pakistan

## NEVER LET HIM GO

"The water of my tears and nose were mingling together and dribbling down Baba's shirt. In this emotionally and spiritually surcharged atmosphere, Baba was unperturbed that His shirt was being spoiled. He was simply gazing and watching me like one tenderly watches a helpless child having a fit."



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LIKE SHIVA AND KRSNA,  
ANANDAMURTI WAS BORN INTO  
AN ENVIRONMENT OF GREAT  
CONFLICT AND SUFFERING

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THE PRIME PURPOSE OF ANANDA SAMBODHI IS TO  
BE FOR THE ALL-ROUND UPLIFTMENT OF THE  
WOMEN IN GENERAL AND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE LOCAL TRIBAL WOMEN IN PARTICULAR

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# PROUT

**PROGRESSIVE UTILISATION THEORY**

Propounded by - Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

## **PROUT - Cry of the Suffering Humanity**







### **What is PROUT :**

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

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

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

### **Main principles of PROUT and Neo-Humanism**

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



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*“He comes on earth when there is too much sin and it is difficult for virtuous people to live on this earth. When dharma declines and adharma, or sin, gets the upper hand; when the virtuous and the pious are tortured and the dishonest and evil-doers tyrannize over the good; in a word, when the human intellect is guided along degraded and destructive channels; Táraka Brahma forms a desire to come on earth with a specific mission of restoring Dharma by launching a ceaseless fight against all injustice and sin.”*

**-Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar**

## Fundamental Principles of PROUT

1

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

2

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

3

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

4

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

5

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





## Manifest His Mission

It was the eleventh of May, 1922. Polaris, Regulus, Antares, Betelgeuse, Hadar, Arcturus, Taurus, Rigel, Arcturus, Norma, Jupiter, Aquarius and Neptune, as were other stars and planets at their specially appointed coordinates in the sidereal hemisphere, in the Milky Way and beyond. Deep within the hub of their immense fiery bodies where their souls lay and giant hearts throbbed, some once in two years, the large constellations and their smaller sisters were vaguely conscious of something extraordinary, about to happen in the all pervading universe. Patiently yet anxiously they waited for something they themselves were not quite aware of. Thousands of light years away on Earth, the third planet of another star, tiny in comparison to some of these super giants, the Sun was rising over the northern hemisphere. Her satellite the lovely Moon was all in readiness to display her full beauty to the mother planet Earth. Towards dawn, while the mighty River Ganga serenely meandered few kilometres away from Jamalpur, a small town in North India began to stir to life seemingly unknown about the remarkable event about to take place within their midst - the birth of Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, whose spiritual name was Shrii Shrii Anandamurti affectionately known as Baba, the one who founded Prout.

And who was he? "I was a mystery, I am a mystery, and I shall always remain a mystery". This, written in his own hand, after refusing at first, was his answer to some of his close disciples who only the evening before pleaded with him somewhat persistently, to write an autobiography. All his life he wished to keep out of the public eye so that he could work on his dream to establish a global mission for spiritual elevation of human beings and bring about a radical change in society. This was his overnight answer – a single page with a single sentence. Yet, how may one even begin to unravel the mystery about who this great soul was, when he was so keen on keeping away from the public eye? No one could possibly fathom what lay behind those enchanting eyes and there was no real way of knowing who the person really was. And comes then the question - why?

When arrested in 1971 on false charges and jailed for seven years, people often asked him when he would come out. His characteristic reply was, "If you want to see me, do my Mission because I am merged with my Mission." Seeing him is as good as, knowing him. This is absolutely true and it is impossible to separate him from the mission he established and the universal ideology he bequeathed to the world. The life he led was verily a reflection of that ideology, and can there be a better way to learn ideological principles meant to guide humans on how to conduct their lives, than get to know about the life of such a great spiritual master?

The main pillars of that mission are Sadhana, Neohumanism and Prout. The first pillar is based on Tantric principles wherein one creates an internal revolution within oneself as a first step towards the unknown, and attain the goal of total revolution. Second, Neohumanism whose principles and education systems liberate the intellect for tackling the challenge of historical social injustices, recognizing and eliminating the wide disparities in all walks of life, gives the strength to fight the forces that divide the people, and unite them based on the principles of Universalism – the goal being to establish a cooperative spiritual society. And the third, Prout in a nutshell, is a new socio-economic-political philosophy that calls for all round changes in attitudes, lifestyles, socio-economic structures, public policies, leadership and urgently moving towards minimizing inequalities especially in economic affairs - actually the rebirth of a gift economy.

The founder of Prout always exhorted his disciples to follow a cult of ideology rather than that of personality and took great pains to focus the attention of his followers away from guru worship that was so deeply ingrained in 7000 years history of Indian culture. A spiritual master unlike any before him in the ancient land of India, he was as much a social revolutionary as a spiritual guru. He did not allow his disciples to only enjoy his own company or the bliss of spiritual realisation while meditating. He deployed them on tasks for social change, and allowed nothing to distract them from that sacred mission, not even their real fascination with his own persona.

This new millennium has heralded a subtle change in the public perception of this great personality, about whom one knew very little. The first decade of the new millennium has gone by and many leading national newspapers and magazines of India have begun publishing his writings. At the same time liberal intellectuals and distinguished academicians, who otherwise had no connection with the spiritual philosophy of Anandamurti but having got a taste of his progressive thought, holistic ideology and a touch of the ocean of knowledge left behind by him, have begun to develop a deep reverence for him.

Fascinated by his genius, people wish to know more about the person that he was on Earth where he faced a lot of hardships - literally swallowing poisons of the world for his mission. And unless that mission becomes a reality those personal sacrifices would be in vain. Sri Arjun Narayan Chaudhary of Patna explains, "Niilakantha literally means blue throat, the discoloration caused by drinking the Earth's poisons, and that poison would remain in Baba's throat until Prout is firmly established". So to know Him all must ceaselessly strive to manifest that mission. That is the call for all, this Anandapurnima issue to celebrate the joyous occasion of his birth.



### **Liberation from Staticity**

What a short, powerful article. It calls for a “relentless struggle against dogma, backed by unlimited, uninhibited courage.” Who will fight the countless religious dogmas of this country that are making people kill each other now in Bengal and Bihar in the name of celebrating the birth of an Aryan god? Who will fight the dogma in the economic and political sphere that justify the looting of this country by foreign corporates while their paid netas distract the people with caste and communal riots? Today we see no courage at all to fight dogmas. To say what Kabir or Basava said can lead to death. Is there no saint or saintly organization who can lead the people towards freedom from crude mindsets and social barbarism?

**Montu Deb, Bishalgarh**

### **New Vision for Karnataka**

This was such an in-depth article about Kannada Samaja. We do not realize what is the great heritage of this state. Why are not more people writing articles like this? You have published articles on Telangana Samaja and Kannada Samaja. When will we see articles on Sahyadri Samaja, Tamil Samajam and Navya Malayali Samaj? It is high time for South India to take the lead as Baba predicted.

**Dhyan Babavarman, Thalassery**

### **Miraculous Torturous Fast**

Baba says in this article that He was

suffering to save the devotees of the past, of the present and the future. Where is to be found a true son of Baba? There are many people who claim to be Tantrics or pramukhs, but where is there a mini-Baba who will fight for PROUT and suffer for PROUT like Baba did? Where will we find such a hero? I have the answer. Let us go look in the mirror and find the hero we are looking for and demand justice from ourselves for suffering humanity. This April 1st is the anniversary of Baba's Fast. A tiny number of people distribute food on this day but otherwise it is forgotten, but people do not forget to take bliss and blessings from Baba while allowing exploiters to ruin and terminate so many innocent lives.

**Atul Ashray, Patna**

### **Underworld-Politician-Police Nexus**

This is the core problem in the country today. Winning elections, launching protests is all useless unless this cakravyuha is burst wide open. The body politic cannot be healed until this boil is burst. What is clear is that the mafia has taken over the police and that the Dawood mafia is controlling the country. Those who take money from him give loud, violent speeches about Bharat Mata. Unless we are willing to empower ourselves and sacrifice ourselves like Abhimanyu in this fight, there is no hope in sight.

**Tana Shinde, Mumbai**

### **Food Safety**

Such a wonderful example about how the Congress and BJP in Centre have such unity when it comes to selling India to boost the profits of US junk food corporate. Of course it is clear that when the Commission weakens health standards before official reports that they have most likely been bribed. You know our great leaders want to make India like the US. That means they want to feed our people with toxic junkfood so that their medical corporates can make big profits off their bad health and diseases.

Why do our politicians want to hug these people who are poisoning and robbing us all?

**Nirukt Singh, Faizabad**

### **Immoral Traffic Prevention Act**

What are these laws that fail so miserably to end social evils like prostitution? We take them for granted but the reality is that we never think how the entire system is a complete failure. India is always behind the latest human rights codes and often refuses to ratify them. The time has come for a global penal code used not to penalize but to end such evils as prostitution. Andhra Pradesh has shown the way by bringing those debased men who use prostitutes to justice rather than focusing on the victims of trafficking. We all know countless Hindu Nepali girls are trafficked into India every day. Why cannot our government protect the honour of these girls? Those non-Hindus accused of eve-teasing Hindu girls are flashed on facebook to start huge riots. But those directly abusing Hindu girls every day get off scot free because they are also Hindus. Is it the case that only upper caste Hindus are allowed to sell and abuse Hindu women and no one else? Is this what they call Dharma-rashtra or Navya-Manuvad?

**Amrapali Asmita, Lucknow**

### **First Self-Immolation**

This was a very sound, well-thought out article. We Proutists know that a psycho-spiritual politics involves creating a new collective psychology and evolving the higher kosas (layers of mind) of the collective psychology as part of NeoHumanism as Essence. And that it involves using Kiirtana Andolans like Caitanya Mahaprabhu to fight against exploitation. People have been shouting “Zinzabad” for 100 years, now is the time for new andolans and meditation morchas. Baba's Grace will rain down on those who do Kiirtana Andolans to stop religious riots and fight exploitation. Should we not start this year?

**Janak Godna, Madhubani**



## Dharma Guru

Once in the 1960s Baba [an endearing appellation of Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar] was visiting a village somewhat near the city of Kanpur.

About a century before there was a cyclone and an outbreak of a disease and many people died. This event remained in the memory of the people of that village even more than a century later.

At the end of Baba's talk, one of the old villagers mentioned this time of death and asked Baba, "Why does God kill the innocent people?"

Baba replied that those people were not innocent. Baba mentioned that this calamity took place shortly after the Great Revolt of 1857 against British rule. Kanpur was a major centre of that revolt. Some people from that village left to fight and died the death of heroes.

However, most of the people in the village stayed at home. Baba said that to punish the people for their cowardice, Prakrti (Nature) caused those natural disasters.

Baba said that when the rulers are exploitative or oppressive, then it is the duty of the people to either carry out a revolution to overthrow them and usher in Dharma-rajya (rule of sublime righteousness) or they should die as heroes trying and failing to bring about revolution.

Baba explained that if the people do not carry out their duty, then the sins of the leaders become the sins of the people and then Nature will kill them eventually in natural disasters.

No spiritual personality in the last 3500 years has talked in this manner - like a true Dharma Guru or someone who shows a community the true, revolutionary path in the social and spiritual realms. Baba explained what is the Dharma-yuddha or a war to establish the fundamental spirit of humanity. This lies in the tridimensional struggle for 1) expansion (vistara), 2) merger with the divine flows of love (rasa) and 3) all-round service as a form of service and surrender to the Lord. In the booklet, Talks on PROUT, Shrii

Sarkar said,

**Each and every individual has the inborn right to enjoy our common patrimony, the mundane property. Anyone who violates this fundamental law is a vested interest. Nobody should be allowed to go against this patrimony. If anybody does so, they should be cured of their psychic ailments. The process of curing them may be termed Dharma Yuddha.**

It should be mentioned that after the great war of 1857 against the British, those who fought against the British were discriminated against while the descendants of those who sided with the British became the new leaders of India after the transfer of power. Today while in theory India is free, economically it is completely enslaved under the control of the same foreign corporations who used to control India in the past.

The same religious extremists who divided the country in 1947 are again active - both in selling out the country to foreign corporates and in using religious nationalism to divide and rule the country. Today we see elaborate rituals done by politicians.

Rejecting so-called religious sacramental rituals and calling for a new Dharma Yuddha based on the struggle for Artha Azadi (economic liberty), Baba said in the discourse "Human Progress",

**To get protection and to enjoy the manifested universe of the Supreme Entity is the birthright of each and every being. Nobody has any right to accumulate excessive wealth.**

**To accumulate and desire more mundane property is a crime against society and a sin against God. It is a highly immoral and anti-social action.**

**To fight such vested interests and to wage a war against such antisocial activities is upright and sacramental.**

# The Physical, Psychic and Spiritual Strata

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

Human life has three strata, in other words, it functions in three spheres. The first one is the spiritual sphere, the second one is the psychic sphere and the third one is the crude physical sphere. While talking to someone this morning, I said that human beings remove the afflictions in the spiritual sphere by dint of their personal efforts; combined with that, there is also the blessing of great personalities and the grace of the Almighty Lord – Mahat krpayaeva Bhagavatkṛpāleshādvā [“By the blessings of realized personalities and a wee bit of the divine grace”]. Human beings must make a sincere endeavour. Endeavour is a must; then the blessings or grace of the realized personalities, and only a wee bit of the omniscient grace, will be enough. Just a small bit of the Cosmic grace will suffice. A huge quantity is not at all required.

This is regarding the spiritual sphere. Human beings need not worry about it. They need not worry because the very existence of Parama Puruṣa is meant for promoting the well-being of the jīvas [microcosms, living beings]. Had the question of the microcosmic well-being not existed, Parama Puruṣa would have remained as a nirguṇa [transcendental] entity. He would not have come down to the level of Saguṇa Brahma or Tāraka Brahma [Supreme Consciousness

**Question** - What is the necessity of the advent of Parama Puruṣa onto this earth again and again?

**Answer** - He wants to bring about the welfare of human beings.

as the Supreme Liberator]. That is to say, His main purpose is public welfare – the welfare of human beings. That is why He has declared:

*Paritrāṇāya sādhuṇām vināśhāya  
ca duṣkṛtām;*

*Dharmasamsthāpanārthāya  
sambhavāmi yuge yuge.*

[I incarnate Myself in this world from age to age for the protection of the virtuous, the destruction of the wicked, and the restoration of Dharma.]

Now the question is: what is the necessity of the advent of Parama Puruṣa onto this earth again and again? The answer is: He wants to bring about the welfare of human beings. “Human welfare” here means, primarily, welfare in the spiritual sphere, and secondarily, in the mental and physical spheres, as Parama Puruṣa is a veritable embodiment of the supreme welfare of humanity. All created beings are His progeny. It is not possible that He would bring welfare only in the spiritual sphere and not in the psychic and physical spheres. In fact He will promote welfare in all

three spheres of life.

Regarding the spiritual sphere it has been said: Mahat krpayaeva Bhagavatkṛpāleshādvā. How much can human beings accomplish by their own efforts? Aghātana ghaṭana patīiyasii Māyā [“the dexterous hand of Māyā that can even create things impossible to create”] – how much can human beings by dint of their individual efforts fight against this all-powerful Māyā? That is why it is said that the blessings of realized personalities and just a wee bit of Cosmic Grace are indispensable.

Mahat means a great personality, a highly-evolved personality. The blessings of such a person are immensely helpful, and together with this a small bit of the Cosmic Grace is required. Not much is required, only a wee bit will be enough. In fact, this is what ensured the spiritual progress of individual human beings in the past, is also doing so at present, and will do so in the future, also.

And what about the psychic sphere? The reaping of consequences of original actions performed by a human being occurs mainly in the psychic sphere. And if a person



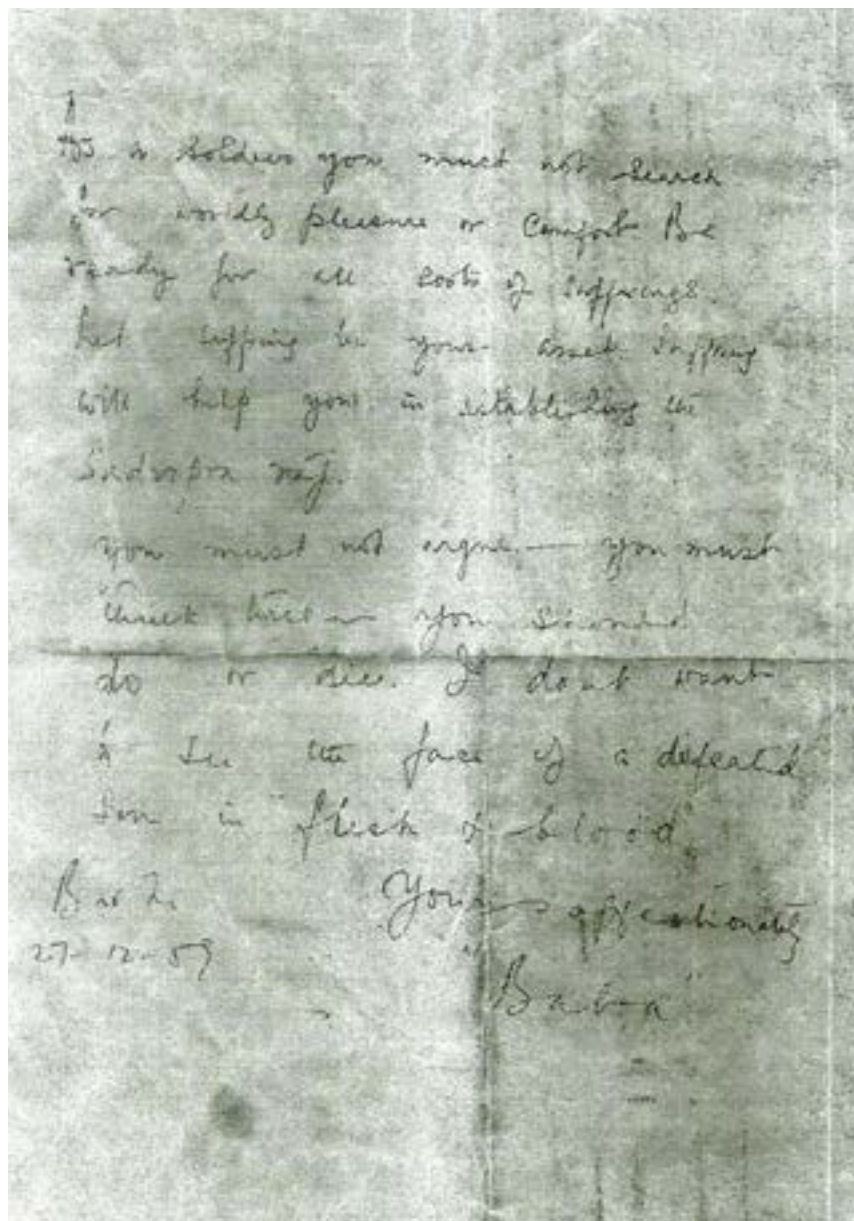
attains the blessings of evolved beings and the Cosmic grace in that same psychic sphere, the problem is solved. Pain and misery is bound to come. Depending upon one's inborn saṁskāras and the actions performed, tortures and afflictions are bound to be undergone – the expression of one's own reactive momenta.

Tortures and afflictions will not be as severely painful as before; with the blessing and grace, the psychic afflictions will be removed. Well, when there is pain and the pain is not felt as such, should it then be called pain? **In this case, in the psychic sphere, one will remain in a state of bliss. Let the afflictions come. When the affliction and pain are not felt as such, one should not worry about it.**

Then what about the physical sphere? It is true that in the physical sphere there is the utmost necessity of food, clothing, education, shelter, medical treatment, etc. Now what has Parama Puruṣa done for jīvas (living beings)? He has already scattered wealth in the world for human consumption. Enormous wealth has been distributed everywhere. He has also given human beings intellect for them to utilize, so that they can live collectively on this wealth.

For mental peace, He has given people instructions to practise the science of spirituality. This will bring them spiritual emancipation and will remove their psychic afflictions. In fact, this is the Cosmic Grace, the divine Grace, that He has already showered on humanity. He has already proclaimed that He will bestow His grace on all human beings. That is why He has unequivocally declared: sambhavāmi yuge yuge ["I incarnate myself in every age"]. So no one need be worried on this account.

Now the problem remains in the crude physical sphere. Regarding this sphere, people were instructed during the days of Lord Shiva and again during the days of Lord Kṛṣṇa to live and enjoy the [world's]



property collectively – Devābhāgaṁ yathāpūrve saṁjānānā upāsate ["let us share our wealth without differentiation, like sages of the past, so that all may enjoy the universe"]. But unfortunately people have not done this, and as they have not done this, they have had to suffer various physical hardships, and are still suffering.

Now, in order to remove people's sufferings in the physical sphere, common sense dictates that the wealth of the entire universe should be considered as common patrimony. The wealth is meant for all, so that all can live collectively. It is not proper that one person will snatch away the morsels of food from the mouths of others. **So there has been a need to introduce a system where all human beings would distribute the entire wealth among the collective body in a collective way.** Unfortunately, no great person ever did this in the past, nor did even Tāraka Brahma do it. It was not done, therefore the problems and difficulties in collective life have continued. Because of these shortcomings, human life is full of pain and misery.

**Now the time has come when this has got to stop. How can we allow such a thing to continue?** When human beings are predominantly intellectual beings, why will such a major lacuna be allowed to perpetuate itself for days

and months on end, for years and centuries together? Such a thing must not be allowed to continue. Yet the strange thing is that this lacuna in the physical sphere, and the consequent disparity, is the noumenal cause of all phenomenal troubles. Due to this noumenal cause, peace in the psychic sphere is being disturbed again and again.

**With this end in view, with the sole purpose of removing physical misery and affliction, and keeping in view the higher goals of human life, the PROUT philosophy has been formulated. There was no alternative but to propagate the PROUT philosophy.** Had it not been done, maybe human sorrows and sufferings would have been perpetrated for centuries together. Mean opportunists would have continued their exploitation, taking advantage of the simplicity or intellectual deficiency of the innocent and credulous masses. This exploitation has been perpetrated mainly in three ways: oppression, suppression and exploitation. I have not mentioned repression, because repression is inseparably associated

with exploitation.

**Now, the point is that the entire population of the world has got to be saved from oppression, suppression and exploitation – by any means, fair or foul.** What will then be the result? Human suffering in the physical sphere will be overcome. Of course there has never been lack of adjustment in the spiritual sphere, nor will there ever be. Human beings can rest content in this regard. Only in the psychic sphere will they have to acquire power. And for what? People will have to acquire psychic power in order to overcome the psychic affliction which is the result of past reactive momenta.

That is to say, with the establishment of Prout, the problems in the physical sphere and in the spiritual sphere will have been solved. And what about the psychic sphere? Of course the requital of unserved saṁskāras will surely affect the mind, but it is also a fact that human beings will acquire enough strength to overcome the psychic afflictions.

**Bearing this in mind, you should build a new human society at the earliest possible moment.** Regarding those who are likely to create obstacles in your path – let them do so. **You should remember that those who are the actual pioneers, the real vanguard of the society, are always a microscopic minority, but it is they who are destined to be victorious.**

Those who once opposed, or are now opposing or will oppose in the future, will in the future admit: “Yes, we are now driving our vehicle safely and comfortably along the very path which that vanguard once opened by clearing the jungle.” This means that those who cleared the obstacles in the beginning will later be recognized as pioneers. The funny thing is this, that people do not give recognition at the time [when] it is due. This is the natural law.

And at the same time you should also remember this simple truth: that in a jungle the number of tigers and lions is always few; the jackals far outnumber them. Yet in the jungle the tigers and lions reign supreme, not the jackals. The jackals are sure to howl, that is their nature; but the tigers and lions will not be frightened.



PURNAKALIK BANDHU

# Never Let Him Go

■ Acarya Tadbhavananda Avadhuta

I remember one precious incident. It was Bhukti Pradhana (District Director of Ananda Marga activities) meeting and nearly 800 people from all over India had attended this meeting. Baba had two residences, one in Tiljala in VIP Nagar and the other in Lake Gardens in the main city. Baba's Lake Gardens' residence was not so big but it was remarkably accommodative to Baba's activities with pots of rare plants stacked on top of each other up to the sky. Tiljala by contrast was a big Ashrama. Baba's Lake Gardens' residence was very nice and big and 600 people could be accommodated at a stretch while 5 to 6000 could be accommodated in the Tiljala complex. When Baba was there with so many devoted Margis and workers, then the place became spiritually vibrated and dynamic. Kiirtana, satasanga, seminars became the routine.

Once, Baba suddenly decided to leave Tiljala and to go to his central Kolkata residence in Lake Gardens. When Baba takes a decision, then it is very difficult to stand in His way, because His mysterious ways of working are seemingly disturbing for disciples but this very psychic disturbance is spiritually beneficial in a multidimensional way for His devotees. Baba's departure to Lake Gardens was indeed disturbing because there seemed to be a shortage of space to accommodate nearly 1000 persons and many persons had to remain outside Baba's house, moving hither and thither which disturbed the neighbours.

Acarya Ramanandji was the PA and he brought Baba's car out from the garage to drive Baba to Lake Gardens. Baba was sitting in the car and the main gate was open. I was there by Baba's Quarters in Tiljala, which was adjacent to the Ashram. The General Secretary was standing in a depressed mood as I enquired the reason why Baba was leaving this place suddenly. The GS replied that he had tried his level best to prevent this but Baba refused to listen.

I was suddenly spiritually sentimentalized and ran after the car, which was slowly rolling away from the main gate of Baba's residence and then through the Ashram premises. Many Margis were standing in rows to just silently express their feelings that why was Baba departing from such a spiritually vibrant atmosphere which was comfortable for everyone. I reached there

and caught up with the car. Baba was sitting in the back seat and the window was rolled down. I simply put my hand inside Baba's car while spontaneously crying without end. Weeping, I caught hold of Baba's shirt from the front.

Baba told me to leave Him but I said, "No, I will not leave you." I was completely senseless. The water of my tears and nose were mingling together and dribbling down Baba's shirt. In this emotionally and spiritually surcharged atmosphere, Baba was unperturbed that His shirt was being spoiled. He was simply gazing and watching me like one tenderly watches a helpless child having a fit.

When the Margis saw my courage to hold Baba in such a devotional way, they also surrounded the car. Finally in our drama as devotee and Guru, Baba asked me whether I was the only person who was forcing Him to stay there. Then all the Margis began crying, "Yes Baba, we also want You here." But Baba was not paying any attention to them and again simply asking me if there is any other person who wants Baba there. Then an old Margi, Mangal Bihariji, came forward crying and saying, "Yes, we all are here for

Once, Baba suddenly decided to leave Tiljala and go to the Lake Gardens' residence. This was indeed disturbing.





You, Baba.”

In such a sweet way Baba exclaimed, “Oh, Mangal Bihari.”

**Baba now told me to prepare a contract and have the Margis sign that they will do everything for serving the needy people of India and the world in any situation, at any time. He further asked me to make the Margis promise in writing that they would also devote time for propagating Dharma because at this juncture of human history, the promotion of Dharma is the need of the hour.**

After showing the contract to Baba duly signed by many Margis to Baba, then Baba said that when we were all so interested that He remained here, we should tell Ramananda to return the car back to His Quarters. Ramanandji returned the car inside the premises and drove it towards Baba’s Quarters.

The atmosphere was so devotional that the Margis were singing Kiirtana in such a very devotional way that I simply cannot describe it to you. After Baba had

gone into His Quarters, I came into the hall and with a bursting heart gave a talk. Afterwards nearly sixty Margis became Purna Kalik Bandhus – those who devote all their time for serving the mission of Baba for suffering souls.

God has come onto this Earth and He is LOVE. I felt this so strongly when I was holding onto Baba’s shirt and spoiling it like a small baby spoils his father’s clothes. Like a Father, Baba paid no heed to all this and was just gazing at me so lovingly like a Father looks in poignant joy when a child cries and cries and refuses to let their Father go and leave them. Tagore wrote a famous poem of how moved he was when once, he was leaving and his small daughter said, “I won’t let you go.” From this we can understand how the Supreme Father feels so much when we say the same thing.

O, I had forgotten the basic discipline to the Guru but my spontaneous devotional downpour melted Him and He bestowed His Grace upon us by changing His program and remaining in Tiljala. The Lord is thirsty for devotion. My personal experience is that when one wants to enjoy the Grace of the Lord, one has to become a real devotee without any sophistication. Then alone will His unfailing Grace pour down in any situation. One has to hold Him with devotion.

But Baba cannot just give us love alone. Baba must give His love to humanity through us. This is why, Baba made the Margis sign the sacred contract or Covenant with Him and promise to dedicate their lives to serving suffering souls everywhere. It is a Covenant that may be broken in this life but then it must be honoured in a future life.

Baba will give us everything only if we are ready to give our everything to His children all over the world, in countless communities, of countless species. I pray and yet I know that one day Baba’s Margis will honour the Covenant Baba made with them on this blessed day. Furthermore I know that more and more Margis – both new and old - will answer the Call given by Baba on this day. And can there be any day better than today?



# PBI Launches Fight for Statehood to Vidarbha



■ Ravindra Singh

Vidarbha is the eastern region of the Indian state of Maharashtra, comprising Nagpur Division and Amravati Division. Its former name is Berar (Varhad in Marathi). It occupies 31.6% of the total area and holds 21.3% of the total population of Maharashtra.

Govind Prabhu, (the guru of Chakradhar, the founder of the anti-dogma Mahanubhav movement) and Sant Mukundraji the first writer

in the Marathi language were also from the state. The state also had other saints such as the great Dalit poet Chowkhamela, the blind boy poet Gulabrao Maharaj and Tajuddin Fakir. The region also had social activist saints such as Gadge Maharaj and Tukdoji Maharaj. The latter was the author of the Gramagiita and a movement for casteless, exploitation-free villages. It was in Shegaon (Buldhana) that

that Gajanan Maharaj inspired BG Tilak to stop wasting time in casteist and communal pravar and arouse the moral courage to defy the British Empire. While Tilak was imprisoned, his example reignited the revolutionary legacy of Bagha Jatin and led to the rise of such heroes as Chandrashekar Azad and Bhagat Singh.

Till the defeat of Raghuji II of Bhonsla dynasty by the Britishers in

1817, Vidarbha was an independent kingdom with Nagpur as Capital. Situated in central India, Vidarbha has its own rich, cultural and historical background distinct from rest of Maharashtra. The largest city in Vidarbha is Nagpur. A majority of Vidarbha speak Barhadi and Zadi dialects of Marathi.

The Nagpur region is famous for growing oranges and cotton. Vidarbha holds two-thirds of Maharashtra's mineral resources and three-quarters of its forest resources, and is a net producer of power. Throughout its history, Vidarbha has remained much calmer than the rest of India, especially during the communal troubles; but it is plagued very much by poverty and malnutrition. It is less economically prosperous compared to the rest of Maharashtra.

The demand for a separate state of Vidarbha was raised for the first time over 100 years ago. In 1905, demand of separate Vidarbha was revived. The Constitutional Commission on Reforms Report in 1918 mentioned that need based Provinces of Orissa and Vidarbha (Berar) require to be considered. 2.2 In 1924, Shri Bapuji Aney raised the demand of te of Vidarbha in the Assembly. Furthermore, in the following Round Table Conference the demand for a separate Vidarbha was raised. When the All India Congress Committee of 1920 was held in Nagpur and in 1927 at Madras, the matter of the reorganization of the States in the country was discussed and included the issue of Vidarbha state.

As a result of which, the Central Provinces legislature passed a unanimous resolution to create a separate state of 'Mahavidarbha' on 1 October 1938 at Nagpur. In 1948 the AICC of the Congress had favoured a separate state. The State Reorganisation Commission had recommended in 1955 that Vidarbha and Telangana should

**“Only those Sadvipras are safe from destruction and extinction who can work for the welfare of the human society. Therefore, it becomes the prime duty of all people to make themselves and others Sadvipras...Sadvipras will wage a ceaseless struggle against immorality and all sorts of fissiparous tendencies. Those who pose as Dharmic but are bashful with the spirit of fight cannot be called Sadvipras. Shiva was great because his Trishul was always ready to strike at the immoralists. Krishna was great because his arrows were meant to curb the anti-human and immoral elements. He also encouraged the moralists to wage war against the immoralists. They were not only Sadvipras but also the parents of Sadvipras – the Great (Maha) Sadvipras.”**

**- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar**

be separate states.

In recent times, there have been calls for a separate state of Vidarbha, due to perceived neglect from the Government of Maharashtra and incompetent political leadership in Vidarbha. The living conditions of farmers in this region are poor compared to India as a whole. There have been about 70,000 farmers' suicides in Maharashtra in 22 years (1995-2017), of which 70% being in the 11 districts of Vidarbha region. The problem gets even more complicated with the lack of basic necessities and farming equipment due to the lack of any social or economic investment in the region.

This is in part because Vidarbha falls under low-rainfall region, but also due to the perennial Indian problem of lack of political will and

attention inequality- in case of Vidarbha, for example, undue attention has been given to the sugar industries of Maharashtra, as a CAG Report of 2006 states: only 11% of Maharashtra's total electricity is consumed by the farmers in Vidarbha while 65.5% goes to the sugar belt of the state. Such a biased attitude of the state government leaves the farmers in the region- already burdened under looming debt- helpless and without any option but to be forced towards taking the extreme step. The relief packages are of no use, since most of the packages offered by the state government have been charted out without consultation of the farmers, their representatives or the NGO's working in the area.

The region generates 80 per cent of Maharashtra's thermal



power, of which 72 per cent goes to the rest of the state while the people suffer from acute power shortage. The government set up high-tech infrastructure to export mangoes and grapes but has done little to cash in on Vidarbha's famous oranges: the fruit is cultivated on 56,663 ha. The region, its people claim, has been neglected in every sphere. Result: it has the worst roads in the state—of the Rs 15,000 crore earmarked to develop roads in Maharashtra, only Rs 900 crore comes to Vidarbha; irrigation supply is poor though agriculture is the mainstay; a mineral-rich area, it has 6,660 million tons of coal deposits but only 22 million tons are mined annually.

According to state's economic survey for fiscal 2013, out of 11 districts in Vidarbha, only one had more average per capita income than the state average—Nagpur at Rs.1.06 lakh versus Rs.95,339. Citing these problems, and the economic robbing of the state—the same CAG report states that Vidarbha was robbed off at

least 70% of its funds, and cites the example of provision for irrigation granted by the Governor: The amount granted was Rs. 3119.79 crore, of which only Rs. 1391.58 crore was used, leaving an unexplained vacuum of Rs. 2528 crore.

The Fact Finding Team of the Planning Commission suggests that while the region remains completely ignored and in a state of disarray, its resources- which includes 30% of Maharashtra's power supply, 90% of India's dense forest reserves and 29% of all the mineral output of Maharashtra- were all used up for the development and progress of other regions in the state.

Though rich in minerals, coal, forests and mountains, this region has mostly remained underdeveloped because of the continuous dominance of political leadership from other parts of the state, especially Western Maharashtra. Though being culturally, politically and financially different from the rest of Maharashtra, the calls for a separate state rose to prominence

only when the leaders from this region were sidelined by other political leaders in the Government of Maharashtra in recent years.

Statehood demands have not been fulfilled mainly due to the opposition from a major state political party, the Shiv Sena. Actually Vidarbha was independent of both Shivaji and the Mughals and was ruled by the Gondwana dynasty. In the 18th century, Raghoji Bhonsale of the Peshwas invaded and began the plunder of the state. The same culture is prevailing today. The later attacks of the Bhonsales on Bihar and Bengal led the Nawab of Bengal to ask the British for military help. That was the death warrant for Indian liberty. Vidarbha gained temporary freedom but eventually fell into the hands of the British and then into the hands of the British lackey dalalis of Mumbai. Now Vidarbha is once again facing Navi Peshwa exploitation.

Prout's propounder Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, who has recognized Vidarbha as one of 44

Samajas (socio-economic units) in India, also supports the demand for statehood to Vidarbha. Shrii Sarkar also gave a practical solution for the water crisis in Vidarbha. Aside from many forms of rainwater harvesting, riverside plantations, Shrii Sarkar said that if a tunnel were built through the Western Ghats then excess rainwater from the west could

Shrii Sarkar was a strong advocate for a separate state of Telangana due to the exploitation of the region by outsiders who also (just as in the case of Vidarbha) used language sentiment to unite the Telangana with Andhra and

Royal Seema. Today Telangana is largely free from this type of exploitation. However due to the lack of a movement for economic democracy, merely the birth region of the exploiters have changed. The adivasis of Telangana who suffered for years with an average life expectancy of 35 years still suffer from rampant exploitation and land-grabbing.

PBI is determined not to let this happen in Vidarbha. The benefits described above will merely end outside exploitation to some extent. The main exploitation by Mumbai dalalis, the brutal exploitation of the adivasis in areas like Gadchiroli

will not change. Hence PROUT is fighting for Arthik azadi in Vidarbha. And that is dependent on the revival of the bhakti manavatavada (devotional humanism) of the region which has largely managed to avoid being polluted by the viruses of casteism and communalism that have infected the Maratha region.

The movement for Artha Azadi for Vidarbha is the fulfillment of the ideals of sants like Tukdoji Maharaj. He used to travel throughout Vidarbha singing that "God is not a feeling in your heart. God is the feeling in a hungry man's stomach." Proutists of this land are determined to worship and serve this God and end the suffering in this region.

## **Economic and Financial Benefits of Vidarbha State**

- 1. Separate Vidarbha will have a surplus in electricity. There will be no load shedding and all villages and towns will have uninterrupted supply of electricity year round.**
- 2. This will connect all pump-sets to irrigate the farms of the farmers. Existing irrigation potential will be fully used.**
- 3. All irrigation projects which are languishing under the Maharashtra regime will be completed on priority. Out of the total cultivable area of 55 lakh hectares, only 10 lakh hectares is under Rabi Crops. Once irrigation becomes available the Rabi activity will increase and give more employment to farmers and farm labour of Vidarbha. There will be no suicides of farmers in Vidarbha.**
- 4. Agro-processing industries and horticulture will be developed that will further boost the farm economy.**
- 5. Electricity using small, medium and large industries will be set up with more incentives to industrialists with backward area concessions.**
- 6. The much neglected Tourism Sector will get a special attention and investment allocation. Vidarbha has number of tourists destinations which Maharashtra Government did not care to develop.**
- 7. The removal of the sugar baron mafia from Vidarbha will lead to less water-intensive crops which will improve the water situation.**
- 8. Vidarbha can resort to low cost organic farming suiting its dry land area, give remunerative prices to farmers. There is a huge market for organic food including organic cotton. Maharashtra government even did not think on these lines.**
- 9. Forest based and mineral based activities will be given boost for generating more revenue.**
- 10. More thermal electricity generation to sale it to other States to generate more income/revenue.**
- 11. Vidarbha will establish balance between revenue and expenditure for multi-faced development. Vidarbha's estimated Budget 2009-10 is of the order of about Rs. 24,000 crore with its revenue and expenditure balanced. Haryana and Punjab which are comparable in area and population to Vidarbha, have budget of Rs. 28000 and Rs. 30,000 crore respectively. Haryana and Punjab do not have Mumbai and still they have progressed faster than Maharashtra. Hence, Vidarbha State has the potential of developing fast once it is detached from Maharashtra.**



# THE PEERLESS SEER

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Like Shiva and Krsna, Anandamurti was born into an environment of great conflict and suffering: the world had just emerged from the greatest imperialistic war in known history and was only a few years away from an even greater one.

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## ■ Dada Ravishekharananda

Seeking to faithfully present in words a figure such as Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar is an impossible task. It is like trying to show the vastness of the ocean when all one has available is a teaspoon of water! Yes, we may say the depth and clarity of his spiritual teachings eclipse that of the Mahatmas and Mahapurusas of past millennia. We may say, as Johan Galtung says of his social philosophy - PROUT - that it is, indeed, "far superior to Adam Smith or that of Marx". We may echo the thought of India's former President Giani Zail Singh who declared: "P.R. Sarkar was one of the greatest modern philosophers of India." And yet, all of these are lacking because they confine our mind to the relativities of human comparison. Those who came to know Shrii Sarkar, realised him as a being who spanned multiple worlds and multiple realities - not merely a Renaissance man - but a man of Cosmic breadth whose mind saw as clearly into the ancient past and the future as much as it did into

the present. In Shrii Sarkar we can identify three main roles associated with his three names: Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, philosopher and social liberator; Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, Guru, Mahakaola and Preceptor of Tantra, and, to his disciples, Baba, the all loving but strict personal guide.

## Born on Buddha Purnima

Shrii Sarkar was born at sunrise, 6:07am 11th May 1922 on the full moon of Vaeshakh - Buddha Purnima - the day celebrating the birth of Lord Buddha some 2500 years earlier. Born at the time of the rising sun He was given the names Prabhat Rainjan meaning "the One whocolours the dawn". The place of His birth - Jamalpur, Bihar - is fitting: Jamal meaning "the beautiful one, the charming one, the tender one". The young Prabhat Ranjan possessed a deep empathy for other living beings. As a child He insisted - against his family's tradition - on taking only pure vegetarian food. The young Prabhat Ranjan rejected the caste system, befriending and helping children

from all castes, including the so-called "untouchables". In response to opposition from his mother Shrii Sarkar quietly replied: "One day I will destroy the caste system".

Like Shiva and Krsna, Anandamurti was born into an environment of great conflict and suffering: the world had just emerged from the greatest imperialistic war in known history and was only a few years away from an even greater one. The European empires were still voraciously preying upon much of world - economically, culturally and linguistically. Capitalist exploitation had merged with warfare, leading to Smedley D. Butler's famous 1935 statement: "war is a racket". Meanwhile communism was reducing much of Europe and Asia to the dark ages while religious dogma continued to paralyse the benevolent intellect of much of humanity.

## India's Liberation from British

At age 17 Prabhat Ranjan left Jamalpur to study at the Vidyasagar College of the University of Calcutta. He stayed in the house of his maternal uncle Sharat Chandra Bose, through whom He would meet another relative, the famous Subhas Chandra Bose, whom He would later initiate into Tantra Yoga, becoming his spiritual Guru. It was on the advice of his young Guru, that Netaji left India to raise a military force to fight the British in the liberation of India. In 1941 Netaji created the Free India Legion in Germany, and then, went on to



lead the revived Indian National Army (INA) in South East Asia with the support of Imperial Japan. As numerous scholars have argued, the intention of the British to place captured INA soldiers on trial for treason led to such outrage throughout India that it shook the British Raj to its foundations. The rest is history: Mountbatten was dispatched by Prime Minister Clement Attlee with the instruction: "... get Britain out". With India free, so sounded the death knell for the British Empire as Malaysia, Ceylon, the Middle East protectorates and later, the African colonies all demanded independence. I have no doubt that the day will come when it will be said - too simplistically - that Shrii Sarkar "ended the British Empire".

### Spiritual Ideology

Shrii Sarkar's impact on the social world was equally as great on the spiritual. While acknowledging that the East possessed spiritual, philosophical and social treatises of high calibre, these, He knew required competent "scholars, philosophers and penetrating thinkers" to bring forth their true

and practical meanings. These were lacking. In this regard, Shrii Sarkar's elucidation of the shastras (scriptures) is unequalled. His clarification of the concept of Dharma, for example is revolutionary. In modern India the meaning of Dharma had become religion. Shrii Sarkar rejected this meaning saying that religion is not Dharma, rather it is Dharmamata-expressing mere **opinions** about Dharma.

Now let us see what is Dharma. Dhriyate Dharma ityáhusaevaParamam Brahma – that which sustains a living being is its Dharma. The word "Dharma" is derived from dhr+man suffix... Therefore, Dharma is the fundamental determinant of one's entitative existence...

The aspects of Bhágavata [divine] Dharma that make human beings unique are four in number:

1. Vistára or expansion,
2. rasa [moving in the cosmic flow],
3. sevá or [selfless] service,
4. tadstithi or ensconcement in the Supreme.

### East-West Synthesis

The West - traumatised by a history of conquering, subjugating, witch-burning and perpetuating dogmas - is realising that it has arrived at a dead end - material prosperity but a lack of happiness and meaning: "I shop therefore I am". Rudyard Kipling declared that "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet" - an idea Shrii Sarkar rejected. He favoured a "happy blending of occidental extroversial science and oriental introversial philosophy" and this He expressed practically in His numerous organisations.

### Ananda Marga and PROUT

Shrii Sarkar was fundamentally a revolutionary - not in the way of his students, M.N. Roy and Netaji - rather He was the consummate spiritual revolutionary in the style of Shrii Krsna. And yet Shrii Sarkar had no intention to allow the Dharmic battle He had quietly been instigating centre around himself. He was once asked by one of his brahmachari monks, "Is it true that you can change the world merely by your thought". To this foolish

question Shrii Sarkar thundered back: “I did not come here to change the world”... followed by a deafening silence. Then in a sweet voice He said, “I came here to create human beings - they will change the world”. To this end Shrii Sarkar created numerous organisations, principally the socio-spiritual organization Ananda Marga in 1955 while developing the Progressive Utilisation Theory - PROUT - from 1959.

Guided by a sublime ideology and a revived Tantra sadhana, the tattvika, a’carya and avadhuta (teachers) of his Ananda Marga mission - who numbered several thousand - became highly competent in matters of shastra and spiritual understanding. Significantly, he sent this large body of a’caryas throughout India and the world to serve the society and to teach freely, without remuneration, the life-transforming practices of Tantra and to promote PROUT.

### Persecution

With such a dynamic and morally uncompromising personality it was inevitable that He would attract opposition. Indeed it is not uncommon in human history that great social reformers and visionaries suffer at the hands of tyrants. It was on account of the PROUT teaching with its demands for economic democracy, social justice and an end to corruption, that moves were taken by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her communist allies to destroy the PROUT movement. In 1971 Shrii Sarkar was arrested on false charges. A CBI official acting on behalf of the Indian Government offered Shrii Sarkar a ministerial berth in Indira Gandhi’s cabinet if He would declare that He was not a Proutist. He refused and was imprisoned for the next seven years. On February 12, 1973, Shrii Sarkar was poisoned by a prison doctor acting on orders from officials within the Indian Government. After recovering his health He demanded a judicial

enquiry into his poisoning. As it was not forthcoming He began an historic fast surviving on only two cups of salted whey a day. Shrii Sarkar’s fast lasted 5 years, 4 months and two days. He broke his fast on 2 August 1978 the day He was released from jail having been acquitted of all charges. In the meantime, his Ananda Marga and Proutist Universal organisations had spread worldwide.

### Revolution and Mahavishva

Shrii Sarkar’s concept of revolution was unprecedented.

Ánanda Parivára or establishing a universal spiritual family involves not only a World Government but also a Universal Government. More correctly it is a universal social order. The question is, how can such a Parivára be established? This will certainly come through revolution which may be democratic or undemocratic; or it may be a pyramidal, palatial or nuclear revolution. Among all the types of revolution, nuclear revolution is the best. The nucleus of creation is Cosmic Consciousness. It is also the goal of revolutionaries, and whatever they do by way of revolution with this goal in mind leads them to the culminating point of their life’s march. Revolution must have an ideological goal. In essence, revolution means controlling all the three nuclei of the universe – physical, psychic and spiritual.

Elsewhere He clarifies the idea of revolution:

In nuclear revolution, every aspect of collective life – social, economic, political, cultural, psychic and spiritual – is completely transformed. New moral and spiritual values arise in society, which provide the impetus for accelerated social progress. The old era is replaced by a new era – one collective psychology is replaced by another. This type of revolution results in all-round development and social progress.

We here get a glimpse of the magnitude of Shrii Sarkar’s vision - it is not Krishna’s Mahabharata - rather it is what He named, Mahavishva - the Great Universe. For a species that is already off-planet and poised to join the universal community, the struggle to establish Dharma is to be carried out, indeed, on a universal scale. But for now the pressing issue remains the establishment of Dharma in our local societies. With this substantial task in mind, I humbly leave the final word to the incorrigible optimism of Shrii Sarkar:

Despite its advent onto this earth many thousands of years ago, humanity is not yet capable of building a well-integrated and universal human society. This is in no way indicative of the glory of human intellect and erudition. You, who have understood the predicament, realized the urgency, seen the naked dance of evil and heard the hypocritical and raucous laughter of the divisive forces should throw yourselves into this noble task without further delay. When the ends are just and noble, success is inevitable.

*Ananda Vanii, 1 January 1975*





# *Happy Birthday Baba*

*A cosmic mirror that sucks my soul  
As do nebula to galaxies of yore  
Into its mysteries far to keep  
And secrets dark flowing to thy door.*

*Memories that were lay a washed  
And strewed away to the fore  
Like flotsam upon some lonesome beach  
Clinging as ever for yet some more.*


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*Clouds as grey as my thoughts  
Besides the deepening blue of the sea  
Yet meadows look greener by the tide  
In a world alone for You and me.*

*Oft to hear the silence of midnight's bell  
From an elusive star so far to seek  
Through many a window of scattered cloud  
Someday to rain upon strong and weak.*

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*In an eternity of a presence unknown  
Might I wager all that I have  
Within evergreen shoes of a field so vast  
Melting unto the light You have.*

*And in timelessness of a song known  
Wafting on seas of melodies far from land  
Through uncharted wakes of perdition saved  
Always for me upon timeless sands.*

*\* \* \**

*True light not with any shadows benign  
Engulfs me within pristine skies  
No loss for words or memories fresh  
Are there to haunt within mind's eye.*

*Blue skies of youth turn to white  
In this old age of petering grey  
No drop of dew with rainbows fine  
Are there to tempt while sirens sway.*

**Arun Prakash**

The prime purpose of Ánanda Sambodhi is to be for the all-round upliftment of the women in general and for the development of the local tribal women in particular

# ÁNANDA SAMBODHI:

## A NEW LIGHT FOR THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD

■ TN Das

In July 1976 just a few months after the end of the Emergency in India, Baba gave the direction for a Master Unit of the Women's Welfare Department (W.W.D) to be established. In BABA's words, it was to be a "mini Ánanda Nagar" which is the Central World Headquarters of Ánanda Marga Pracaraka Samgha. Likewise this project was to be the Central Headquarters of the Womens' Welfare Department and to be a model for all the welfare and connected programs of this Department.

In May 1978 in Jail, Baba explained, "WWD is a part of Ananda Marga. It is a department set up for the poor and neglected women of the world. You should do service to those women. If you see men who need service, you should serve them too. But you should not take service from men. No, individually you may take service from men, but collectively you should not. You may find men who say very bad things about women and these men you should especially serve."

One and half years later the work which was then simply on paper

"We stand to create a powerful, dynamic and upsurging social consciousness, especially among women, so that they are inspired to rise, abolish dogma and annihilate all symbols of slavery, and usher in a new era of coordinated cooperation and glorious achievement. Let women be the vanguard of a new revolution which humanity must achieve for a glorious tomorrow."

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

has come to fruition at the 4 acre site now named "ÁNANDA SAMBODHI". After receiving a donation of land near Asansol, West Bengal (India) work began on construction almost immediately. There was a small construction of three rooms and bath room which will be open as Primary School in 1979. Later more land was bought. When Baba first visited Ananda Sambodhi, He said it is as spiritually vibrated as Ananda Nagar as it is on the border of Bengal and Jharkhand which is a Tantric belt. Baba later said that the

Ajay Valley is a Tantric Area. While in Ananda Sambodhi, Baba said that "Bodhi" meant "intuition" and that "sam" meant "complete". So Baba said that Ananda Sambodhi was a blissful land where one can fully develop one's intuition or spirituality. Women in particular are well-known for their intuition which arises naturally from devotion, caring for others and from surrender. Intuition brings the sweetness of the spiritual realm into daily life. Tantra is an intuitional science by which intuition blossoms in more and more subtle ways.

## Blossoming Visions

The plan envisaged for “ÁNANDA SAMBODHI” is very vast as indicated by the scope of the program below:

1. Ananda Marga Women's Welfare Department Central Office.
2. Whole timer Prashiksan Math (Training Centre) (Ladies) of Seva Dharma Mission.
3. Hari Pari Mandala Gosthi (Ladies) Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre).
4. Ananda Marga Primary School (Lady managed)
5. Ananda Marga Children's Home (Lady managed)
6. Ananda Marga Hostel (Girls)
7. Ananda Marga Sisters Home
8. Academy of Light (for the blind girls and women).
9. Ananda Marga New Life Asylum (for the patients of Leprosy).
10. Ananda Marga Maternity Hospital and Women's Hospital.
11. Medical Unit (Abha Seva Sadan)
12. Ananda Marga Press
13. Tribal and Backwards Peoples Welfare Centre (TBPW)-
14. Narii Abhyudaya Centre (Women's Development Scheme)
15. Agricultural Development Section (for Cattle raising, poultry; crop and vegetable cultivation by improved methods).
16. Cottage Industries Section (to teach and employ the local women in gainful occupation for making them financially independent; includes tailoring training and books binding; weaving; pottery etc.
17. Ananda Marga Jagriti School for poorer students. This gives a glimpse of the number of ideal programmes to be established in the pioneering

effort and yet still the final plan is not complete. The prime purpose of ÁNANDA Sambodhi is to be for the all-round upliftment of the women in general and for the development of the local tribal women in particular, as well as serving as the centre for all ÁNANDA MÁRGA W.W.D activities. For the sisters of ÁNANDA MÁRGA it is an opening to new vistas of service for the welfare of their World family. Later other Departments were added to WWD which necessitates the need for further projects:

18. Ananda Marga High School (6th to 10th)
19. Ananda Marga Junior College (10th to 12th)
20. Ananda Marga Gurukula Teachers College (B.Ed. and MA. Ed. Degrees)
21. AMURTEL Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre).
22. PCAP Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre).
23. Ek Manav Samaj (EMS-L) Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre).
24. Girls Proutist Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre).
25. Girls Volunteers' Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre).
26. Abha Seva Sadan Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre).
27. PWSA Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre). (for older women LFTs – Moral Codes, 4-fold Dharma, Tantra, Bio-Psychology, Karma, Bhakti, etc.)
28. WWD Sevalal Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre).
29. Aksham Narii Nivas (Home for invalid and Handicapped Women)
30. Ananda Marga Hostel (College) & Ananda Marga Senior Hostel (High School)

When people come in contact with a particular human being whose life has been elevated because of his or her movement towards the Supreme, then others look upon him or her as a sanctified being. As what? A sanctified being. And when, from that sanctified entity, or from that sanctified being, they get selfless service, then that sanctified being not only remains sanctified but becomes dignified too.

I addressed you little girls as the dignified section of human society, and I know I am cent per cent right in feeling so. And I expect these little dignified beings, dignified section of human society, will be – should be – more and more, and still more, dignified by dint of their work, their rendering of more and more selfless service to suffering humanity. This is what I want.

- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar



1. Ananda Marga Women's Welfare Department Central Office.
2. Whole timer Prashiksan Math (Training Centre) (Ladies) of Seva Dharma Mission.
3. Hari Pari Mandala Gosthi (Ladies) Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre).
4. Ananda Marga Primary School (Lady managed)
5. Ananda Marga Children's Home (Lady managed)
6. Ananda Marga Hostel (Girls)
7. Ananda Marga Sisters Home
8. Academy of Light (for the blind girls and women).
9. Ananda Marga New Life Asylum (for the patients of Leprosy).
10. Ananda Marga Maternity Hospital and Women's Hospital.
11. Medical Unit (Abha Seva Sadan)
12. Ananda Marga Press
13. Tribal and Backwards Peoples Welfare Centre (TBPW)-
14. Nari Abhyudaya Centre (Women's Development Scheme)
15. Agricultural Development Section (for Cattle raising, poultry; crop and vegetable cultivation by improved methods).
16. Cottage Industries Section (to teach and employ the local women in gainful occupation for making them financially independent; includes tailoring training and books binding; weaving; pottery etc.
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25. Girls Volunteers' Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre).
26. Abha Seva Sadan Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre).
27. PWSA Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre). (for older women)
28. AMUS Stores
29. Ananda Marga Nursing College (Not given in Ananda Nagar but in great need – Diploma courses + full degree)
30. Prabhata Samgiita Global Prashiksan Math (Local Full-Timer (LFT) Training Centre). (Vocal, instrumental and dance: 3 levels Basic, Advanced and Visharad)
31. Power Station, solar ovens, BioGas Centres, etc.
32. Water Infrastructure – Rainwater harvesting, check dams, lakes/ponds, riverside plantation, etc., canals and drip irrigation, etc.
33. Roads Infrastructure – developing and maintaining good roads\*

This gives a glimpse of the number of ideal programmes to be established in the pioneering effort and yet still the final plan is not complete. The prime purpose of ANANDA Sambodhi is to be for the all-round upliftment of the women in general and for the development of the local tribal women in particular, as well as serving as the centre for all ANANDA MARGA W.W.D activities. For the sisters of ANANDA MARGA it is an opening to new vistas of service for the welfare of their World family.

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## Rescuing Ananda Sambodhi

To manifest all these projects requires more land than was available with Ananda Sambodhi. Sadly, more than 6 acres were sold to a member of the local land mafia. While the remaining area is used for Acarya training of sannyasinis (nuns), the mission for Ananda Sambodhi given by the Lord has yet to be begun.

All devotees of Lord Anandamurtiji and His Mission to empower women as the leaders of world revolution are earnestly requested to take action and manifest His Vision for Ananda Sambodhi at the earliest.

**"When the fighting starts,  
My Daughters will be  
out in front."**

(Crimson Dawn February 1974)

*Shri Prabhakar Ranjan Sarkar*



# The Draft Mineral Policy is Tailor-made for Mining Lobby

Natural resources, including minerals, are a shared inheritance. This acknowledges and reiterates the constitutional position that natural resources are owned by the people of the State.



*Representation to Veena Kumari Dermal, director; Director, Ministry of Mines, Government of India, on the draft National Mineral Policy (NMP) 2018 by Dr Claude Alvares, Director, Goa Foundation.*

■ Rebbapragada Ravi

This letter is written in response to the draft National Mineral Policy 2018, uploaded on the Ministry's website on 9.1.2018. The Goa Foundation participated in the work of the committee that was set up by the Ministry of Mines to oversee preparation of the draft. We

are therefore not a little surprised to see some significant changes from the last draft circulated before the committee. Hence these comments which we hope the Ministry will consider.

Before we go into the merits of the draft notified, it would be useful

to reiterate the context within which the Mineral Policy of 2008 is sought to be reviewed within the span of just a decade.

In the SC judgment in the Odisha mining case, the SC discussed intergenerational equity at some length before directing

the present review of the policy. The SC was also dismayed that the existing (2008) mineral policy “seems to be only on paper and is not being enforced perhaps due to the involvement of very powerful vested interests or a failure of nerve.” It therefore directed the government to announce “a fresh and more effective, meaningful and implementable policy.” The SC went on to direct a fresh look at the policy “particularly with regard to conservation and mineral development.”

Obviously, a major overhaul of the existing policy was intended by the Government when it set out on this new exercise in 2017.

Unfortunately, the notified draft does not actually provide an adequate enough response to the issues raised in the Supreme Court’s order. This is despite the fact that a review of the 2008 Policy provides a magnificent and unique opportunity for you and your government to set things right. I am writing to try and persuade you not to miss this historic opportunity to put mining on a sustainable footing – which would be of utmost importance to the national economy – in addition to ensuring it is “intergenerational equity compliant”

### **Draft Policy Highlights that Need to be Commended**

We are happy to note that the present draft notified for objections/ suggestions includes the following salient principles for sustainable mineral wealth management which are not in the 2008 National Mineral policy:

1. It observes that natural resources, including minerals, are a shared inheritance. This acknowledges and reiterates the constitutional position that natural resources are owned by the people of the State.
2. The State is merely a trustee of these natural resources for the people and also future



- generations (Public Trust Doctrine). State is not the true or real owner.
3. States must ensure recovery of full value of the ore transacted, which means they must ensure zero-loss mining of what are essentially publicly owned resources.
4. There is a need to cap mineral resource extraction from point of view of making such resources also available to the next generations and from the environmental point of view.
5. Information about mineral resources is “a public good” as it deals with publicly owned resources and therefore will be made available to the public who are its owners in a transparent manner and not just to investors or those involved in mining for a profit.
6. The draft notification introduces the idea of “no-

go” areas, so that potential conflicts between those who are allowed to prospect for minerals in forest and ecologically sensitive areas and the forest department at the time of lease grant do not arise.

7. The introduction of “Make in India” perspective and the idea of ensuring “Mineral Security” are both welcome. Both ensure that minerals are used for the economic development of the country and not solely for profit.

The point to underline is whether the above aspects relating to intergenerational equity will protect the rights and interests of future generations? We think that while the above proposals are necessary, they are not sufficient. It is almost as if the Government has had a failure of nerve at this stage, and does not want to go the whole mile for ensuring “an effective, meaningful and implementable policy.” We hope you will consider what we are



suggesting and make appropriate changes. Otherwise we are simply cheating the coming generations of their inheritance.

### **Policy Highlights that Remain in the Grey Area, Requiring Clarification/Modification or Improvement**

We regret that important aspects of sustainable mining and intergenerational equity have not been included in the said draft and we are most anxious that these are imported into the document in some manner as the final notification will be providing a much needed direction for improved handling of minerals for at least another decade:

1. The draft NMP 2018 states: “Conservation of minerals shall be construed not in the restrictive sense of abstinence from consumption or preservation for use in the distant future but as a positive concept leading to augmentation of reserve/resource base.” This is unchanged from NMP 2008. There has been no advance.
2. While conservation is not the same as preservation, augmentation of a reserve cannot be considered “conservation” in any interpretation of the term under the MMDR Act.
3. Conserving the value of the mineral capital for future generations following the intergenerational equity principle is a conservation that is entirely missing from the policy. In our humble suggestion, conserving minerals or conserving the value of the minerals mean almost the same. If we are unable to conserve the minerals, we are duty bound to conserve their value. Either the minerals or the value of extracted minerals should be available to future generations.
4. Thus, we would like to insist that the idea of conservation of minerals should also include

conservation of the value of the minerals in the form of permanent or sovereign funds. When 50+ countries in the world (and now State of Goa) are setting aside the value of their natural resources in such funds, we wonder why India too cannot do the same. At least, a good reason should be provided to indicate why our country refuses to invest the economic value obtained from sale of our natural resources in such funds, which is the only significant best practice today of ensuring intergenerational equity, since the minerals themselves are being steadily depleted and therefore lost.

5. Thus, use of the mineral receipts is an issue that is completely ignored in the draft. Saving everything, sharing the income, capital treatment of mineral receipts, accounting on the public trust account, creation of permanent funds & paying the citizen's dividend – serious proposals made by the Goa Foundation since we are after all dealing with publicly owned resources – have been completely ignored.

### **Need for Focused Research into Minerals**

The Policy must have a stronger section on indigenous research by those involved in mining, both public and private sector. Only the public sector is presently doing some research into minerals and mineral processing (including CSIR) but this is still inadequate. With a few exceptions, most of the private mining industry players are continuing to freeloader on the backs of public sector research. Appallingly, the government appears to support such sponging.

Despite the report of the Standing Committee on Coal and Steel (2012-13) (15th Lok Sabha, 38th Report) on “Review of Export of Iron Ores Policy”, we are still peddling the argument that India

does not have the type of furnaces to deal with low grade iron ores and hence the export of these ores should be permitted – instead of ensuring that indigenous capability to improve such ores and utilize them in Indian iron and steel plants is distinctly enhanced. The National Mineral Policy should not be subordinated to the demands of those who have developed a vested interest in export of minerals. The Make in India policy should effectively rule out such kinds of exports. However, little thought appears to be given to how this new emphasis on Make in India reconciles with the continuing practice of exporting such minerals, often at depressed or ridiculous prices, despite the real fear of their impending scarcity.

### **Hard Message Needed on Illegal Mining**

We need a strong section to be included reflecting the position of the State on illegal mining. The present draft does not discuss this issue except in generalities (2.3 and 2.4), nor does it announce absolute intolerance of illegal mining. This is strange considering that illegal mining has repeatedly brought the sector to its knees in the past 5 years, affecting economic and industrial output. Existing regulatory measures appear inefficient to control such mining practices. It appears that in respect of illegal mining, this policy has nothing new when compared to 2008 and will remain a paper tiger.

### **Implementation Plan is Missing**

The existing NMP 2008 states: “3.2. The Central Government in consultation with State Governments shall formulate the legal measures necessary for giving effect to the new National Mineral Policy, 2008, to ensure basic uniformity in mineral administration across the country and to ensure that the development of mineral resources



keeps pace and is in consonance with the national policy goals. The MMDR Act, the MCR and the MCDR will be amended in line with the policy. **The regulation of mines and development of mineral resources in accordance with the national goals and priorities as spelt out in the policy and the legal framework shall be the responsibility of both the Central and the State Governments.”**

**Despite these assurances in the old policy, the SC found that “it seems to be only on paper and is not being enforced perhaps due to the involvement of very powerful vested interests or a failure of nerve”...** One would expect that additional implementation and effectiveness aspects would be incorporated such as:

*“An implementation plan for the policy recommendations will be drawn up within 3 months from the policy being notified. Supporting metrics for measuring progress in implementation will be developed such as mineral output and loss rates. A task force will be set up to monitor the implementation of the policy. The task force will meet at least every quarter. An annual report on the implementation of the policy will be placed before parliament. The CAG will be asked to perform a periodic performance audit on the implementation of the policy.”*

Incredibly, the draft NMP 2018, contrary to the SC directions, takes a massive step backwards – it has eliminated even the existing Section 3.2 providing for subsequent actions!

### **Impact of Corruption on Economy Through Mining**

The succession of failures in mining in India – that has led to a succession of landmark judgements from the SC – can be attributed to a single factor: rent seeking and crony capitalism. As the Shah Commission noted of Goa mining:

*“It is pertinent to state*

*here that such illegal acts can't happen without connivance of the politicians, bureaucrats and lessees. There is a complete collapse of the system.”*

This nexus has been found in other states as well. However, there seems to be no effort in the policy to reign in corrupt politicians and bureaucrats. This aspect has been completely ignored. The ongoing corruption from mining is a huge drag on the economy. World Bank research shows good governance leads to a 300% increase in per capita income in the long term. **Most of our large scams have involved natural resources. The corruption is leading to political capture & poor governance. It is also behind our civil war and much of our environmental issues. It is a driver of our galloping inequality and our persistent extreme poverty.** The principles we are advocating will make a significant dent of corruption, which is sorely needed.

As is apparent, control over corruption cannot be left only to the bureaucracy. Radical transparency is a critical aspect so that ordinary citizens can audit for themselves how their mineral inheritance is being managed. This view is bolstered by the prominent role played by private citizens and NGOs in uncovering & prosecuting many of the mining scams.

We would like to draw your attention to the recent study “Many ways to lose a billion” by Publish What You Pay – Canada. A recent study by Transparency International Australia has identified 140 “Corruption Risks and Ways to combat them in the Mining Approval Process.” This is only in the first stage of the process to convert minerals into financial capital. The reports of the Karnataka Lokayukta, the Shah Commission, the Central Empowered Committee, the CAG identify numerous other lapses in the process of mining. The SC in the Odisha mining case proposes to appoint an Expert Committee to identify the lapses that have taken

place and measures to prevent its recurrence.

### **Elimination of Zero Waste as a Priority**

Another way the draft policy tries to increase ineffectiveness is to lower the standards required of the mining industry. For example, zero-waste mining would logically form part of conservation and mineral development. Disappointingly, zero-waste mining is no longer the national goal (See 2.1 in NMP 2008). This is a step backward. The Supreme Court asked the Ministry of Mines to go forward, not backward.

### **Sustainable Development Framework**

Likewise, the Sustainable Development Framework has gone from being mandatory in the existing policy to being simply a benchmark in the present draft. While the draft policy adopts some of the key aspects of the existing Sustainable Development Framework, it suspiciously omits: “Also one based on creating long-term, genuine, mutually beneficial partnerships between government, communities and miners, based on integrity, cooperation and transparency.” Even the last draft of the NMP discussed at the K R Rao Committee showed more commitment to sustainable development.

### **And Whatever Happened to Best Practices?**

India aspires to be a world leader in many aspects of modern economy and we support this aspiration. World leadership, however, includes redefining the frontier of global best practices. Global best practices in mining include membership of EITI & the WAVES partnership, and practices like Open Budgets, Open Fiscal Models, Open Contracts, Open Data, Mandatory Disclosure of payments to governments, Beneficial Ownership Registries, registry of interests for politicians,



mineral chain control systems, Tax Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS), Free Prior Informed Consent (“FPIC”), etc. Surprisingly, there is not even a mention of “best practices”, let alone a vague aspiration to implement any of these standards. These are best practices, not worst practices. Governments implement best practices because that helps the nation. The timidity is disappointing.

## Conclusion

The SC was dismayed that the existing (2008) mineral policy “seems to be only on paper and is not being enforced perhaps due to the involvement of very powerful vested interests or a failure of nerve.” It therefore directed the government to announce “a fresh and more effective, meaningful and implementable policy.” We have a civil war being waged in Central India over minerals.

**The present draft is designed primarily to promote the narrow interests of the miners and their lobbies. In the State of Goa, where only private interests are involved in mining, several commissions of inquiry found more corruption and looting than in those states where public sector dominates. So**

let us not assume private investors will provide a new mining heaven. The interests of other stakeholders, the people on the ground, affected communities, as well as the owners of the minerals (the citizens of the state) and future generations should be taken more seriously.

## Inter Governmental Forum (IGF) \Review of the Draft

India is a member of the Inter Governmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development (IGF). “The IGF’s overarching objective is enhancing capacities to achieve sustainable development objectives through good governance in the mining sector. This effort is largely framed by its flagship Mining Policy Framework (MPF), which sets out concrete objectives and processes for good governance. Members are committed to reviewing and updating this tool on a regular basis.”

*“As a non-binding policy guidance tool, the MPF lays out international best practice in these six key pillars of mining law and policy:*

1. Legal & Policy Environment
2. Financial Benefit

Optimization

3. Socioeconomic Benefit Optimization
4. Environmental Management
5. Post-Mining Transition
6. Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining.”

A comparison with the draft NMP 2018 shows its inadequacy on almost all these pillars. The IGF has already completed mineral policy assessments for Suriname, Mongolia, Senegal, Uganda, Madagascar and Dominican Republic. As India is a member of the IGF, we strongly recommend that the Government refer this draft National Mining Policy 2018 to the IGF for review as well.

**Representation to Veena Kumari Dermal, director, Ministry of Mines, Government of India, by Rebbapragada Ravi, Chairperson, and Ashok Shrimali, Secretary General, Mines, Minerals & People (MM&P), on the Draft National Mineral Policy:**

The draft National Mineral Policy is a step towards greater clarity in

public policy regarding rights of the communities affected by mining. It is a small step but in the right direction. We, representing the mining affected people of the whole country, do hereby suggest that the vision statement of the NMP should include a non-negotiable “Sunset Clause” regarding the utilization of District Mineral Funds by state governments and pursue the goal of Nil-Illegal mining within two years of its acceptance.

## Suggestions

1. The vision statement of the National Mineral Policy should include ‘socially responsible mining’ taking into account the health and human rights of the population affected by mining.
2. Regulation of Minerals (2.2)- In this regard there is a need for mentioning **the Samata Judgment which prohibits the buying of tribal land by a non-tribal**. The general rules of “ease of doing business” does not apply to the Vth Schedule areas. The policy should clearly state the limitations of doing business in Vth Scheduled areas.
3. Regulation of Minerals (2.3)- **The enforcing agency should also include some members of the affected communities** with providing them adequate training as they can contribute a more sustainable strategizing.
4. Role of State in Mineral Development- the role of state is also to consider the environmental, health, social, livelihood and human rights issues before granting licenses for mining. State also has to set up a grievance redressal body in the sites of mining where the affected population can approach with their problems.
5. Prospecting and Exploration (4.2)- Private sector entry into prospecting and exploration should be monitored by the state and only licensed private entity

can take up the exploration activity. This will reduce the occurrence of illegal mining.

6. The prospecting and exploration procedures are industry friendly but these can have a reverse implication on the environment and social lives of the affected population, especially the children.
7. Advancing make-in-India in mineral sector should also **ensure that the large section of population which is mostly adversely affected by mining is not left behind**. Make-in-India initiatives should encourage and make sure that the affected population participates in it as a livelihood source.
8. Mining Equipment (6.4)- The local community should be provided adequate skills in-order to operate the machinery being used in mining and prospecting.
9. Human Resource Development (6.5)- **The local community which will be affected should be trained and skilled** to be part of the human resource.
10. The Revised National Policy should include a section on penalties that will be imposed in case of any violation of the various provisions as outlined in the Policy.
11. The social impacts of mining should be considered on priority and prior permission of the community, as laid down in the Niyam Giri Judgement, have to be clearly mentioned in the Policy.
12. Mining affects children, women and other vulnerable categories of the community adversely. Children are the future of the nation and have equal rights to enjoy the fruits of development. The NMP should categorically state its priority for the health, education and livelihood of these sections of affected community.

## Representation by Rebbapragada Ravi, Executive Director, Samata, a Civil Society Group Working Among and for the Adivasis on the Draft National Mineral Policy:

1. Conflict in Mining sites between affected population and the miner should be strictly dealt with by the state governments following the letter and spirit of the Samata vs Union of India, 1997, Judgement.
2. The creation and use of District Mineral Fund should be streamlined and states which fail to utilise the fund should be taken to task.
3. **Children bear the brunt of extraction process and environmental outcomes of mining**. The NMP should state that violation of the Rights of the Child would be a punishable offence and negligent states would face criminal proceedings for such violations.
4. **Any executive order regarding mining, which violates the principles of right to life of the Adivasis in the PESA areas, would suo motu be declared ultra vires by a district level court** and shall be binding on the state policy.
5. Nil-Illegal mining should be the clearly stated object of the NMP within two years of its acceptance.
6. Cooperative mining has been mentioned in the draft NMP, basically for minor minerals. They have to be considered even for major minerals.
7. The full value of mining should accrue to a Future Generation Fund in order to provide collective rights over resources. This should be a stated objective of the NMP.



WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO THE ALARMING RISE IN WOMEN'S MURDERS IN THE COUNTRY?  
IS THIS THE FATE OF ANY COUNTRY WHERE RELIGIOUS ZEALOTS HAVE FREEDOM TO KILL?

# The Missing Women of Pakistan

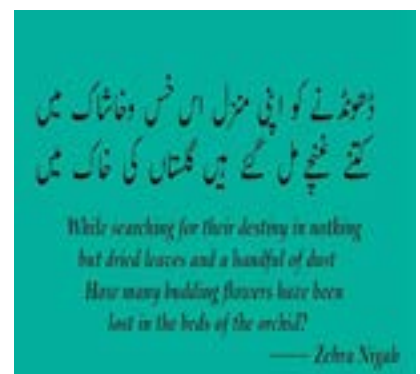


*The graveyard in Butranwali, Punjab where Muqaddas Bibi is buried.*

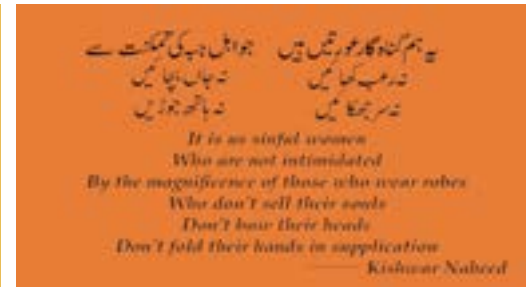
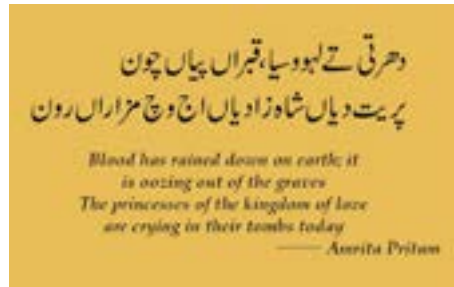
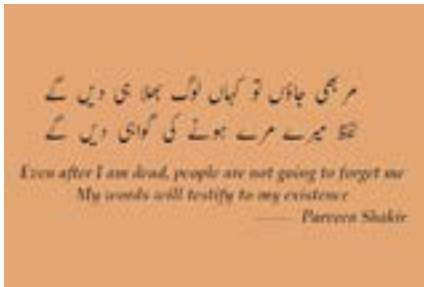
■ Annie Ali Khan

Ambreen Riasat woke up one summer morning and realised she was getting late for school. Her elder brother, Nauman, was already awake and she could hear him pack his school bag. Outside, the sun was already glaring down on the tall green trees and the grass rustling in the air on the mountain slopes. She rushed to the bathroom, a tiny space just outside her house with a pit and a tap. She washed her face, came back in, zipped up her school bag and ran to school. She was wearing a bright red salwar kameez, a dress she had slept in.

Even at the tender age of around 14, Ambreen knew what part of her clothing she could not be careless about — a face-covering niqab that left a small space for her eyes to peer out. The stony path from her home to the paved road went steeply up the mountain. With the ease of someone who has been walking up and down that path for years, she hopped and skipped and



*Source: The Herald*



ran all the way. Nauman was leading her as the two went past the trees bearing blood-red pomegranate blossoms and parrot-green walnut fruits.

The government school in her village, Makol, is tucked away, almost invisibly, at the end of a narrow path covered by thick trees. A small peak, jutting out of a mountain, obscures its front gate. Most teachers at the school – including the principal – are men, and girls and boys study in the same classrooms. Girls wear niqab so that the men and the boys cannot see their faces.

When Ambreen returned home that day, her mother, Shamim Akhtar, was livid. Why did she not change her bright red clothes before going to school where there were so many men around, she asked her daughter. Ambreen tried to argue that she did not have time to change. Shamim would not hear it. “You are not going to school again,” she told Ambreen.

Shamim took her books away from her and confined her to the house.

Farmaan Ali, a teacher at the school, remembers Ambreen as an intelligent girl, a bright student. She could be naughty and easily distracted because she was so young, but she was smart and curious and a good daughter to her mother, he says. After classes, he had often seen her carrying large water containers home for her mother’s cooking and washing.

Her obedience, however, did not stop Ambreen from resisting her confinement. She kept protesting. She wanted to go back to her studies. She would often pick up her notebooks and start scribbling in them or she took her brother’s notebook and copied his lessons word for word. She was restless and often received beatings from her mother for talking back and asking to go back to her school. After her protests became too frequent to ignore, Shamim allowed her to go to a nearby madrasa for daily Quran lessons.

All that happened in 2015.

Exactly a year after she had been banished indoors, Ambreen walked back to school. She was careful to keep well behind her brother so as to make sure he did not see her. She was more worried about her mother. Sooner or later, Shamim would find out that Ambreen was missing from home.

She quietly walked into her old classroom. It had changed. Other children had moved into it.

After her arrival at school, a cousin of hers, who also studied there, went to the teacher Ali and asked him not to give Ambreen any books. She is not supposed to be in school, the girl told the teacher.

Ali discussed the matter with the principal, Khaliq Zaman, and they decided to summon Ambreen’s brother, Nauman. They sent her back home with him. An angry Shamim gave Ambreen a serious thrashing but soon everything went back to business as usual. Ambreen helped her mother clean the house before everyone went to bed. Lying in his cot, Nauman could hear Ambreen sob.

That was April 29, 2016 – a moonlit night. Everything outside seemed to be bathed in a heavenly glow. By 11 pm, Shamim and Nauman fell fast asleep. Between midnight and 2 am, some men came in and took Ambreen away. Whether or not her mother knew is not clear.

Zarnab Gul lives on a hilltop in Makol. It was very early that morning when he heard screams. He opened the window of his room and looked out. He saw a big blaze below — at a place where a dusty shoulder jutted out of the village’s sole paved link with other villages and towns. Such shoulders are common on roads passing through hilly areas and are meant to provide parking space for broken-down vehicles or for travellers to wait for a bus.

Gul called his wife and they went to their rooftop to see what was burning along the road outside. They



A photo taken in Asma Jahangir’s office in Lahore. Credit: Annie Ali Khan

could not make out anything. He shouted loudly to see if whoever was screaming would answer. He heard back nothing but screams.

Gul eventually went down to the road. He saw a van on fire. The flames were leaping towards another van parked nearby.

Gul knew the owner of the second van – a twenty-five-year old local driver Ghulam Mustafa. He dialled Mustafa's cell phone number and asked him to come over. By the time Mustafa reached the spot, the fire had died out but his vehicle was all burnt down.

Gul and Mustafa went closer to the vans to see their condition. Both froze with horror when they saw that there was a person sitting inside the first van – burnt to a cinder. The arms and legs of the body, relatively recognisable, suggested it was a girl. The two also spotted a school bag inside the van. "I was surprised that the bag was still intact," says Mustafa. "Nothing could have survived that blaze."

It was dawn by then. Ali, the school teacher, heard an announcement from a local mosque about a dead body lying in a van on the roadside. He walked down the hill from his house and saw a crowd moving in the direction of the van. When he reached the place where the van was parked, he saw the singed body of a young girl tied to a seat. There were notebooks inside a school bag tucked in her hands. Those belonged to Nauman, Ambreen's brother.

The girl in the van, according to her autopsy report, was strangled before she was set on fire. Her hands and legs were also tied with some plastic material to ensure that she did not move out of the van. When the police arrived, they concluded from the notebooks that the dead girl was Ambreen.

While everyone rushed to the spot where the body was found, Shamim stayed at home even though she lived only a short walk away. "The entire Makol came to see the vans but Ambreen's mother did not," says Mustafa.

Shamim says she did not notice anything unusual when she woke up that morning, except that the door of her single-room house was open. She went out to the bathroom, washed herself, offered her prayers and went back to sleep. She says she heard announcements about the burnt body of a young girl but she did not pay attention. When Nauman was leaving for school at around 7:30 am, Shamim asked him to wake Ambreen. That is when, she claims, they realised that she was missing.

Shamim ran out of the house and checked in the bathroom and the thickets close by but Ambreen was nowhere to be found. She went to the neighbours and asked them about her daughter but no one had seen her that morning.

Her statement triggers some troubling questions. She was sleeping right next to her daughter in a small



*Ambreen's brother Nauman looks through his notebook at his house in Makol.  
Credit: Annie Ali Khan*

room. How could she not know if someone came in and took the girl away? Why did she not notice Ambreen's absence before her son told her about it?

The police detained Shamim and Nauman and took them to the police station. They were both beaten up. Shamim was slapped and the soles of her feet were struck hard with sticks. "You can beat me as much as you want," she cried, "but I have not killed my daughter. Why would I kill my own flesh and blood?" She was released, along with Nauman, for lack of evidence.

Shamim's husband, Riasat Khan – a small, gaunt old man with a shrunken, bearded face – is a labourer working in a ship-breaking yard in Gadani, Balochistan. He stays at his workplace, hundreds of kilometres away from Makol, for most part of the year. He was at work when his daughter's body was found. He reached home a couple of days after Ambreen had died. He says he has no clue what happened to her.

Shamim, younger than her husband and also more articulate and worldly-wise than him, does not like to talk much about her daughter. Instead, she mourns the death of her eldest born, a boy named Waseem, who had died of an unknown cause a few years ago. He was fine one day and then the next day he was bleeding from the mouth, she says. Within hours he was dead.

Shamim has a photo of Waseem. He seems to be in his early teens at the time the photograph was taken. She has no photograph of Ambreen that can enable an interested outsider to know what she looked like.

In the sparse room where Ambreen's family lives, there is almost nothing that suggests that the girl even existed. A small stove next to a low wooden shelf in a corner of the living room-cum-bedroom marks the kitchen area where a few tin containers carrying cooking oil and some spices are lined neatly. Next to them are pots and pans and a couple of trunks with clothes in them. The bright red dress Ambreen wore to school last year could be in one of those trunks, but there is no way





*The interior of the burnt van. Credit: Annie Ali Khan*

of knowing that. Next to the trunks, charpoys are lined against a long wall facing the only opening in the room: its door. Ambreen used to sleep on one of those cots.

As Nauman starts talking about Ambreen, his mother looks at him. He is sitting on a charpoy right opposite the door. There is a notebook in his hands. Ambreen used to scribble and doodle in it. He is also drawing something – a mishmash of lines and spirals, like the mystery surrounding his sister's death.

Makol, located about 10 km from the military's premier training facilities in Abbottabad district, is a typical settlement in the mountains: houses are scattered, separated by small hills, pathways and tree-lined courtyards. It consists of a few hundred houses. Most of them are built with bricks and mortar and have concrete roofs but a few are mud huts with thatched ceilings – like the one Ambreen's family has.

In this village lives a rich man: Muhammad Pervaiz. His family owns vast tracts of land and many houses here. He is also the elected chairman of a union council of which Makol is a part, along with a few other villages.

Last year, Pervaiz's young daughter Saima disappeared from home, allegedly with a man she wanted to marry. Her parents looked for her everywhere they could but did not find a clue of her whereabouts. There were rumours in Makol that Ambreen knew where Saima was. She reportedly was the human link through which Saima communicated with the man she loved.

Pervaiz is known to be unhappy about Ambreen's role in his daughter's disappearance. He is reported to have convened a council of the elders of the area in his home some time in 2015 where it was allegedly decided to punish Ambreen. It was not a jirga, a tribal judicial council, in the exact tribal sense because those living in Makol are not bound by any tribal affinity (they all come from different castes and working groups) and it had no legal and political legitimacy as the jirgas have in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. It is still reported to have the sanction of the rich and the influential in and around Makol.

Shamim alleges it was Pervaiz who came to her house along with some other men on the night Ambreen disappeared. He took her away to question her about Saima's disappearance, Shamim says, but she does not have any evidence to substantiate her allegation.

Others in the village speculate that she knew all along that Pervaiz was out to get her daughter. That is why she took Ambreen out of school soon after Saima had disappeared and the jirga had taken place, they say.

Pervaiz's wife, Rubina, a housewife reluctant to speak to an outsider, swears by her husband's innocence. "He was at home with me on the night of Ambreen's murder," she says. She also denies the allegations that the punishment for Ambreen was approved at a jirga held inside her home. "That was not a jirga. After Saima went missing, a few elders from the community talked to each other inside a closed room. There was no discussion on the subject ever afterwards," she says.

Rumours continue to swirl around the case. One of them joins Pervaiz and Shamim as secret lovers who killed Ambreen after she had come to know about them. According to another rumour, Shamim could have killed both Waseem and Ambreen for some unknowable reason.

Many weeks after Ambreen's murder, Safeer Ahmed, a junior court official in Abbottabad, a few kilometres to the north-west of Makol, insists that Shamim was "involved" in some kind of a "racket" and that is why she had her own "daughter killed to cover up her crime". Makol is a small place where everyone knows everyone, he says. "It is not a city. How can the mother not know the person who took her daughter away? There is some great secret here."

Pervaiz and around ten others – including the owner of the van in which the body was found – were arrested in early May 2016 and are in jail pending a trial. The police are yet to release a complete forensic audit of the crime scene. A judicial inquiry into Ambreen's death, ordered by the provincial government, is also going on.

Whoever killed Ambreen was both meticulous and methodical. According to police investigations and statements of witnesses who discovered her body, the killers had cut off electricity to the nearby street light and damaged the water pipeline passing through the place so that water to extinguish the

fire could not be secured easily. Ambreen was dumped on a seat right above the van's gas tank. When the fire started, she did not burn slowly. The fireball caused by the gas roasted her body instantly.

Her teacher, Ali, remembers how many in the crowd that April morning took photos and made videos of the crime scene. Those grainy and terrifying images and the recent renaming of the local school after her are the only signs that Ambreen did once exist.

Even her grave in Makol graveyard remains unmarked: a small mound of dried earth with a shapeless piece of rock placed where a tombstone should have been.

Asma Jahangir, the renowned human rights lawyer and activist who recently died had said that generally she found Dewal Sharif divided along gender lines over Maria's death. The women were "in full sympathy with the victim whereas the men were either justifying [the] crime or denying it totally," says the mission led by Jahangir in its recently released report. "There was a concerted effort to paint the occurrence as a suicide rather than murder," it adds.

"It was obviously not a suicide. It was murder," Jahangir says in her office in Lahore.

The fact-finding mission initially "was quite satisfied with the inquiry" but its members were "shocked to know that the investigation had declared the main accused as being innocent". They also point out that a magistrate hearing the case did not accept the police recommendation to release the accused "and yet bail was granted" to him.

The report lists developments that might have had some negative impact on the investigation. "There was a campaign of character assassination of the victim and her family and ... there were credible reports that the family members were being threatened and induced

to accept some reward for their silence."

Jahangir pointed to a widespread public perception, especially among men, – something she has noticed in many similar cases: That a woman who leads a life of moral laxity always ends up dying in ignominy.

He passed through her street every day. She waited for him half-hidden behind a half-open door. "Why don't you look my way? Why don't you talk to me?" she gathered the courage to ask him one day. "I have nothing to offer," he replied. "I want nothing," she said.

Muqaddas Bibi was a young girl with a soft face. "She was the daughter of a potter but she looked like she belonged to a family of Rajputs," the boy's mother says.

Taufiq Ahmed is a handsome young man with a thick mustache and thick wavy black hair, oiled and slicked back stylishly. One of his legs is shorter than the other but that is barely noticeable. He works as a tailor.

The two lived in the same Buttranwali village, a nondescript settlement a little off the road that connects Gujranwala with Sialkot – nestled amid green fields being steadily taken over by ramshackle housing and brick kilns. They came from two different castes and their financial status varied. Though the girl's family was poor a couple of generations ago, they have been doing well of late and are regarded well off by the village's standards. Ahmed comes from a family of carpenters which struggles to make ends meet even when some of its members have branched into other professions. They had no chance of having an arranged marriage.

Three years ago, the two ran away and got married in a court.

At first Ahmed's family was hesitant to accept Muqaddas into its fold but she took to her married life wholeheartedly. "She made rotis every day for the family, washed clothes and was always helping everyone," says Ahmed's mother. Everyone in the family and the neighbourhood soon started liking Muqaddas. An elderly woman living next door to her would come to her complaining of headache and Muqaddas would apply oil to her hair to massage and soothe her.

Ahmed lives in a small single-storey home made of red bricks, unplastered and unpainted. It is hard to distinguish from other houses in the village. His entire family has one room to sleep in — a simple structure with bare walls, save for a couple of framed images of the Kaaba.

Ahmed works from 7 am to 11 pm in one corner of the house, making about fifteen thousand rupees a month by stitching clothes. Muqaddas would serve him tea every few hours.

About a year ago, they had a daughter. A few months after her birth, Muqaddas became pregnant again. She was happy about her second child. The delivery was still two months away but she made new clothes for herself to wear after she had given birth.

One day this June, she felt ill and Ahmed's mother offered to take her to a hospital. They were to take a bus to Gujranwala, slightly more than 10 km away. While Muqaddas and her mother-in-law were waiting at a bus stop, her mother arrived there and grabbed Muqaddas by the hair and the neck. "It all happened so fast," says Ahmed's mother, "that I did not know what to do." Before anyone could come to their help, Muqaddas' mother had dragged her daughter into her house and closed the door from inside.

As a crowd gathered outside, the mother screamed at the daughter. "Why did you marry a cripple?" Other members of the family were also present inside the house and they are known to have beaten up one of Muqaddas' sister-in-law for trying to help her. Within minutes, the mother took out a knife and slit the daughter's throat.

As Muqaddas lay dying, people waiting outside tried to enter the house



*The House of Muhammad Pervaiz, Saima's Father, in Makol. Credit: Annie Ali Khan*

but could not. "They must have planned for a long time," says a visibly angry Ahmed. "Our women seldom leave the house. They have been waiting for a chance all this time to grab her."

The old woman who liked Muqaddas for oiling her hair curses the girl's mother. "The whole neighbourhood is in shock," she says crying. "This is not about honour. Once the girl had become a mother, the question of honour died there and then."

Ahmed's mother now looks after his daughter. "What will this little girl think when she grows up?" she asks before she starts crying. "I am going to take good care of our child," Ahmed says, lifting his daughter in his arms.

Muqaddas is buried in a grave behind a wall forming the village's boundary. There is an empty bottle of camphor and fresh flowers lying on the grave.

Back at his home, Ahmed takes out an album carrying the photos of the couple. In one photo, a heart pierced by an arrow overlaps them as they pose for the camera. "I want to ask the world, if love is forbidden then why did God give us a heart," he says. "If these people call themselves believers, do they not believe that couples are made in heaven?"

Zeenat Bibi's killing stands out among all these cases for multiple reasons. An 18-year-old girl living in a working class neighbourhood in southern Lahore, she was burnt to death on June 8 by her mother, Parveen Rafiq. This is the first known incident this year of a girl torched to death by her own family. Zeenat also did not belong to a village where some supposedly primitive anti-women social code operated. She lived and was killed in the second biggest city in the country where tribal concepts of male honour look distinctly unfeasible to follow. And she was killed by her mother – not by her brother or father though they may have a role in it.

Yet the cause of her death is what it has always been in such cases: "bringing shame to the family," as her mother put it, according to a report published by daily Dawn.

Parveen, who confessed to her crime and is undergoing trial, set Zeenat on fire more than a week after the girl had reportedly eloped with one Hassan Khan. The two had married in court. "Hassan had agreed to let his wife return [to her parents' home] after her family promised ... to organise a traditional wedding reception for the couple," the newspaper reports.

Less than a week before the girl was murdered, the neighbours had seen her brother carrying home a jerrycan of petrol. The fire that killed Zeenat was so big that it was extinguished only with help from the official rescue service.

Ammar Majeed, who works at Jahangir's law firm, AGHS Associates, as a media officer, has been visiting homes from where violence against

women is reported. He has seen cases similar to that of Zeenat's. In his reckoning, these "are crimes of ego" that "have nothing to do with honour." A mother, upset that her daughter did not listen to her before deciding who to marry, resorts to killing not in order to redeem her honour but to satisfy her pride.

From experience, Majeed knows that such pandering to the self often has a destructive outcome. He once asked a boy why he had killed his sister. "Because it was satisfying," is the answer he got.

Khawar Mumtaz, a veteran of the women's rights movement in Pakistan, has worked in different capacities over the last three and a half decades — first as a member of the Women's Action Forum (WAF), then as a founding member and head of the Aurat Foundation, a Lahore-based lobbying and research group on women's rights, and recently as the chairperson of the National Commission on the Status of Women. "Most cases of violence against women in the 1980s were reported from tribal areas in Sindh and Balochistan," she says. The situation has only worsened over the years as similar cases are being reported from everywhere in the country.

One reason, according to Mumtaz, is that the economic, social and political environment is changing in Pakistan. "Women are doing much better economically, politically and socially as compared to the past," she says. "Women are marrying late. More and more women are working." This, she says, is one of the major factors in the backlash against them.

Mumtaz points to "a total disjuncture" between how the society is moving ahead and how social structures and social roles are still playing out in the same old ways. She gives an example: "Once women become independent, they also get a mind of their own and want to marry of their own choice. This is seen as a major contravention of family boundaries."



That explains why it has become acceptable that a woman can work to provide for her family but it is still not acceptable if she exercises choice in marriage. “Violence then is likely. It is part of a control mechanism.”

Shahnaz Rouse, a professor of sociology at the Sarah Lawrence College in the United States, has also written about social and political changes that have led to an increase in violence against women in Pakistan. In her book, *Shifting Body Politics: Gender, Nation, State in Pakistan, she sees the crucial shift in attitudes towards women having resulted from the militarisation and progressively increasing masculinisation of society itself since the military regime of General Zia ul-Haq.*

Freely available arms and ammunition and Pakistan’s status as a frontline state during the war in Afghanistan and the drug trade are some of the contributing factors to the social changes she highlights. “The militarisation of the state and civil society [is] a result of the international/global politics of the last two decades, combined with the collapse of the liberalisation policies of regimes following Zia ... the continued reliance by all three [regimes] on “Islamic” ideology as constructed by increasingly militant and conservative religious groups for “strategic” and/or ideological purposes, have resulted in an alarming **masculinisation of public space.**”

*The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India* by Urvashi Butalia goes another step backwards. Her book deals with one of the most brutal manifestations of the notion of shame and honour being linked to women and their bodies on a mass scale. Women were humiliated by being paraded naked in the streets or forced to abandon their religion and marry their rapists, never to see their families again during the cataclysmic events of 1947. Thousands of them died willingly at the hands of their own

men to avoid bringing shame and dishonour to their families.

“They are straightforward murders, disguised as honour killings to escape punishment,” Butalia said in an interview about some recent incidents of violence against women in India.

The word honour invariably appears in news reports covering violence against women. Maqsooda Solangi, who has been working for the Aurat Foundation for six years, believes that many crimes are seen as honour killings because the media portrays them as such. “News contents are spiced up,” she says.

The situation is particularly bad at relatively small Punjab-based Urdu language newspapers. Whenever an honour crime occurs, it is covered in a way that focuses on the love marriage aspect of it, Solangi says. She adds that the coverage of crimes against women in local-language newspapers in Sindh is not as salacious as it is in Punjab.

It was during Zia’s era that honour killing first entered the lexicon of the news media and human rights activists, Mumtaz says. It has its origin in a 1979 judgement by the Peshawar High Court that declared that Islamic concepts of qisas (retribution) and diyat (compensation) must be taken into account before deciding any cases involving the death penalty. Awarding capital punishment without any provision for forgiveness is un-Islamic, the court ruled.

In politics, this put Zia’s self-professed Islamist regime in an uncomfortable position as far as hanging – without provision for forgiveness – of deposed prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was concerned. The verdict also raised alarm among women’s rights activists. It will lead to impunity for those men who kill their women because they can benefit from forgiveness – which in such cases is the prerogative of their own next of kin – is how the activists looked at the possible impacts of the law. They were proved right. The next decades saw a spike in crimes against women but most of them did not lead to conviction and punishment. The accused, the police, the prosecutors and even the judges used family honour as an excuse to condone such crimes as crimes of passion, committed on the spur of the moment by someone incensed by the injury to his or her own honour.

This led activists to demand that the state and the courts treat murders in the name of honour as a separate category of crimes in which forgiveness, qisas and diyat did not apply. As a term, “honour killing” thus became a part of everyday language.

In March 2015, after multiple failed efforts to reform the law, the Senate, the upper house of the parliament, finally approved a piece of legislation



Muqaddas Bibi’s husband Taufiq Ahmed with his daughter and mother. Credit: Annie Ali Khan

the activists have been asking for all along: honour killing became a crime against the state; the parties to it could not reach an out-of-court settlement in such cases. Women's murders became "non-compoundable" – provided that the prosecution was able to prove that those were honour killings. Tabled by Senator Sughra Imam in 2014, the legislation, however, lapsed because it could not win approval from the National Assembly, the lower house of the parliament, mainly due to opposition from the religious political parties.

Jahangir said that the focus by activists on the term honour killing has hardly been helpful. Lawyers now spend all their energy and time on proving the crime to be an honour killing, she says. If they can't do that, she says, the parties to a case can still go and affect a compromise no matter how gruesome the murder.

Additionally, qisas and diyat, as Islamic instruments to settle murder disputes, still stay on the statute books. The legal heirs of a victim also have the right to drop the charges at any point during the proceedings.

Jahangir blamed non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for this state of affairs. "If they can write in English, they think they can also draft laws," she says. Their advocacy has only added multiple layers of litigation that women face in courts, she said. Any benefit that could have come about in terms of stricter penalties for honour killing has been apparently cancelled out by these additional legal complexities, Jahangir adds.

Many in the NGOs seem to recognise these problems. A report commissioned by a group of women's rights organisations and development foundations in 2015 attributes major hurdles in justice for women to a number of legal and judicial problems. There are **hardly any female judges; availability of a lawyer is as low as 2.5 per 100,000 people and there are not enough female police officers**, says the report entitled *The Laws of Honour Killing and Rape in Pakistan: Current Status and Future Prospects*.

The report cites surveys conducted by local human rights organisations that reveal a general lack of faith in the judiciary and very low levels of contact with the courts, especially among women. Most importantly, it points out that the reformed laws have changed nothing on the ground. The lack of sympathy encountered by survivors of rape and other forms of violence against women and the tendency among the police officers to encourage out-of-court settlements seem to have survived despite changes in the law, it says.

Nafisa Shah, a long-time campaigner for women's rights and a member of the National Assembly affiliated to the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), readily agrees that the criminal justice system needs reforms. In an interview at her residence inside the parliamentary lodges in Islamabad, she argues that the recent cases of women's murders are far more complex than they are made out to be.

In the past, she explains, the manner of killing women was different. "Most murders were spontaneous acts committed with such weapons as axes or clubs and they usually happened in rural areas," she says. **"Now there seems to be premeditation in these killings." The existing laws, she says, do not define honour killing in such a way as to cover cold-blooded murders.**

Shah is soon to publish a book, *Honour Unmasked*, which contains the results of her own field research on the subject.

Shah, as well as Jahangir and Mumtaz, agree that distinguishing one type of crime from the other – as has been the case with honour killing – has created more problems than it has solved. Ideally, all three say, all crimes should be treated alike – investigated, prosecuted and adjudicated in the same manner regardless of the gender, caste, creed, ethnicity and the social status of both the perpetrators and the victims.

**"Every murder should be seen as a crime against the state, not a matter between two individuals that they can resolve mutually,"** says Mumtaz.

Dr Nosheen Ali, who taught sociology at the New York University recently, said at the discussion that a limiting framework of morality divided women into good and bad. We need to ask who has created this divide, she said. "How is it enforced and who does this benefit?" These questions, she said, take us from "a framework of morality to a framework of patriarchy." She, then, observed: **"Patriarchy is violent against women. It is particularly violent against fearless women."**

Abira Ashfaq, a Karachi-based lawyer and another panelist at the discussion, agreed with Nosheen Ali but she added that all murders should be treated just like honour killings are so that people who are killed in the name of ideology or religion also get the justice they deserve. She gave the example of the murder of Zafar Loond, a leftist Seraiki activist living and working in Kot Addu town, less than 100 kilometres from where Qandeel Baloch was killed.

He was shot dead outside his house only a day before her murder. It is not clear who killed him. What is known is that, fearing opposition from religious activists, his family did not bury him in his ancestral town of Shadan Loond, which, like Qandeel Baloch's ancestral village, is also in district Dera Ghazi Khan.

There were allegations that he was an Ahmadi – a new heretical Muslim sect that faces violent attacks.

Loond's funeral prayers were offered in Dera Ghazi Khan city where he was buried in an unmarked grave.

*Annie Ali Khan is a freelance journalist and photographer.*

# **WITHHOLDING SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS FOR SC-ST-OBC STUDENTS TO REDUCE THEIR PRESENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION**



**Prof Madhu Prasad**

The All-India Forum for Right to Education (AIFRTE) extends its full support and solidarity to the legitimate struggle of the students of all four campuses (Mumbai, Guwahati, Tuljapur and Hyderabad) of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). Starting their struggle from 21st February 2018, students have boycotted all classes, field work and submissions at all campuses after months of dialogue and negotiations

between the students union and the administration failed to make the authorities revoke their decision to withdraw financial aid to SC/ST students from this academic year.

SC/ST and OBC students receive aid under the Government of India's Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme. Without the aid from the institution they would be required to pay in full the fees and mess charges, both of which have also been steeply increased recently. Reimbursement

would be made only if and when the central government releases funds to the institution.

Financial aid has been stopped for OBC students since 2015, leading to an approximately 9% drop in admissions from this category.

The behavior of the authorities is completely arbitrary and untenable. The 2016-18 class found aid abruptly withdrawn in 2017. The 2017-19 class found aid withdrawn



at the time of admissions. The students union demanded that the illegal decision be immediately revoked. Further they demanded that TISS continue to make timely provision for aid as otherwise SC/ST and OBC students would be unable to bear the financial burden of paying full fees.

TISS authorities initially ignored the demand but four days into the boycott action students were even denied the breakfast which had been prepared for them.

The vindictive reaction of the authorities to protests against the decision to deny financial aid to students who have a constitutional right towards affirmative action is an alarming indication of the **speed with which the current central and state governments are privatizing higher education. It is most unfortunate that authorities and administrators at educational institutions are not resisting such actions but falling into line with them at the expense of corrective measures to promote social justice.**

**This is not simply a problem at TISS.** On March 20, Hundreds of students belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities are on an indefinite strike in front of Maharaja Purna Chandra (MPC) Autonomous College, here protesting delay in disbursal of stipend. SC/ST students of the college have not received their stipend for the last couple of years.

**It goes without saying that of course funding for religious minorities has been drastically cut in the last few years.** Funding has almost been halved for the pre-matric scholarship since 2014. This means large numbers of poor Muslims, Sikhs, Christians were not able to graduate. And of course post-matric scholarships have also been cut.

**Higher education has been chronically starved of funds and pushed towards marketization over the past 25 years under pressure from the World**

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## **UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION (UGC) HAS CUT FUNDING TO SEVERAL RESEARCH CENTRES THAT WERE SET UP UNDER THE 11TH FIVE-YEAR PLAN (2007-2012) AND THEN RENEWED IN THE 12TH PLAN.**

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**Bank and then by the central government's refusal to pull-out of the ill-conceived commitment made in 2005 to offer Higher Education as a 'tradeable service' for regulation by the World Trade Organization-General Agreement on Trade in Services (WTO-GATS).** However, since 2014 decisions taken by the central and state governments are,

Slashing educational budgets, introducing a 30%-70% division of market contribution and government grants for higher education, and aggressively forcing institutions of higher education to resort to fee hikes, to replace scholarships/grants with loans, and resort to privatization, commercialization and marketization of the entire higher education sector;

Denying the majority of young people in the relevant age group (i.e. 18 – 24 years) from gaining access to higher education. The report of the National Sample Survey (NSS) 2014, shows as many as **44.81 million Indian students are too poor to pursue higher education. The private expenditure per student on education for general courses has increased by 175.8%,** and that for technical/professional and vocational courses has almost doubled from the 2007-08 NSS report to the 2014 NSS report;

Targeting, with clear Manuvadi intention, SC/ST and OBC students **whose access to higher education is already less than 10% as more than 90% cannot complete Class XII due to privatization policies that have led to dismantling of the state-funded school system.**

The special rapporteur of the

United Nation's Human Rights Council on the right to education had clearly stated in a June 2015 report that "privatization negatively affects the right to education both as an entitlement and as empowerment" and "breeds exclusion and marginalization, with crippling effects on the fundamental principle of equality of opportunity in education."

### **Secret Campaign**

TISS as a university has been targeted after the new government took office, it was mainly because of the kind of research and intervention that it was engaged with the most marginalized and poor. In 2015, the name of TISS was deleted from the Online application procedure for students belonging to ST category doing their MPhil and PhD programmes. The fellowship original known as Rajeev Gandhi National Fellowship for ST students (RGNF) was renamed as National Fellowship for Higher Education of ST Students (NFST). In the On line list, the name of TISS was missing from the list of eligible institutions.

Another remarkable alleged incident in which **University Grand Commission (UGC) had sent circulars to many universities including TISS demanding the details of students from particular sections.** This was done at the behest of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). **These include Adivasi, Dalit, Muslim minorities and those who are part of communist or communist-like minded students' organisations.** This highly confidential circular to the Vice Chancellors demanded for

their addresses, photographs, courses undertaken with the particular university, parental details, etc.

The right wing government wants to completely wipe off any sort of dissent against its regime and has put in place all sorts of systems against those who resist the anti-people policies of the government. In a way it is to **trap students into a cobweb and stamp them as terrorists, extremists and anti-nationals**. Many students from these sections were under severe threat for being from these social groups. In another move UGC had **stopped funds to three UGC funded centers at TISS** Center for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policies, Advanced Center for Women's Studies and the Nodal Center for Excellence under the Scheme of Human Rights. All three centers at TISS were renewed for the 12th Five-Year Plan, the period for which ended on March 31 2017. This was understood as **targeting the courses and pedagogy taught by these centers to do with oppressed and marginalized**.

## Ending Discrimination Research

While the prime minister announced plans for a fresh round of 'Dalit outreach' around B.R. Ambedkar's 125th birthday, his government cut funding for research centres at several universities across the country that study social discrimination.

According to a report by Pheroze L. Vincent and Basant Mohanty in the Telegraph, the University Grants Commission (UGC) **has cut funding to several research centres that were set up under the 11th five-year plan (2007-2012) and then renewed in the 12th plan**. While a similar renewal was expected under the 13th plan, the UGC has sent circulars to some of the universities that house such centres saying that their plan funding end on March 31.

"I am directed to inform you that UGC will not provide financial support to the centre after the end of XIIth Plan as per the order received from MHRD (ministry of human resource development) ... Further, the UGC will not be liable to the scheme of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy after the completion of XIIth Plan in any matter of functioning of the Centre; No communication whatsoever will be entertained or solicited by the UGC," says the order quoted by the Telegraph, issued by UGC undersecretary Sushma Rathore.

According to ministry and UGC sources who spoke to this order has been sent to all those centres that have not been upgraded to a full-fledged department by the universities. "It's ironic that **these centres, which research Dalits, B.R. Ambedkar's philosophy, social exclusion and inclusive policies like reservation, are being closed down when the University Grants Commission (the higher education regulator) is funding courses on Vedic studies**," said N. Sukumar, Ambedkar scholar and teacher of political science at

Delhi University.

One such centre that is being closed is the Centre for the Study of Discrimination and Exclusion at Jawaharlal Nehru University. According to teachers at JNU, M Phil and PhD students at the centre will be transferred to other departments while faculty members are likely to lose their jobs. There are several other centres, such as **over a hundred women's studies centres across the country, those have run on plan-to-plan budgeting for decades**.

The end result is that, just as the government's solution to the increasing unemployment has been to stop collecting unemployment statistics, similar is the case with regard to social discrimination. **The best way to suppress adivasis and dalits is to stop research into the poverty and persecution they face**. No news is good news for the elites who run the country. It also will **justify the government reducing funding for adivasis and dalits in the budget year after year**. As it is every year the money allotted for them (that is not stolen) often remains unspent.

## Reservations

The latest decision of the central government accepting the UGC's new formula for implementing SC/ST and OBC reservations in teaching posts, by calculating on a department-wise basis instead of on total posts in the university/ college, makes it clear that the TISS withholding of scholarship funds for SC/ST and OBC students is **part of a strategy to significantly reduce the presence of these sections in higher education**.

**With SC faculty at a mere 7.22% and ST at only 2.2% of total faculty in India's 716 universities and 38,056 colleges**, it was expected that appointments to the currently 35% vacant faculty positions would play a major role in correcting this negative trend.

However, the new formula will significantly reduce representation of SC/ST and OBC faculty in all future recruitment drives. (Indian Express, 2 March 2018) AIFRTE strongly condemns these negative policy decisions which deny the SC/ST and OBC citizens their right to equality and social justice.

The government's present strategy violates the Constitutional commitment to affirmative action and social justice. AIFRTE is forced to reach the unavoidable conclusion that this is calculated policy and is **aimed at undoing even the limited attempts made earlier to prevent higher educational institutions from shutting their doors to those discriminated against on the basis of caste, creed, gender, tribal, and disability conditions**.

AIFRTE therefore demands,

- That financial aid be immediately secured and provided to all SC/ST and OBC students at TISS;

- That scholarships be provided (without introducing discriminatory eligibility conditions such as NET) and enhanced for all students who are unable to afford the fees;
- That fees be strictly regulated in all higher educational institutions by including students union and faculty association representatives in all appropriate bodies so that no arbitrary decisions are implemented;
- That the Central Government immediately rejects the UGC's 'new' formula. SC/ST and OBC reservation in faculty should continue to be calculated on the basis of the university/college taken as a whole.



In India there are castes. The castes are anti-national. In the first place, because they bring about separation in social life. They are anti-national also because they generate jealousy and antipathy between caste and caste. But we must overcome all these difficulties if we wish to become a nation in reality. For fraternity can be a fact only when there is a nation. Without fraternity, equality and liberty will be no deeper than coats of paint...What does fraternity mean? Fraternity means a sense of common brotherhood of all Indians, of Indians being one people. It is the principle which gives unity and solidarity to social life. It is a difficult thing to achieve

Dr Ambedkar

“You will have to remove the disparity, and this means you will have to remove all distinctions based on caste. So the caste system itself must be eradicated. Removing different types of disparities comes within either the socioeconomic, psychic or spiritual approaches. In this case the social disparity of casteism comes within the realm of PROUT.”

(Prout and NeoHumanism)

“In the post-Buddhist age – in the Puranic age – the caste system was very strong, and it is still going on today. We are the first to fight this system. The merits and demerits of human beings are the same, so where is the justification for the caste system? Those who imposed the caste system were wicked, crooked demons.”

(Move with Ever-Accelerating Speed)

*Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar*



# Baba's Warning for the Future



Sometime after Baba (affectionate name for Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar) came out of Jail, devotees began doing Tandava on the streets. The government started arresting Ananda Margis who were doing Tandava with skull and knife on the streets.

Baba had said that when people see this full Tandava their courage is awakened even in the most cowardly people. Hence performing Tandava in public is crucial for social awakening. This was begun by Lord Shiva who aroused the victims of Aryan imperialism to fight for their freedom.

A case was filed against Ananda Marga to ban it from doing Tandava. In that case, Ananda Marga applied for the status of a separate spiritual organisation not affiliated with any religion. Tragically the case was lost, to the lasting shame of the disciples.

At this time, Baba was going on Field Walk in Patna. He was being driven in the car of a senior margi of Patna with his son also present (who has told this story). The margi was driving Baba. Then the margi suddenly said to Him, "Baba now your disciples are with skulls on the

streets."

Baba became very grave and stopped talking. The margi was worried that he had disturbed Baba. All through the drive Baba remained in deep silence. When they reached the place of Field Walk Baba came out of the car.

However Baba did not look or talk to anyone at all as He usually did on Field Walk. Baba walked in a sombre mood in silence and everyone else was silent.

Then Baba went back inside the car. Baba then started talking. Baba said that in the future, the streets would be full of skulls of dead people and skulls would be thrown 'here and there' by people trying to walk.

Baba then said that the disciples should fight for Dharma to end the cry of suffering humanity.

Baba then warned that if the disciples failed to do so, then their skulls would also be thrown about on the streets.

*(The above story was told by a Patna margi who was present at that time)*

# Every Being Is a Potential Devotee

Shrii Shrii Ānandamūrti

Perhaps in the future, with the swift advancement of science, other unit beings living in close proximity to the human society may also acquire this sort of developed mental condition. Monkeys and dogs are certainly inferior to humans, but not very inferior. By learning from their human masters they will certainly acquire a God-loving mentality. Since they have the potentiality to realize God, we should never hate or mistreat them. We have no right to hate or mistreat anybody or anything. As you are a medium for His expression and reflection, so are all other creatures. Treat all creatures as your friends. You have no right to hate or mistreat any other creature.

*Viśṇuparisthitah Viśṇuh Viśṇurkhādati Viśṇave  
Katham Hasasi re Viśṇu Sarvaṁ Viśṇumayaṁ Jagat.*

Once a highly-realized Tāntrika was eating a dish of rice with his beloved dog sitting on his lap. The dog was very fond of listening to kiirtana and loved to dance whenever a kiirtana tune was played. Actually the dog was more developed than many human beings. While the Tāntrika and his beloved dog were sharing the food from the same plate, a jñāna mārḡii [follower of the cult of knowledge], who was a supporter of untouchability, happened to pass by. Seeing them eating together he exclaimed, “How disgusting. You’re eating with a dog!” The Tāntrika said, “I am Viśṇu [All-pervading Lord] and the dog is Viśṇu. So it is Viśṇu who is eating. And being Viśṇu yourself, why are you so scornful? The whole universe is full of Viśṇu, Viśṇu is everywhere. He is all-pervading”.

The sense of differentiation and distinction are of no value to devotees. For them, all become one, all discriminations disappear. Only human beings can have this type of mentality and that is why they are superior to all other beings. **Those birds and animals living in close proximity to human beings, will surely develop this God-loving mentality if they have not already done so. The universal love which has remained suppressed in the human mind is also bound to express itself one day. That day is not very far away.**

By observing people’s conduct one will easily notice those who are absorbed in divine love. Such people could never think of exploiting others. Some of you know how I have described the exploiters. I said they are adhārmika – unvirtuous and sinful people. If, by building big temples and large rest houses for pilgrims they think they are showing their love for God, they are false, vain, and hypocritical. By giving away ill-gotten money the exploiters will never be able to cover up their sins: one cannot acquire love for God so easily.

**Those who have attained Iishvara prema [love for the Lord], can never and will never exploit others. They will raise their voice against all sorts of tyranny, injustice and exploitation.** Those who do not possess that kind of honest courage to oppose all wrongs are nothing but fakes – they are never genuine.

The actions of those absorbed in prema will reflect the true spirit of selfless benevolence.

## ACTIVITIES

### National Convention 2018, Nagpur

#### Mission 2019: PBI -- The Only Political Alternative



Left, right or centre – in the last 70 years, India has seen it all: successive governments by single parties and by the alliances and coalitions of different political parties of varied colours and hues with conflicting ideologies -- each claiming to lead India to a golden future by using their respective concoctions of policies, plans and programmes. Community Development Programme(1952), Green Revolution (1966), Twenty Point Programme (1977), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (1989), Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojna (2000), Antyodaya Anna Yojna (2000), Bharat Nirman (2005), MNREGA (2005), Pradhanmantri Jan Dhan Yojna (2014), Digital India (2014), Make In India (2014), Skill India (2015) and Swarn India (2015) are just a few of those hundreds of highly-touted programmes which, we were told, would bring an end to all our afflictions or, at least, reduce them. But, alas, all of them, individually and collectively, have failed to address basic and all-pervasive problems of poverty, unemployment, economic depression, prise-rise, corruption, pollution etc.

The rich are becoming richer and the poor, poorer; the country is witnessing tumorous growth with a few metropolitan cities sucking in nourishment from all over the country, leaving the majority of population in villages and small towns high and dry. Despite there being a huge scope for developmental work in every part of the country and millions of people willing to work, our profit-driven capitalist economy has failed to create enough jobs. With rising corruption, mounting NPAs, absconding scamsters, thousands of Indian millionaires migrating abroad, about 1000 farmers committing suicides every month, 3000 children dying of malnutrition every day, and corrupt, arrogant and shameless politicians engaged in mutual mudslinging, blaming other countries, one or other caste, community or religion for all the problems, India today stands on the verge of a revolution. But the question is: who will lead it???

It was precisely this question that annual convention of Proutist Bloc India(PBI) held in Nagpur on 24-25 March this year tried to answer. With the theme ‘Mission 2019: PBI -- The Only Political Alternative’, the convention saw the participation by about 400 party delegates from Delhi, Haryana, UP, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Beginning with the garlanding of the photograph of Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar (the propounder of PROUT philosophy and founder of PBI) and a Prout song, the two-day long event was inaugurated by Dashrath Kanthale, a well-known Proutist social activist from Vidarbha. He welcomed the delegates from different states and said that all the problems of the world can be solved by the implementation of PROUT, but it is possible only when we have a Prout-friendly government from top to bottom. Expressing his hope that PBI will emerge as a strong platform for the moralists from every walk of life, suffering people would lodge them in the seat of political and non-political power.

The National Convenor of the party Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta said that the problems that are afflicting the country can only be solved by moralist leaders. He said that the country is moving rapidly towards a morally decadent



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politics, and therefore, PBI's sole objective is to give rise to moralist leadership in the country, and establish morality as a mandatory qualification for one to enter politics. He said PBI is the only political alternative before Indians today because only it can offer an alternative to greed-ridden socio-economic system that all the governments since 1947 have been nourishing.

PBI's General Secretary Kanhu Charan Behura talked about the objectives of the party and outlined its programmes. He said that today we see utter distortion of values in the individual and the system, but PBI is determined to rectify both with its elaborate and practical programmes. Talking about the expansion of the party in different states, he said people have started receiving the message of PBI and are willing to work for PROUT. He hoped the party will make substantial growth in the states-- it is already working and is planning to expand this year to the states like Rajasthan, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat and MP.

Universal Proutist Labour Federation (UPLF) Secretary General YB Singh said the problems of the farmers can be solved only when agriculture is given status of industry on Proutistic lines. He said Prout's cooperative model of industry is the only solution to the problems of workers in both organized and unorganized sectors of the economy. He argued in favour of Proutists working wholeheartedly to get into the power via electoral process. He called upon all the Proutists to strengthen PBI in their samajas by using local issues and sentiments.

In the first session of the programme, a Prout workshop was also held to make people aware of how PROUT can solve the problems of poverty, unemployment, price-rise, economic depression, corruption etc. This exercise helped the participants, as they later reported, get valuable insights into these issues, which would have been impossible otherwise.

Post lunch, a rally comprising 500 people was taken out from Rajasthani Mahila Mandal Bhavan, the venue of the programme, to the residence of Chief Minister. Holding the placards and shouting the slogans in support of separate Vidarbha state, Amiri Rekha, and one human society, the demonstrators marched peacefully through the main roads of the city. Later, the CM's office was given the memorandum of the following demands:

**1. Amiri Rekha (ceiling on wealth):** Physical wealth is limited. If a handful own the most of it, the majority of the population is deprived of even the basic necessities of life, viz. food, clothes, shelter, education and medication. Today, 10% of Indians own more than 80% wealth of the country, while 50% Indians hold just 3% of the country's wealth. What a glaring disparity! Hence, PBI demands ceiling on wealth i.e. nobody should be allowed to accumulate wealth beyond a certain limit. And the maximum must not exceed 10 times the minimum.

**2. Industry Status to Agriculture:** The farmers and the labourers, who make the most valuable contribution to our economy, have been worst-hit. The farmers having no control over the price of their produce have to either make distressed sale or abandon agriculture or commit suicide. PBI demands that agriculture should be accorded industry status as per Proutistic principles.

**3. Total Ban on Alcohol:** The consumption of liquor destroys all physical,





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intellectual and intuitional faculties and is detrimental to the all-round development of human beings. Alcohol destroys the glands, sub-glands, nerves and nerve cells in the human body. Besides, it completely destroys the family of the addict emotionally and financially. PBI, therefore, demands total ban on the manufacture, sale, purchase and consumption of alcohol throughout the country.

**4. Statehood to Vidarbha:** Since the beginning, Vidarbha has been continuously neglected. A very little portion of Maharashtra's budget is allocated to Vidarbha, which hardly suffices to fulfill the needs of this region. Despite holding 2/3 of the minerals and 3/4 of the forests, Vidarbha has had inadequate industrial development. Most of its coal and other mineral resources are sent to other parts of the state and the country, which has led to the shortage of power and underdevelopment of other industries in the region. PBI, therefore, believes that the development of Vidarbha is possible only when it is accorded the status of a full-fledged state.

On the second day, a powerpoint presentation on 'Amiirri Rekha' was given by national Public Relations Secretary Ravindra Singh. He said if the poverty line was rationally determined, about 70% population would fall below it. He added that only 1% people hold 60% wealth of the country while 10% hold more than 80%. Citing various facts and figures, he established how 'Amiirri Rekha' can solve the problems of poverty, unemployment, corruption, economic depression, price-rise, ecological imbalance, population explosion, pseudo-culture etc.

Swami Agnivesh, well-known social activist and a former minister, was present in the program as the chief guest. He was felicitated with a shirifal and a shawl. In his address, he appreciated the efforts made by PBI to rally the moral forces to bring about a revolutionary change in the politics of the country for the good of one and all. He hoped that PBI will soon become a dominant force in the politics of India because the party has a morally upright and spiritually inspired leadership, and flawless philosophy, which is sublime and pragmatic. He wished all the success to the party for its efforts.

Besides the above speakers, National Movement Secretary Kedarnath Sahoo, Parliamentary Board Chairman Gopalji Singh, National Organizing Secretary Raj Kishore Prasad, national Vice-Chairman Dr. S.D. Dhotre, Bihar state President Shiv Narayan, Delhi state General Secretary Baidynath Sah, Amitabh Verma, Dr. TP Singh, Ram Prasad Nirala, Madhukar Nistane, Nilu Singh and Anusuya Patra addressed the delegates.

In his Presidential address, Arjun Narayan Chaudhary said that in the last 70 years different parties and their coalitions have ruled the country but they have utterly failed to solve the problems of the common man, as they have no intention to serve the nation. He exhorted the party cadres to expose the immoral forces, snatch power from them and establish economic democracy in the country with moralist leadership at the helm.

Hoping that 2019 will see the rise of PBI as the only political alternative in India, he made the announcement of the formal closing of the convention around 11 pm amidst resounding slogans: Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar Amar Hain Amar Hain! PBI Zindabad Zindabad ! Jai Vidarbha-- Jai Jai Vidarbha!



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### PBI Organises Liquor Free India Movement



Kanpur : Proutist Bloc India organised a public meeting at Kanpur on 8th April for Liquor Free India in association with Rastriya sharab bandi sanyukta Morcha.

It was attended by PBI activists besides respectable members of civil society. Speaking on the occasion Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta, National Convener of PBI said that liquor manufacture should be banned since it is doing inculpable harm to society and nation.

Jyoti Baba exhorted audience to work for this cause honestly and wholeheartedly. Rakhi and Sulakshana Didi, crusaders for liquor free India spoke in very spirited voice to work for this mission. Sultan Singh, National Convener of RSSM - a prominent prohibition organisation said they would not stop till our goal is achieved. He also announced that on 5th June a massive rally will be held at Phool Bag in Kanpur.

### PBI Fields Candidates in Karnatak Assembly Election

Bengaluru : Proutist Bloc, India has fielded two candidates in the ongoing assembly elections in Karnatak State of India:

Vinod Godake is contesting from Dharwad and Surekha from Shimoga constituency. Vinod is a social worker and has been working tirelessly to popularise PBI's ideals, its aims and objectives, in his constituency.

Surekha is a student of Law and has also been an aggressive campaigner in anti corruption movements in her constituency for past several years. Having been attracted by the Proutist and Neo Humanistic ideals, she has lately joined PBI and has since been its active cadre. Both these candidates have good number of sympathisers and supporters to campaign for them.

Karnataka has seen many triumphs and defeats in history. Since independence there have been a number of moral activists who have worked to enlighten the public and remove social discrimination and economic injustice. Sadly they have all failed. In the last decade we see new depths of moral degradation in all the major parties as well as the spread of the North Indian culture of social hatred. In view of this unprecedented social crisis Proutists are determined to rescue the state socially by uniting the people with Neo Humanism and with a common struggle against cultural and economic imperialism and exploitation.





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### PBI Sitamarhi Discussion of Burning Issues

On 22nd April PBI (Sitamarhi) held a meeting in the premises of Lakshmi Kishori School, Sitamarhi, Bihar. The issues of local and national interest were discussed in the presence of National Organizing Secretary Rajkishore Prasad.

Speaking about the local problems, district organising secretary Nand Kishore Gupta said that no work is being done anywhere to implement the government's Har Ghar Nal (Drinking water to every home) and Har Gali Pakki Nala-sadak (metalled road and sewer) schemes.

Media secretary K.K Jha said that the mid-day meal scheme is good, but it is disturbing the studies and teaching in the schools, as everyday more than 2-3 hours are spent on cooking and serving food, which involves all the students and teachers.

Rajkishore Prasad condemned the incidents of rape in Kathua and Unnao and demanded speedy and fair trial of the accused. He said that we should all be ashamed that we have made the country unsafe for girls and women. All parties – right, left and centre and all religions have an abusive culture towards women.

He further said that the legislature, executive, judiciary and media has become totally corrupt as everyone is for sale in a capitalist democracy. Hence the system has lost the trust of common man. In such a gloomy situation, PBI needs to offer a ray of hope to everybody by working honestly, selflessly and tirelessly to bring about a new system. The aim of PBI is to fight everywhere against corruption, discrimination and exploitation and bring about a polarisation in society between moralists and immoralists and then to mobilise the moralists for mass upheaval.



### PBI Joins Movement for Separate Vidarbha State

Nagpur: PBI has extended active support to the campaign for statehood to Vidarbha region of present Maharashtra state of India.

The National Convener of PBI, Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta, was invited by the organisers of the committee for Independent Vidarbha State to attend its two days national Convention which was held on 16 & 17 April.

Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta addressed the gathering and expressed his anguish and unhappiness over the hypocrisy of past leadership of this movement. He frankly stated the facts that due to the betrayal by the past leaders this movement has been repeatedly derailed after reaching the peak in its history of past decade. He expressed the hope that present leadership will learn lessons from the past, will rectify the mistakes of the past and take the movement to victory.

He further said that there are numerous valid reasons for granting statehood to Vidarbha. He will remain actively involved with the movement till the attainment of its avowed goal, Acharya said. He offered his perennial good wishes for the success of the movement and gave clarion call to intensify it with all grit and determination. Above all, he emphasized that mere political independence in the form of a separate state cannot solve any serious problems if economically Vidarbha is still under the control of Maratha and other capitalists. Hence the movement must expand to become a grassroots struggle for Arthik Azadi.



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### PBI Joins Anti Rape Movement



Delhi: Sarva Dharma Sansad had organised a rally against rising incidents of rape in the country at Jantar Mantar on 15th April.

Among the notables present was that of Swami Agnivesh ji besides Acharya Premendrananda Avadhuta and Acharya Liladhiishananda Avadhuta from Ananda Marga and saints from other faiths.

All of them expressed grave concern on the rising incidents of rapes. Even small girls of tender age of 4-5 years are not being spared. They specifically mentioned the incidents of Kathua and Unnao. They urged the government to take very strict measures to curb such incidents. PBI Delhi state President Jitendra Kumar had also joined the rally and expressed his Party's solidarity with them.

### AMURT All-round Service to Rohingya Refugees



The Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh is the largest refugee centre in the world. Since last year AMURT volunteers have been provided basic services to the Rohingya refugees from ethnic cleansing in Myanmar.

In February and March, AMURT and its local partners in Bangladesh under the auspices of the Bangladesh ministry of health, has provided vaccinations against Diphtheria to more than 142,800 Rohingya refugee children and 30,938 children from the nearby Bangladesh host community. In total 172,738 children have been reached with life-saving vaccines.

The Diphtheria vaccination campaign consists of three rounds of vaccinations with appropriate cooling down periods in between. Together with early detection and effective treatment, the vaccinations have successfully arrested the Diphtheria outbreak sweeping the Rohingya camps since December 2017. As the Rohingya did not have adequate access to public health services in Myanmar and are largely without immunization, they have also been given vaccines against the most common types of diseases threatening the lives of children in refugee camps such as Measles, Rubella, Tetanus, Whooping Cough among others.

The local health officials thanked AMURT and other organizations active in the Rohingya vaccination drive as it had increased their reach tenfold and successfully protected the newly arrived Rohingya and local children from the most prevalent and dangerous diseases. Ac. Marmadevananda Avt. and Ac. Unmantrananda Avt. were the coordinators of the AMURT team. The AMURT team is committed not just to the care of the Rohingyas but to that of the local Bangladesh population as well.

In order to maintain a child rights sensitive vaccination campaign, AMURT conducted a series of seminars for 312 volunteers and vaccinators from various organizations on child rights and its role in health-related interventions.

AMURT activities in the coming months include the opening of Child Protection Hubs in newly established safe extension camps for new refugee arrivals and other Rohingya families transferred from areas at risk of floods and landslides. These Protection hubs will provide Child-Friendly Spaces, Psycho-Social support, mental health services and Protection related case-management and referrals to other organizations.

An Appreciation letter from the Ministry of Health in Bangladesh is seen above.



Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar



## THE BURNING HEART OF HUMANITY

ÁLOR SÁYARE DHEU JÁGÁYECHO  
ALAKÁR SUDHÁ JHARÁYECHO,  
TUMI, ALAKÁR SUDHÁ JHARÁYECHO,  
KUASHÁR KÁLO MÚCHYÁ PHELYÁ,  
ARUÑER ÁLO ÁNIYÁCHO, TUMI,  
ARUÑER ÁLO ÁNIYÁCHO,  
TUMI, ALAKÁR SUDHÁ JHARÁYECHO,

TRITÁP DAGDHA MÁNAVA HRDAYE  
ASIIMER TRÍSHÁ DIYECHO BHARIYE  
MÚK ACETAN MÁNAVA MÁNASE,  
MUKTIR VÁNII SHONÁYECHO,  
TUMI, MUKTIR VÁNII SHONÁYECHO,  
TUMI, ALAKÁR SUDHÁ JHARÁYECHO,

MÁNUŠE MÁNUŠE BHEDA BHÁVA BHÚLE  
SABÁI JÁHÁTE MILE MISHE CALE  
TÁI MANIÍSÁR UDBODHAN KÁLE  
NÚTANERA CHAVI ÁNKIYÁCHO, TUMI,  
NÚTANERA CHAVI ÁNKIYÁCHO,  
TUMI, ALAKÁR SUDHÁ JHARÁYECHO

You've awakened waves in the ocean of light  
You cascaded unworldly nectar.  
The dark fog You wiped away,  
You've thrown away.  
You have brought the light of dawn.

The heart of humanity, burnt and roasted  
By flames of physical, psychic and spiritual pain,  
You filled, giving the thirst for the Infinite.  
The mute, unconscious human mind  
You made listen to the message (vánii) of liberation.

So that all feelings of difference between  
Human and human are forgotten,  
At the time of enlightening the intellect  
You painted a picture of the New.