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PROUT

A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis



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A New Course for HUMANITY



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PROUT

A Vibrant Magazine that Informs & Inspires

PROUT

PROGRESSIVE UTILISATION THEORY

Propounded by - Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

PROUT - Cry of the Suffering Humanity

What is PROUT :

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

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

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

Main principles of PROUT and Neo-Humanism



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



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



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



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



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



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

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Fundamental Principles of PROUT

In this world, those people who do not start any activity for fear of opposition, are the lowest category of human beings. Those who start an activity but, when confronted with mighty obstacles, give it up out of fear, are the middle category. And those who start the activity and, when faced with obstacles at every step, defy and demolish them and move steadily towards their goal, are the highest category. They alone can achieve something substantial in this world.

– Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

1

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

2

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

3

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

4

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

5

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

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FIGHT THE NEXUS OF IMMORALISTS

For the last two months there has been extensive media coverage especially on television channels as well as on social media platforms about the unnatural death of popular and talented actor Sushant Singh Rajput. Almost daily there have been panel discussions on TV and fresh news and scoops have gone viral on social media. Sushant was found dead in his Mumbai apartment on June 14, 2020. The Mumbai Police touted to be India's best almost immediately declared that it was a case of suicide as the actor was depressed and was taking medicines for the same and they did not investigate any other angle.

Now over two months later with many other clues and evidence having been unearthed by the media it points towards possible murder and not suicide; Mumbai Police is yet to file a First Information Report (FIR). Nobody knows why? It is being alleged that some high profile people including politicians and members of the acting fraternity of Mumbai (Bollywood) are being protected by the Mumbai police. Meanwhile the parents of the deceased actor complained about their lack of faith in Mumbai police for a fair probe and the Patna police have lodged the FIR and have requested the Central Govt. for a CBI probe and the CBI promptly took over the case. There has been a media campaign for a CBI probe, which has met with overwhelming public support from people in India and also Indians living overseas. However it cannot be denied that the outcry to bring guilty to book should've been for a "Fair Probe" and not specifically "CBI probe".

No doubt Mumbai police has not been fair in its probe, but how much better can the CBI do with its previous track record remains to be seen. The matter which took on political overtones reached the doors of the Supreme Court. Mumbai police prayed that such a move is against the federal structure of the Constitution. After hearing all parties a single judge bench gave its verdict on August 19, that the case should be probed by CBI and the Mumbai Police must cooperate with the CBI. And it would be a court monitored investigation.

It's not as though the CBI is an epitome of fair and just investigations. It is an arm of the Central Govt. beholden to the politicians in power and its track record in fairness cannot be said to be very good. Two instances e.g. the murder charge against Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, Prout's founder in 1971 and the LN Mishra murder case, which was being investigated by the Bihar police and the culprits were caught and booked but the CBI unilaterally who took over the case during the emergency and nullified the findings and framed monks of Ananda Marga in a fabricated case related to the same incident. The former got an honorable acquittal by the Patna High Court and in the latter, despite evidences to the contrary after over 40 years of trial on December 8, 2014, a CBI court in Delhi declared innocents guilty. Presently the case is under appeal in the Delhi High Court. There could be others.

Seven years back the Supreme Court called CBI a "caged parrot" and "its master's voice" and said it should be made totally autonomous outside of any political influence. But the political class will never give independence to the CBI. This should be the first step towards such reform in the interests of justice and fair play.

All these point to the obvious nexus between immoralists. When moralists are pitted against immoralists the words of Shrii Sarkar should be remembered, "In society, on one hand we see a crowd of antisocial elements, and on the other hand, a sense of frustration among the moralists. With more wealth and strength, the antisocial elements are in the advantageous position; the moralists appear to be the culprits. This state of affairs is neither desirable nor proper and should not be allowed to continue any longer. Your duty will be to unite the moralists. The moralists were so long scattered, and hence they could not fight. The united strength of five moralists is much more than the united strength of a hundred immoralists because there is an unholy alliance between the latter. Gather strength by intuitional practices and unite yourselves against the immoralists".

What is needed is the leadership of Sadvipras who strictly adhere to the principles of morality, and provide sacrificing service (Tapah) and ready to wage war against immoralists. While mainstream media controlled by money power i.e. the Capitalists, may presently be out of reach; under the leadership of Sadvipras all other modern day efforts including the power of the social media should be channelized towards these efforts. ●



Capitalism 19 Virus

China and India are heading towards an elephantine showdown. Both powers may aspire to be the sovereign power of Asia, if not of the world. The ailing US somehow sees an opportunity in actively supporting India against China.

The US is the embodiment of global capitalism. Despite being in shambles economically, socially, and politically, the US dollar still props up the world financial system purely on its symbolic strength. China owns more financial investments than it takes to torpedo the US dollar but appears unsure as to which date would be the best to do it.

The fall of communism in Europe 30 years ago let suffocating western powers avail themselves of fresh "market oxygen". Only a year later, India opened her economy. Otherwise, global capitalism was in a contracted state already at the time. Our global village of concurrent motives and ambitions is a terminally diseased organism. Today there is no available market oxygen for capitalism's fatally compressed lungs, no more expansionist opportunities for insatiable capital greed. The system is on respirator gasping desperately for war.

China and India would be wise to save their problems jointly. China faces long-term food shortages. Her food-producing capacity fails to meet the requirements of her population. India, if properly managed, has the capacity to feed both herself and whatever China and others would require from her. Both India and China are technically and academically eminent. And India is deeply spiritually rooted. If "Chindia" would aspire to be the France-Germany of a greater Asian union (Germany and France constitute the original and ideological foundation of the EU) profound peace and great prosperity would bless that part of the world.

The world has many times witnessed the miracle of coming together of previous enemies. Sadly, the necessary

rise in popular awareness and new ideological growth often took place only after heavy clashes.

May the amount of bloodshed needed for the present combatants to see the light be minimal.

- Prabhakar, Norway

Microvita and Corona Virus Pandemic

The two parts of the article by Dr. Hans (Manohar) from Berlin who has done and is doing extensive research on the subject, was highly informative discussing the technical aspects of Microvita and application in medical science today. For readers a brief explanation of this mysterious emanation of the cosmic factor may be necessary. There entities come within the realm of both physicality and psychic expressions and are smaller or subtler than atoms, electrons or protons, and in the psychic realm may be subtler than ectoplasm.

This revolutionary theory propounded by Prout's founder is explained this way: "Microvita is the minutest entity. The collection of microvita forms a carbon atom. As a microvita is the minutest entity, it cannot have a structure like that of an atom or a solar system. As a microvita is a singular entity, it has no structure. By nature it is more energy than matter, so it travels and moves through inferences, whereas other entities cannot move through inferences. There are two types of microvita positive and negative. Positive microvita is more ectoplasmic than matter. Negative microvita is more matter than mind. Positive microvita, being more of ectoplasmic nature, starts functioning or working first in the mental level then filters down towards physical matter. Negative microvita starts functioning in matter and moves towards the mind, towards ectoplasmic stuff and endoplasmic coverage. In cosmic space, both positive and negative microvita move through the inferences of the cosmic mind – the internal inferences of the cosmic mind – and also with the help of the cruder portion of ectoplasms. As you know, in the ectoplasmic structure there is the effect of both spirit and physicality. The cruder portion is closely associated with the physical structure and the subtler portion with spirituality".

This requires further and deeper scientific research. When this mystery is solved, perhaps in the not too distant future the entire basis of modern science of today will undergo a fundamental change.

- Arun Prakash, New Delhi

Editorial July Issue

We received a letter from Rasadeva of anandamarganewsbulletin1@yogasamsthnam.net

Extracts are below for information of readers.

"The Editorial carried a statement that China had God centred ideology like India and the two countries lived in peace over millennia. Neither China nor India had a God-centered philosophy, rather they followed religious outlooks that were dogma-centred. They essentially followed dogmatic rituals such as idol worship etc in order to ask something from God. They did not want God Himself, so we cannot say they were God-centred. Rather, those worshipers wanted wealth, social status, prestige, and other worldly boons. And their primary method of attaining those earthly treasures was to ask God to bestow such worldly gifts upon them. So it is obvious they did not want to attain God, so no one can lay claim that they were God-centred. Such is the age-old approach of those religious followers. They did not want to attain God, but rather used dogmatic rituals to place selfish requests before God. Verily, for the past millennia both China and India adhered to dogma-centred ideologies, not God-centred".

PROUT founded by Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar in 1964, is essentially a journal of Proutistic views and Neo-humanistic analysis. While healthy debate and feedback is encouraged words should not be quoted out of context, rather the spirit behind them should be considered. As the revered founder stated way back on December 31, 1982: "Perfect spirituality is our goal, and Neo-humanism is our approach. The collection of all natural human expressions, the collection of all natural expressions of all flora and fauna, is Neohumanism". One therefore cannot say that even before the advent of the matter centred ideology of Communism, in China where Buddhism was widespread, spirituality was totally absent. Same goes for India. Eds

Another letter has been received from the same web link from Rachel Spiers drawing attention to the picture on page 7 August issue to say "This is not the way to portray a woman, especially a sadhaka".

We convey sincere apologies for inadvertently hurting any sentiments, which was never intended.

BE AN EARTH PILGRIM



To be an Earth Pilgrim is to revere Nature as our sacred home, and see all our life as a sacred journey to become at one with ourselves, with others and with Nature. The starting point for being an Earth Pilgrim is humility in the face of Nature's immense generosity and unconditional love. Take the apple tree. We eat the fruit that has been freely given -- and finding a bitter pip, we spit it out. Here the pip immediately starts to cooperate with Nature. The soil provides hospitality for the seed, which is nourished by the rain and the sunshine. Soon the pip has literally grounded itself and realised itself as another tree bearing innumerable apples and countless pips. When people ask about reincarnation, point to the apple tree. And when offering its fruit, the apple tree does not discriminate between human and animal, educated and uneducated, between black or white, man and woman, young and old. All are equal, and all receive. ●

Sometimes people are very sincere in the vocal field but there's not an iota of sincerity in the inner world, in the internal world.



EDUCATION and Neo-humanism

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

You know, it is the inherent wont of all living beings to expand in the physical arena, and for this purpose, rather because of this element – this wont is nothing but a sort of element – they exploit others, they forget the interest of other living beings. Just now I said that it is the inherent wont of all living beings, both human beings and animals, to expand in the physical arena. In the case of human beings there is another wont, another inborn instinct, and that is simply to expand in the psychic arena also. So unlike other animals, human beings have got one scope, or got the scope, to divert their physical longings into spiritual aspirations. Other animals have not got this. But because of this psychic wont, they exploit others in the psychic level as well as the

physical level, and this exploitation in the psychic level is more dangerous than in the physical one.

So that there may not be any intellectual extravaganza or any physical subjugation, human beings require proper training both physically and mentally. And this is what is called “education” – properly training the physical existence and also the psychic world. Because of the want of such a training in proper time, there remains no coordination, no adjustment between inner being and outer being. Sometimes people are very sincere in the vocal field but there remains not an iota of sincerity in the inner world, in the internal world. And this is what happens in the modern world. The existence of both individual and collective

existence has become one-sided, that is, it has lost its balance. For this, what we require most is a proper system of education.

Just to show their sincerity of purpose, just to show that they are developed human beings, sometimes people speak of disarmament. They say there should be a check, a control over the manufacturing of weapons, of deadly weapons. They say like this vocally. They express this idea vocally, but internally they remain ready for worse weapons or more deadly weapons, just to keep others under their servitude in the physical sphere. It is nothing but a very bad type of brutality. Once upon a time a certain person, a leader, said, “Keep the prospects of peace but keep your powder dry.” That is what happens

today. We may say this physical longing, rather this physical want, should be diverted towards psychic longings. But if it is diverted towards psychic longings by proper mundane education – that will not suffice. In that case there remains the fear of psychic subjugation. So the remedy lies elsewhere.

Yes, human beings should be goaded by human feelings – human sentiments, human ideas. No doubt it is good if human feelings serve as a moral check in this competition of weapons, but it is not the last word; human feelings cannot check the internal fighting, the type of infighting prevalent amongst human beings. For this purpose we should have a two-fold approach. For the purpose of training this turbulent mind, what is to be done? One is to get proper education, one is to be imparted with proper education – not general education – in the gospel of, in the idea of Neohumanism. This will help human beings in training the mind. And at the same time spiritual practice should go on for proper psychic remoulding. This is what we require most. There is no alternative.

You know, all expressions in this universe are divided into three strata – physical, psychic and spiritual – and not a single stratum among them is unimportant or negligible. For the integrated development of this world, we want all three of these strata to be properly developed, and their speed to be accelerated. Not a single stratum is



unimportant – neither the physical stratum, nor the psychic stratum, nor the spiritual stratum.

For physical development you are to work, you are to create certain physical factors guided by psychic faculties. Regarding development in the psychic world – since the psychic stratum is the controlling faculty of the physical world, automatically there will be certain processes which develop the physical world also. And the spiritual world is the apex form of the psychic world. So for psychic development there must be spiritual development, there must be spiritual progress. For the integrated development of the world, not only the human world or the animal world or the plant world, but for the development of the entire animate

and inanimate universe, there must be progress in these three arenas.

The psychic world, partly directly and partly indirectly, controls the physical world, and the spiritual world, partly directly and partly indirectly, controls the psychic world. As the psychic world is the apex form of the physical world (mind is the subtilized form of matter), we cannot afford to neglect or ignore the development of the psychic world. And as the spiritual world is similarly the apex form of the psychic world, for psychic development, for development in different spheres of intellectuality, we cannot neglect the spiritual world.

This has been our failing: that we neglected the spiritual faculties of human life, we neglected the cardinal spiritual points of life. If we are interested today in the welfare of this beautiful universe, we should try more and more to accelerate the speed of spiritual progress. If the acceleration of spiritual progress becomes tremendous, then not only in the human world, but also in the physical, psychic and spiritual spheres of the entire world – and not only of the entire animate world, but of both the animate and inanimate worlds – there will be tremendous progress. And this is what we want. Now we are anxiously waiting for that crimson dawn on the eastern horizon. ●



A New Course for HUMANITY

Ravi Logan

Most people will not change unless there is something about their current condition that is intolerable. Humans are adaptable, and they adapt to discomfort rather than identify the core of the problem at its root. So the coronavirus pandemic will have to affect those who lead lives of privilege, that is, those who have not been suffering economic and social hardships. They must become discontent enough to commit themselves and the society around them to dynamic and necessary change. The planet has been going to hell in a hand basket, but nothing of any great significance was being done to change the course of immanent destruction. There are the scientists who are accurately predicting what will occur without a

change of course, but they have been largely ignored.

Now, with the pandemic, the scientists have again been ignored and the cost in human lives and human suffering is enormous. Yet people's first response is, "How do I save myself and my family? How do I save my people?" There is little or no concern for the suffering throughout the world; the suffering masses are still forgotten. So the pandemic causes great stress on the society. The privileged are stressed, the underprivileged are stressed, the minorities are stressed, and the police are stressed. The leadership however is not responding so well to the needs of those who are governed. And why is that? It is because the governing systems have been so corrupted around the issue of

making money for the most privileged that the needs of the body politic as a whole continue to be ignored.

Why is it that people must go back to work? It is not for their own welfare. There is enough food, clothing, and shelter to go around, at least in the wealthy regions. In America, the people are being pushed to go back to work and send their children back into the schools to create a false "normalcy" for the benefit of the most wealthy so that they can continue to make money off the backs of the suffering and, now, off the deaths of many. So, the stress must be applied until people are ready to rise up — not just to protest in the streets but also to participate in the creation of better governance. This type of significant





societal change will not occur from a population that is satisfied with the way government operates now or they believe government is operating now.

Those who are greedy for power and money would exterminate the planet in short order to attempt to satisfy their incessant greed. And do they ever acquire enough to be satisfied? Apparently not. Greed is a disease. Greed is like cancer that eats the host if not properly treated in time, and greed is the disease now eating at its host the earth and is not in any way a controlled greed. Right now, it is the greediest of the world's leaders that are standing out, but it is not only their fault. It is the complacent population that permits this to occur.

The earth and the Loving Entity that looks after the earth out of love for the planet and its peoples has tolerated the ongoing wars and destructions that have been a part of the evolution of the planet and its peoples. But this loving presence will not tolerate the obliteration of the planet's ability to sustain life. It will not tolerate the loss of the planet as a place for the polishing of highly evolved souls.

So action must be taken. Relatively small environmental catastrophes have been there, but they are ignored. Starvation and

displacement of populations is there, but it is being ignored. So more drastic action has been required in order to change the course, and so suffering must be increased on a planetary basis to awaken the humans to the disastrous course they are on.

The pandemic is the warning sign that the planet is sinking, and all action must be taken to save the ship. But first the power must be wrested from those that are steering the planet on its disastrous course. So, on one hand suffering must be there to alert all that they are in trouble, that the ship is filling with water and heading to the tipping point. When the passengers are convinced that the ship will tip over and sink, then they will have the motivation to clear out the captain's deck and steer on a safer and sustainable course. So a mutiny is called for, but the mutiny will not occur without great discomfort among the crew.

Planning for a New Society

For those of us who understand the situation, it is time to plan for improved methods of governance so that after the mutiny the ship — the planet earth — will now be piloted on a safe, secure, and positive course. The planet is abundant with resources and can sustain the life on the planet. There is plenty for all. But

the disease of greed will go on unabated until enough misery is felt to address the root causes of the suffering. Few people but the scientists are convinced that the ship is actually in danger of sinking and this must change.

So of course, we are suffering and are encountering depression and even despair. But our work is not to overthrow those now in the ship's pilothouse. Because we understand that deep change is inevitable, our task is to plan for the future, to lay out the new course for humanity. When the current leaders are displaced, young fresh talent that wants proper governance and a proper economic system for all humanity will replace the old. But they will need a plan. There must be a course laid out for them to follow, and those of us of progressive minds, those forward-thinking individuals, should begin to lay out that course now.

So the concepts in PROUT must not only be studied, but actual demonstration projects in applying those principles must now be engaged in. It is one thing to learn about PROUT, but the next step of practical application must be there also. So the coming focus on the practical application of PROUT is the most proper focus at this time. There is much work to be done, and



those who be available to teach others must be trained. It is similar to the operation of the Red Cross. Those who will respond to the increasing natural disasters must be properly trained before the disaster strikes, and they must be well enough trained to guide the others who come to assist.

PROUT may wish to follow this example also. We do not need to know the various intricacies of the philosophy. Our trainees must learn to guide others to implement PROUT based economies and governance each time there has been an upheaval and a new opportunity

shows up. Look at what occurred in Cuba. The Cuban revolution was successful, and the power was seized from a corrupt and elitist government. But then there was no workable plan of what to do after the government was toppled. So, the already failed example of communism was applied and with unfortunate results. In the future, in these planning vacuums, the principles of PROUT must be there, and it will take those who have training and experience in applying those theories and principles who are there to assist.

Numerous governments are

becoming ready to topple and implode, just as occurred with the Soviet Union. But, there again, no one was prepared; it came so fast that no one had a plan and the greedy took over.

Many opportunities for application of PROUT are coming to the fore, and it is the duty and responsibility of those who have access to the knowledge to move forward with application of training of others. PROUT must be ready for its time has come. Things will move very fast now. We must not be caught unawares. Look how fast collapse came to the Soviet Union. The fuse is burning, and capitalism will explode and disappear like a firecracker. Will we be ready?

The time for petty divisions is over. The karma has been burnt and the lessons are there to be learned. In unity there is strength, and in divisiveness there is only misery. Those who espouse neohumanism must practice what it is they teach, or no one will listen to them. They must have the moral grounding in their own lives before they tell others to be neohumanists.

The time for divisiveness among moralists is over. Errors have been made, sentiments have been hurt, but now all of that must become history. Right up until yesterday is all history. Now we must stand firmly in the present moment and only look forward. Now we must seize the moment and go only forward. ●



Vision^{of} a 21st Century University

Ac. Dhanjoo Ghista

Cosmic Thinking & Knowledge, Smart Governance & Prout, Global Citizenship & Harmony

Global Citizenship constitutes the concept that our identity transcends geographic and political borders



Throughout human history and even until now, states and communities have been beset with turmoil and persecutions, poverty and sufferings because of (i) totalitarian regimes and discriminations, (ii) pseudo democracies by political parties operating as profiteering corporations. There is hence a big need today to alter this primitive community structure, thinking and living, by developing progressive societies involving (i) Neohumanism and Universalism, (ii) Cosmic Thinking and Knowledge, (iii) Smart Governance and Prout, (iv) Global

Citizenship and Global Harmony. This can help to bring about a new era of a more evolved civilization, in which we all can work together to make happy life and living for all the residents of this world.

I. Neohumanism and Universalism

A progressive human society is to comprise of people moving together and helping one another to develop a cosmic vision. Neohumanism facilitates and promotes this higher dimension living, by inspiring people to rise above narrow geo sentiments and socio sentiments that

have governed human thinking and living throughout history, resulting in immense conflicts and suffering. Neohumanism also extends humanism to caring for creatures, wildlife and plants, and recognizing their living need and ecological value. In this way, Neohumanism elevates humanism to universalism, enables liberation from complexes, and promotes a higher order of human living. Verily the time has come for us to think and act in a more evolved way, by rising above narrow sentimentality and embracing universalism, to build a new civilization on this planet.

II. Global Citizenship and Global Education:

Global Citizenship constitutes the concept that our identity transcends geographic and political borders, that the planetary human community is interdependent and whole, and that humankind is essentially one. In this way, the global citizenship and neohumanism concepts are interlinked, and global citizenship constitutes the political enactment of the neohumanism philosophy. Global education will involve teaching of solutions to problems of countries and especially of Developing countries, such as of urban slums and garbage management, rural infrastructure development, organic farming and herbal medicines, energy demand from sustainable energy production to isolated power grids, holistic healthcare from community care to tertiary care. Together, Global Citizenship and Global Education can help to usher a new era of global understanding and harmony and 'a world without borders.'

III. Progressive society and Sustainable Development:

For a society to be considered progressive, it must be able to provide to its people a *reasonable quality-of-life* and a *reasonable degree of happiness factors*. A society that is able to maintain such a progressive state can be labeled as being civilized. When this civilized societal state and development can be maintained in a community, we can term this state to be "sustainable development". The role of a university is paramount in bringing about this sustainable development, by infusing into the community's society humanistic ideals to maintain its progressive state, as well as scientific and technological advancements for industrial incubation.

Sustainable development implies sustainability in all the above quality-of-life and happiness factors of human living. The terms progressive society and sustainable



community are indeed complementary. A holistic concept of sustainability includes cultural, environmental, social and economic sustainability. Also, a progressive society needs to provide scope to its people to progress physically, intellectually and spiritually. Hence, a neo-concept of a sustainable community is that wherein this progressive civilized state (in all the three realms of living) can be sustained, with the help of the university.

IV. Spirit of human society, for a more evolved civilization:

In the long evolutionary journey of a

living being, there dawns the auspicious moment when the thought arises that if I am intelligent, what then is the source of my intelligence? The incessant urge to fathom this Consciousness is what characterizes human progress. And what is the process of progress? It is to ideate on that Entity who is the embodiment of cosmic knowledge, and can lead us to our cosmic desideratum. A progressive society is then verily the composite of those beings who are engaged in the noble task of creating a conducive environment for human progress. This is what constitutes human progress, on how one is to proceed in this direction, and imbibe the

spirit of society. Now if Consciousness be the origin of the expressed universe, and the origin as well as the desideratum of all minds, then surely all human beings and indeed all living beings constitute one singular entity with a common goal, and hence their welfare has to be interlinked. So then narrow and patriotic sentiments favoring one's region and nation, social group and religion, and promoting their interests at the expense of others are contrary to the spirit of one indivisible human society. History bears testimony to the wanton destruction and loss of human lives resulting from these narrow geo- and socio- sentiments.

When litterateurs and philologists, socio-economic and political scientists, cosmologists and physical scientists, life and agricultural scientists eventually discover and comprehend the works of Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, then will unfold for humanity the objective and spiritual knowledge to make their lives so comfortable and harmonious. Their explorations of cosmology and parapsychology will eventually bring them to the threshold of the cosmic world. And when at last they succeed, by means of the knowledge legacy of Baba, to

even unlock the gates of this last frontier, they will then be able to implement the true spirit of society as propounded by Him, wherein human beings will assist one another to overcome all the obstacles to progressive and dignified living (such as economic distress, ill health, cultural suppression, educational barriers and spiritual stifling), and march in unison to the exalted state of supreme beatitude.

V. Genuine Democratic System and Prout:

In order to promote all-round prosperity, we need to have Political Governance and Economic System to promote progressive communities and high quality of life for the people. A progressive community adequately addresses the needs of all the sectors of the community, such as education and innovation, municipal infrastructure, healthcare delivery, fair judiciary, safe living conditions, public transportation, finance and banking, shops and businesses, to promote all-round prosperity and quality-of-life. For this purpose, we need to have progressive political and economic systems, based on Prout. Today, we are facing intensive economic and political crisis. The

reason is that we have never had genuine democracy, and instead governance by political parties (supported by capitalist corporations) who have their own agendas which have little to do with public welfare. In corporate capitalist economy, the financial elite and the elite corporations constitute a separate class who control the government and their policies, for their own profiteering. There is hence now a crisis of confidence in the political system and its financial system. So now this has created a massive political and social crisis, which is truly a systemic crisis.

For developing a genuine democratic system, of an enlightened socio-economic political-governance environment, we need to have (i) Economic Democratic system (EDS) governance without political parties, whereby the most qualified representatives of all the functional sectors of the community get elected to the local legislature, and (ii) Cooperative Economic system (CES) of cooperatively managed institutions and enterprises, wherein only the company employees are involved in company decisions and profit sharing. Together, this combination of Economic Democratic system (EDS) and Cooperative Economic system (CES) would not need political parties, would eliminate wealth inequality, and would represent People's Participatory Democratic system (PPDS). In the People's Participatory Democratic system (PPDS), there is a direct link of the government with the grass-roots people through the various sectors of the community, such as the education sector, healthcare sector, legal sector, agricultural sector, industrial sector, finance and banking sector, transportation sector, etc. Each sector can be represented by an association, such as the association of school teachers, association of doctors, association of lawyers, association of farmers, association of businesspeople, association of bankers, etc. Each





sector is concerned with promoting its optimal function, such that the sector serves the people in the best possible way, and the interests of people working in the sector are also served. Hence, if each sector's association elects its most competent representative to the state legislative assembly or government, then this representative would be in the best position to enable the sector to best serve the people as well as look after the interests of the people working in the sector. This type of political system would be most fair, economical, and benefitting for the common people. Thus, this PPDS can truly be termed as the people's democratic political system.

The economic side of this PPDS consists of what can be termed as the employee stock ownership plan (ESOP), which constitutes an employee-owner scheme in which companies provide stock ownership to their employees, and all the company's profits are shared by the employees. This scheme applies to all types of companies, from grocery stores to pharmacies and hospitals. This ESOP scheme can result in a more even distribution of the wealth of the country among the people of the country. This PPDS would result in

the optimal utilization of the community's human and economic resources, and promote enthusiastic enterprise and innovation on the part of the people, because of their reaping the benefits of their enterprises.

VI. Global involvement of Faculty and Students, for 21st Century Education :

In today's rapidly changing world, a 21st century education is all about giving students the skills they need to succeed in this new era world, and helping them grow the confidence to practice these skills. We want to enhance their creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills. In this way, Education will help to empowering students with transferable skills that will hold up to our rapidly changing world. We are moving into the era of global education. Today, students would like to study in other countries and mix with students from other countries and cultures. Faculty members would like to collaborate with peers across the globe, to develop new knowledge and inventions. Learning to be global citizens is important in today's world where technology is erasing borders, for the new generation of global community

leaders to promote a more integrated human society. In this 21st century there is a big awareness and scope for universities to become global educational institutions, by forming partnerships with universities in other countries, and together address the sustainable community development needs in countries, to thereby promote happier living for the people. With this concept of global education and global citizenship, universities can become the prime agents of a new era of the world dedicated to progressive living for all the people of the world, to thereby promote genuine united nations—which is long overdue.

VII. Cosmic thinking to provide advanced solutions to our world issues:

Our continuing enhancing knowledge of cosmic consciousness and cosmology can shed some light on the universe and on life in higher galaxies. There is ongoing development and expansion of the cosmos and our physical universe is also continuing to form and expand.

Let us even consider where we came from, and where the UFOs come from, how it must be like to live in those more advanced worlds—how people must be thinking, learning and living over

there. This kind of cosmic thinking could enable us humans to see our world problems in a new light, and motivate us to develop more advanced solutions for our world problems.

Dark Matter: *Scientists have described it as a mysterious form of matter that has not yet been identified. Could it be the Universe with only three factors: ethereal, areal and luminous. Could we have come from there? How would it be like to living there?*

VIII. Role of Universities in Society and an Ideal 21st century University:

We need an enlightened concept of the role of university in the community and society, as follows: *A university is verily a laboratory for the development of a progressive society, by delineation of its ideals in all fields of human thought and endeavor, and by the development of education and research programs for imparting these ideals. A university hence needs to have a pulse of the problems challenging*

society and a clear delineation of its role in cultivating the requisite solutions for its progress.

For that, let us define the concept of an ideal 21st century university, as one which:

1. emphasizes heightened values of living: in personal living and in interactions with societal members;
2. imbibes neohumanist ideals in educational programs;
3. promotes the development of society according to the sloka: *Samgacchadhvamsamvadadhvam* Let us move together, let us sing together; *Samvomannamsijanatham* let us come to know our minds together;
4. incorporates the concept of Gurukula, wherein the faculty members are dedicated to foster the holistic development and enlightenment of students, and are role models for students;
5. is a comprehensive multi-disciplinary research university, having all the faculties: humanities and

social sciences, physical and biological sciences, engineering science and technology, pharmaceutical sciences and biotechnology; business management, governance and public administration, medicine and health sciences, law and governance; agriculture and forestry, veterinary science and medicine, school teachers education.

6. imbibes social consciousness of serving the regional community and promoting its socio-agro-industrial-economic transformation.

This is the model university that we should promote and develop, in order to catalyze a new civilization!

IX. Need for multi-disciplinary universities:

Based on the above concept of an ideal 21st century university, in this era, universities need to be multi-disciplinary, having schools in all disciplines: humanities and social sciences, physical, biological & environmental sciences, engineering and technology, business management and city administration, medicine and health sciences, law and governance, sports science and engineering. Today, interdisciplinary fields are developing new knowledge; for example, biomedical engineering is making new developments in medicine and surgery. Thus, institutes of technology, without medical schools, are outmoded.

Today, students need to also have a multi-disciplinary background for the bachelor's degree, and then even get two doctorate degrees, such as in (i) Political science and Public administration to qualify to be appointed as city mayors and state governors, (ii) Physics and Sports science, to become scientific sports coaches, and (iii) MD and PhD (biomedical engineering) to become technologically competent physicians and surgeons—which brings us to the new concept of



STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, medicine).

X. STEM operating in nature, communities and within the human body :

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education is vital to our future—the future of every country, the future of the world and the future of our students. STEM is operating everywhere around us and within us. It shapes our everyday experiences, and especially our health and wellness. Let us consider our experiencing STEM in our daily living. STEM is operating in our natural world: sun, and stars, lands and oceans, weather and natural disasters, animals and plants. STEM is operating in our communities, in infrastructure development and home appliances, computers and smartphones, transportation systems and airports.

Now STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, medicine) is even more important, because it pervades every aspect of our lives, and particularly in the way it shapes our human body and health. STEM careers will help our students to build smart communities, precision medical systems, and make for progressive human living. We hence need to educate a new set of STEM² professionals and academics. Our new STEM graduates will be involved in finding solutions for global warming, cancer, third world hunger, disappearing habitats, and an interdependent world economy.

XI. Academic Structure of a 21st Century University :

For a model 21st century university, we are proposing the following academic structure of university colleges:

1. College of Humanities and Social Sciences, to develop humanitarian values of living, and the constituents of political science and governance for progressive living.
2. College of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering,



- Mathematics), to study about STEM operating in (i) our natural world: sun, and stars, lands and oceans, weather and natural disasters, animals and plants, (ii) our communities, in engineering infrastructure development and home appliances, computers and smartphones, transportation systems and airports.
3. College of Management Science, Business Administration, Smart Cities and Hospital Healthcare Management
4. College of Law, Governance and Public Administration. to address the need for smart Governance for promoting economically sustainable cities and urban-rural communities.
5. College of Education, to train school and college teachers into preparing student readiness for careers in STEM fields, by teaching how to integrate all STEM fields.
6. College of Sports Science and Engineering, to educate

scientific sports coaches for working in universities and professional sports, to provide knowledgeable training to sportspersons and athletes, and enhance national performance in international tournaments and Olympic Games

7. College of Yoga and Meditation, to educate yoga teachers for schools, colleges and hospitals, for promoting health and wellness, cognitive development and mind-body medicine.
8. College of Medicine and Health Sciences, to develop a novel STEM format of medical sciences, leading to precision medicine and technological surgery; this would be the first such medical school in the world.

Let us set up such a new era 21st university to help develop cosmic knowledge and spiritual culture, by which we can develop a more advanced civilization on our planet. ●

REAL EDUCATION



Trend of life is irrepressible it is dynamic
The dynamic spirit of the age rushes ahead
Anyone coming in the way is knocked down
Therefore those sensible should channelise it upon
The path of benevolence with their own wisdom
As the real worth of a person is not limited to
Good manners or politeness is mere lip service
As it does not have to bear the burden of
Taking any trouble to eradicate other's misfortunes
Especially when it conflicts with their self interests.

The real worth of a person is reflected
In their all encompassing large heartedness
It is such people who by dint of their efforts
And genuine love for humanity plunge headlong
Into providing service to the suffering mankind
This is the essence of a truly civilized society
And to give it a refined form education is a must
And no strong human society can be built
If humans are allowed to drift away from one another
And neglected with imaginary lines drawn between them.

In every sphere of life social economic mental spiritual
To make people conscious of their rights
Is called expansion of knowledge
And the full application of these rights
Is akin to the cultivation of science
Neglected people who for whatever reason
Have kept themselves aloof from knowledge
Should always be given full opportunities
And these rights can never be discriminative
In the entire spectrum of humanity the world over

Vested interests be allowed no more to perpetuate
Ignorance among the exploited and deny them human values
Knowledge and science shall be free as light and air
The ignorant should have the light of wisdom
The low caste should move up the social ladder
The hungry should have their square meals
And the superstitions of the superstitious be eradicated
After getting fully acquainted with
Spiritual and scientific knowledge

Having equal opportunities to access the kingdom of God.

- Arun Prakash





THE ZERO MARGINAL COST

REVOLUTION AND PEOPLE'S ECONOMY OF PROUT

 G Surender Reddy

We are about to enter
an era of the Internet
of Things

Jeremy Rifkin, best selling author, published his twentieth book titled 'The Zero Marginal Cost Society: The Internet of Things, the Collaborative Commons and the Eclipse of Capitalism' in the year 2014, drawing attention to a much deeper contradiction ignored by Karl Marx, while being eloquent about many other ancillary contradictions of capitalism.

Rifkin, in the book uncovers the contradiction at the heart of capitalism, that has propelled it to greatness but is now taking it to its death - the inherent entrepreneurial dynamism of competitive markets that drives productivity up and marginal costs down, enabling businesses to reduce the price of their goods and services in order to win over consumers and market share. Marginal cost is the cost of

producing additional units of a good or service, if fixed costs are not counted.

While economists have always welcomed a reduction in marginal cost, they never anticipated the possibility of a technological revolution that might bring marginal costs to near zero, making goods and services 'priceless', nearly free, and abundant, and no longer subject to market forces. Another major cost factor, of energy in production, is being solved by distributed or local generation, from renewables, such as solar, wind, thermal, tides, etc., and its storage enhanced by battery technologies, at near zero marginal cost.

Worried that capital accumulation is driving ever-greater wealth inequality? Concerned that we have already lost the climate

change battle? We have good news. Rifkin argues that we are about to enter an era when the Internet of Things, “free” energy, and what he calls “the collaborative commons” will make anything and everything available for practically nothing. Together, he contends, those developments will overthrow capitalism as the world’s dominant economic model. Hitherto, economy was defined as a science of ‘scarcity’ and now what is predicted is that, ‘abundance’ will define it in the 21st Century.

The near zero marginal cost phenomenon has already disrupted the “information goods” industries over the past decade as millions of consumers turned into “prosumers” and began using the Internet to produce and share their own music via file sharing services, their own videos on YouTube, their own knowledge on Wikipedia, their own news on social media, and even their own e-books, all for nearly free. Meanwhile, 6 million students are currently enrolled in free massively open online courses (MOOCs) that operate at near zero marginal cost and are taught by some of the most distinguished professors in the world. The near zero marginal cost phenomenon brought the music industry to its knees, shook the film and television industries, forced newspapers and magazines out of business, crippled the book publishing market and forced universities to rethink their business model. We enjoy Kiirtan BNK, 24/7 from Radio Prabhat on {Zeno Radio APP}; courtesy the zero marginal cost economy.

Until recently they have argued that the productivity advances made possible by the digital economy would not pass across the firewall from the virtual world to the brick-and-mortar economy of energy, transportation, and physical goods and services. That firewall has now been breached.

A new Internet of Things (IoT) is evolving that will allow conventional business enterprises, as well as millions of prosumers, to

make, store and distribute their own renewable energy on a digital Energy Internet; share vehicles on an automated, GPS-guided and soon driverless Transportation and Logistics Internet; and manufacture an increasing array of 3-D-printed physical products and other goods and services - at very low marginal cost in the market exchange economy, or at near zero marginal cost in the sharing economy - just as they now do with information goods.

The best biology class room lecture as video (digitised), universally distributed online, that is, (demonetised), and consumed by infinite (democratised) number of students, illustrates the typical three-step process, of the new economy. Post-Covid, the expensive conferences have become digitised (Google Meet/zoom), demonetised (person to person contact costs, reduced to zero), and universally accessible (democratised) to anyone with a hand-held smartphone. Similarly, all activities, having a cognitive pattern including most critical [robotic] surgeries, would be rendered to zero marginal cost dispensation.

Economy of Self-reliant Samajas

Prout envisages 44 self-reliant socio-economic units or Samajas of India and 200, of the rest of the world. The Prout's quadry-dimensional economy for each Samaj comprises Peoples, Commercial, General and Psycho economies. Here we are concerned with the Peoples economy.

Peoples Economy - Guaranteed minimum necessities

What goes into the basket of 'guaranteed minimum necessities of life, is assured as a Right to all members of the society in the Peoples economy of Prout. In every era the minimum necessities will be updated according to changes in society. For example, cell phone and later smart phone which was considered as demi-essential a decade ago, is now a minimum necessity. Prout economy defines the minimum necessities as food, clothing, housing, healthcare, education; further, energy, transport/internet communications, Irrigation water, as supplemental requirements. The production and distribution of all these 'minimum necessities' comprise the distinctive Peoples economy of Prout, and is accorded suitable priority.

The following is an exploration of the exponential changes in technologies, promising 'zero marginal cost revolution in some of the sectors.

A. People's Economy - Universal Education :

Prout's Peoples economy guarantees access to universal education besides universal healthcare, ensuring level playing field to all the members of a samaj, as a part of its equal opportunity legislation. It proclaims 'Sa Vidya ya Vimuktaye'. Education cannot be subjected to market economy and should be treated as a fundamental Right of all citizens to enable fullest human



expression of physical, psychic spiritual potential of each and every individual, without any discrimination.

Several countries of European Union, including Germany provide all citizens without discrimination, free education including higher education.

India spends a low GDP share of 3.37 percent which has declined from 4.5 for the year 2000, while It is 4 - 6 percent of GDP in most of the countries, big and small, rich and poor, in the world. The average share of GDP for education of OECD countries is 4.5. Neighbouring Pakistan, by not providing Publicly funded education, drove the students into the lap of fundamentalist madrasas, with serious consequences for itself and the region.

Vested interests in India are commoditising and lowering the standards of education, as a wave of anti-intellectualism is sought to be promoted to distract attention from exploitation through their social and economic dogmas.

The digitalisation of the knowledge resources and universal affordable connectivity enables access to world class education to all. The best digital class room experience without distinction of rich or poor can be delivered to hand held devices to all at zero marginal cost.

Samaj Prout activists would unlock the potential of zero cost economy to materialise the powerful dream of universal quality education



to all, in both native and global languages. - *Sa Vidyaya Vimuktaye*.

B. Peoples Economy - Food :

Exponential innovations in science and technology have rendered the production of required, local food production for the population of a samaj, feasible and also economic, irrespective of adverse or favourable climatic or geo-physical factors now considered necessary for agriculture.

There are three important dimensions to the climate-neutral indoor farm production, under controlled conditions ;

(1) Driven down, inputs to zero marginal cost, (2) Artificial intelligence and automation in agronomic operations and monitoring, reducing labour costs. (3) Health and ecology conscious communities are raising the demand for locally produced food.

1. The required energy will be sourced from 'renewables' such as solar and wind power. The energy costs of a) drawal and delivery of irrigation water b) engineering of controlled-climate conditions in the multi-tiered green houses will be

rendered at zero marginal cost.

2. Hydroponics, vertical farming, artificial intelligence, nano-robots and automation will render crop production in multi-tiered green houses climate-neutral and reduce the manpower costs and avoid drudgery.

3. There is a movement gathering momentum for 'local production for consumption' of food, for all the right reasons; carbon footprint, health and symbiotic local economy.

The solutions for production of sufficient food are available. The challenge is to design the Proutist cooperative economy, for each and every samaj, wherein sufficient production and distribution of food is planned, along with adequate purchasing power and access to food, to all the members of society. Prout's agrarian revolution of cooperatives can free humanity from malnutrition, hunger and serve to restore the environment.

C. Peoples Economy -- Irrigation Water

Only ten to forty percent of arable land available in majority of the six lakh and odd villages in India has access to assured irrigation water. Farmers are left with only the choice of rain-fed cultivation in the remaining arable land.

Participatory irrigation management (PIM) based on the technology of village level irrigation-water-grid has the potential of conversion of arable land from rain-fed to irrigated cultivation, that can contribute to exponential increase in productivity.

Firstly, farmers of a village, to secure remunerative farming for all,



and essential food production, irrigation water (IW) needs to be recognised as 'community asset'. This social engineering reflects the spirit of Prout's cooperativisation of agriculture.

Secondly, the adoption of PIM (Participatory Irrigation Management) is designed to increase, meter-measure and regulate irrigation water, that is, collect, conserve and distribute, for sustainable and maximum individual and collective utilisation of irrigation water for cultivation. This is technically feasible and economically viable proposition. The design is similar to electrical power-grid model, wherein solar panelled houses partner with electricity suppliers, employing bi-directional meters, 'sensors' and net-metering. This model with the technology can be adopted, rewarding the farm owners, according to contribution and consumption of irrigation water. The existing and increased series of tanks/wells can be networked for distribution to maximise irrigated cultivation of all the arable land in a village.

Presuming, that all the best agronomical practices, economics of scale, consumption and market savvy cropping pattern, along with joint management of 'inputs' of cultivation and processing-marketing are followed, the twin objectives of income to farmers and production of essential food are served.

D. Peoples Economy – Transport/Communications :

The multiple revolutions - navigation (maps), ride-hailing, ride-sharing (uber) and self-driving vehicles (waymo), riding on the platform of the Internet, combined with exponential increase in battery storage capacity, will render transport, to near zero cost.

Communications revolution in the last two decades has made geography history. Now powered by hand-held smartphones, it is heading to rapidly connect entire humanity. The costs have been also rapidly

falling with several projects underway to offer free internet connectivity and Wi-fi.

E. Peoples Economy – Universal Healthcare :

Unlike the current, 'reactive' distress-stage healthcare, the future will be 'predictive' healthcare. It will be based on genomic profiles of all members of a samaj, accessed at a cloud-data bank. Chips are embedded in the individual, connected to an online health data-flow and personal AI digital assistants would monitor and deliver universal healthcare at zero marginal cost.

The cost of individual whole genome sequencing, from Rs. 7crore in 2001, has crashed to Rs.15000/- in 2020 (Veritas Genetics). The downward cost curve with increasing demand, will render it at zero marginal cost, in a few years.

F. Housing for All

Nearly, 9.43 lakh crore housing units worth 7.77 lakh crore, are stuck now, across the top 8 cities in the country. The stark reality is the imbalance in the market, wherein there is huge premium housing, without takers, and low investment in affordable housing for the masses.

Co-working, co-living, working from home; digital delivery of education, healthcare, yoga classes, play and entertainment concepts, are gaining traction, post-covid pandemic, that demands a relook at designing hygienic, affordable housing for all.

Further, the initiative to use local materials and orienting the design of housing for work-life, suitable for local climate and transforming life styles, integrating spaces for education, play, meditation and living has to be undertaken in the post-covid world.

Here is an opportunity to redefine housing to avoid 'fortress versus slum'; 'urban versus rural' kind of inequality and plan for wholesome affordable housing, that is, both old and young are enabled to live and grow in all the spheres, - physical, mental and spiritual, that is mandated in Prout's peoples

economy.

New technologies construction, such as 3-D printing, modular construction, automation can be adopted for economic planning of planned housing for all, at a scale that affords, zero marginal cost advantage.

Brave New World of 21st Century

The data-rich eco-system has transformed, the way we learn, socialise, work, and entertain through affordable smartphone at near zero marginal cost. Similar, three step, - 'Digitise-Demonetise-Democratise' process will go beyond the virtual spaces to drive physical devices in every sector, from cars to surgical operation devices revolutionising the economics of zero marginal cost, bringing us closer to the goal of universal guaranteed minimum necessities of life and welfare.

The under-use, abuse and dis-use of economic resources on account of concentration of wealth must be confronted by Prout activists, highlighting that, another world is possible with the zero marginal cost revolution, providing every samaj, a future of self-reliant local production and consumption, of minimum necessities of life - thus, providing solutions to the problem of equitable and rational distribution.

The redesign of economy through the chief and default organisational principle of cooperatives will secure equitable and rational distribution of the essential minimum requirements of the era, further, progressively upgrading the universal basic basket of essential goods and services, with the passage of time.

Prout ideology cannot be seen, as a natural or normal change. It warrants a revolutionary change in behaviour and adoption of a new value system based on spirituality. It is the fond hope that the vision of alternative Futures will fuel the movements for paradigm shift in thinking and action, revolutionising the discourse and ignite the Proutist vanguard to move ahead at godspeed.●



Garment Workers to Women Leaders and the Wise E-buddha

CAMBODIA 2050

■ Sohail Inayatullah,
Sunniya Durrani-Jamal,
and Sonia Chand Sandhu

In late 2019, the Asian Development Bank (2020) facilitated a Futures foresight workshop to map out complimentary pathways to the development of Cambodia's vision 2030 (to become an upper middle income country) and eventually Vision 2050 (to become a middle income country). As it was a one day workshop, we focused on a variant of the Six Pillars process using in particular Causal Layered Analysis, Scenarios, Visioning and back casting. The intent was to enhance futures literacy in the nation and

Foreign investment was needed so the economy could move from being a tree giving fruit to an entire forest with multiple industries.

articulate areas that the Asian Development Bank and the government of Cambodia could work together. While there were numerous research areas, the role of women, technology, and economic diversity stood out.

Women and the Future

Given that currently there are 94 men to every 100 women in the country, in terms of growth can women go from being garment manufacturing workers to 50% of executives in government and business? Executives from the Cambodia government asked this and other questions not only for reasons of equity, but also for optimization. They knew that

Cambodia could not become a wealthy nation, an efficient nation, a fairer nation unless females rose to the ranks of leadership. Current research, including from the IMF certainly supports this. Moreover, we know from data on start-ups (Council 2015) and financial firms that females on the whole perform better than their male counterparts. Whether this is because they can manage the economy better in turbulent times or because they are more cautious it is not clear. We do, however, know that gender equity is a pre-requisite to a prosperous society. To shift Cambodia, to make the change, first the future needs to be imagined. Thus, the image of the future was that of a woman leader leading a political rally of men and women in contrast to a man overseeing a factory filled with female garment workers. This is contrast to today where the main KPI is number of shirts produced.

Diversity of gender roles was not the only issue that they saw changing in the decades ahead if Vision 2030 was to be achieved. The economy needed to diversify, knowledge innovation was necessary, and governance needed to transform through transparency and technology. Indeed, they saw these changes as working together to create a possible transformation towards a Digital Economy.

E-monk to the E-buddha

While the foresight workshop was conducted in English, the metaphors that were used to describe the change were localized. For example, participants imagined the new governance system as E-Buddha – that is a system that was for the good of all. The current information technology system in Cambodia was considered complicated, paper-based and for the

Table : Women's Leadership in Cambodia

Litany or description	Shirts produced per day	Number of women in leadership
The System	Rules-based, low status	Diverse work opportunities Political and social empowerment
The Worldview	Industrial economy	Knowledge economy
The Metaphor	Garment worker = a woman	Leader = a woman



Person behind the idea of 2050 Vision. Dr. Mey Kalayan, Senior Advisor, Supreme National Economic Council, and Chairman, Royal University of Phnom Penh.

good of the local organization. It was like a room full of monks and nuns. In the e-Buddha world, administrative processes would serve the nation, be paperless and easy to use. They would need to be on open platforms, allowing different systems to access and change the parameters. This would be quite a shift from the current system, which was more like a c-drive, private and divided by silos.

Litany Description	Complicated	Simple and efficient
The System	Paper and C-drive	Paperless with an open platform
The Worldview	For the government department	For the Nation
Metaphor	E-Monk	E-Buddha



Chhy Vichara, Under Secretary of State of Ministry of Civil Service. Imagining an alternative future for women and men in Cambodia.

The E-Buddha system would be wise, helping all Cambodians, making everyone's life easier. But to what avail? How would the new administrative and technological system change the nation? In the view of participants, new information and communication technologies would assist in the transition to a more effective system. The technology is already present with 98.5% of the population using the Internet or around 15.8 million people.[iv] Facebook alone has seven million users. The bureaucracy, while active users of Facebook for communication, in particular, needed to transform services, using new technologies to decentralize.

Economic Diversification

But it was not just the administrative sector that needed to change, the economy also needed to shift from being city and manufacturing-based to becoming far more diversified. Citizens too needed to be trained for the technological disruptions ahead – soft and hard skills. Foreign investment was needed so the economy could move from being a tree that was giving fruit to an entire forest with multiple industries.



Participants felt if woman were empowered, governance became decentralized, paperless, far more efficient – whole of government,

citizen and business – than it could help Cambodia truly transform, moving from a hopping frog to a leaping tiger.



Chhe Lidin, Director General, Ministry of Mines and Energy.

Litany	City-based	Decentralized
The System	Manufacturers	Many industries, so as to attract investors
The Worldview	Poverty reduction	Wealth creation
Metaphor	Tree	Forest

Making the Vision Real

But for this vision to occur, used futures (Inayatullah 2008) needed to be challenged. These are strategies that no longer work, but we continue them. Participants asserted that the main used future was the Cambodian mind-set. It was reactive, rigid, formal, and risk-averse. It was this historical weight that would not allow innovation that could enhance well-being and prosperity. This was especially so given how new technologies were challenging traditional knowledge and bureaucratic structures. As one group suggested, “we want a smart governance system that is open and sustainable, has on-line public services has a great ITC infrastructure, and ensures excellent communication between the government and citizens and government and the private sector.

But how to get there? Using the

methodology of back casting wherein the future is imagined and then steps to realize this future articulated, participants recommended the following.

- ❖ By 2023, there is a Minister for ICT
- ❖ By 2025, near full literacy in the nation
- ❖ By 2025, a nationwide ICT infrastructure system
- ❖ By 2026, a system to evaluate what is working and not working in e-governance
- ❖ By 2027 a fully functioning agile cyber-security system
- ❖ By 2028, cost savings from the ICT revolution are visible
- ❖ By 2029, enhanced gender equity, possible as work ICTs are not gender-based
- ❖ By 2030, with a decade of data collection, the beginning of evidence-based policymaking.
- ❖ By 2030, Cambodia receives

an award for e-government

- ❖ By 2035, women are visible leaders in Cambodia

Embodied Backcasting

The back cast showed that the drivers creating a different future were education, information and communication technologies in governance, and the empowerment of women. Each factor/driver works with the other drivers synergistically creating a new Cambodia. Investment in these areas as well as anticipating action learning projects in these areas needed to be prioritized.

Conclusion

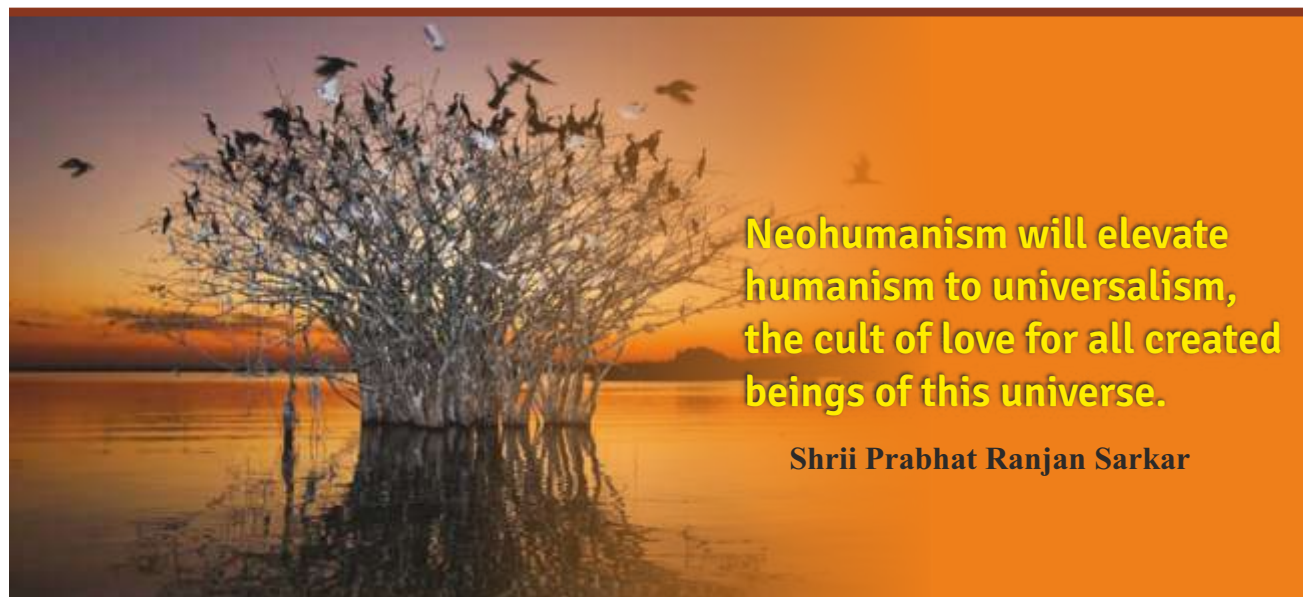
While with some groups, variation and outliers are most important, with this group of senior leaders gaining convergence on the vision was critical. The back cast, in particular, helped make futures a practical exercise. Overall, the futures process helped break silos and create a shared vision. Next steps include funding participation action research projects with ADB grants as well as ensuring that futures thinking becomes a formal part of public sector knowledge coursework. ●

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Neohumanism will elevate humanism to universalism, the cult of love for all created beings of this universe.

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

The tyrannies of China and North Korea cannot be left out merely as internal matters with false notions of national sovereignty.



ASSESSING^{the} Great Global War

Prof. R.P. Singh

In the present world scenario with Covid-19, the speculations of third world war going on since mid 1980s are now trending to reality. Alongwith other scholars, BBC journalist Humphrey Hawksley in his novel 'The Third World War' first published in 2003 has presented interesting sketch as to how the dangerous acts of China, Pak and North Korea lead to start of this war resulting in end of these dangerous designers. In this novel he has mentioned the **significant role of the air base of Gorakhpur** too. Another author Aniruddha D.

Joshi in his book 'Third World War' published in 2006 as a series of articles estimates the timing of this war as near about 2026-2031.

The American economist of Indian origin Dr. Ravi Batra in his analysis of trade cycles in USA also indicates its timing as during 2029-2036 in his famous books 'The Great Depression of 1990' and 'Surviving Great Depression of 1990'. But dreams in novels or analyses of trends need not go with perfect accuracy. The dream of ship wreck as imagined in a novella 'Futility' written by Morgan Robertson published in 1898 (and revised as The Wreck of the Titan in 1912)

has been famous for its similarities with sinking of the real RMS Titanic, a British passenger liner in the North Atlantic Ocean 14 years later in April 1912 was bound to have some differences in description. Such descriptions are not so important as their accuracy may be affected by the actual acts of the real players. But their indications are important.

A Great Opportunity

Today the well-meaning people all over the world and their governments are readily willing to support India in their fight against terrorist and anti-human forces

mainly due to the dangerous designs and activities of governments of China and also Pakistan, North Korea and even Nepal. It is a good signal for India. **India should not waste this great opportunity** which will not come time and again. We need to **be really aggressive in our defense and external strategies** as the Prime Minister Modi has exhorted in his Leh address recalling Lord Krishna on July 4 saying, 'This is the era of development, not expansionism'. Such assertiveness should reflect & go on in actuality. We need to be quite clear and articulate in our foreign policy with broad strategic objectives and not just narrow calculations of national profit.

Our position so far has been highly defensive. We could not dare to initiate diplomatic relations with Taiwan just to avoid displeasure of China. But now **India should support, persuade and champion** the world community to recognize Hong Kong, Tibet, Baluchistan, Pakhtunistan, South Mongolia, East Turkestan, Manchuria as independent countries with provisional governments. The tyrannies of China and North Korea cannot be left out merely as internal matters with false notions of national sovereignty. A large China under PLA is always danger to the whole world. Same is applicable to

all religious as well as narrow sentimental and ideological fanaticism devoid of and opposing science and technology. Such dangerous narrow sentiments need to be crushed by the world community ruthlessly. Nationalism and communism have been used by autocrats as tools of power capturing and perpetuation.

Dangerous Designs—An Assessment

As of now, offence is the most viable option for defense. The ongoing Chinese attitude and designs along with its collaborators are putting danger for Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Laddakh, Bhutan and whole of North-East along with north Bihar, Sikkim and West Bengal. Pakistan is having eyes on Kashmir and Nepal on Uttarakhand. China has been trying to bring Iran, ISIS, Talibani Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, etc. also in its fold of dangerous designs. The way it is using Nepal against India indicates that anytime it can intrude in India through Nepalese territory. It is just as has been indicated by Shrii P. R. Sarkar.

By taking clear position on these issues and going with the people of the world, opportunities will arise on their own for solving the issues of Pak Occupied Kashmir, Aksai Chin, Arunachal Pradesh,

Nepal and Bhutan. Such issues cannot be so easily solved through nationalism. Nationalism has always invited bloody wars, speedy destructions, slow but tormenting disturbances and restart of another series of imperialism, expansionism, subjugation and exploitation. Nationalism can't work in the present world situation. It is not effective enough to protect the national interests and rather it is inimical to it.

Disintegration of USSR—Resolving Misunderstandings

USA has been frequently accused for **disintegration of the Soviet Union** during 1987-91. But could America really do so against such a mighty superpower. The reality is: It was the amalgam of Russian nationalism and communism which was regularly and blindly used by the Soviet dictators right from V. I. Lenin to suppress the local aspirations, issues and needs as well as hiding maximum information in the name of national interest; and it was this amalgam which led to very poor quality in manufacturing and low productivity in rural soviets—all this led to high frustration among the soviet masses. This issue combined with the vote politics of same Russian dictators to allow members of the Soviet confederation like Ukraine, Ajarbaizan, etc., to vote in the UN assembly as separate nations. Had the United States of America also adopted similar policy and allowed its 50 states voting in the UN as separate nations, USA could also have suffered the same fate easily long ago. Hence whatever happened with the USSR was solely due to the narrowisms of its own dictators and none else could be capable to do so.

The similar amalgam of nationalism and communism has long been used by the Chinese dictators and more so during the present Xi Jinping regime again leading to same phenomena of hiding all information from its own people & also misleading the world community; similar poor quality; patents and human rights violations;





same high frustration among the masses; and disturbing the neighbouring countries. Hence **China has to break away anyhow** due to acts of its bulletoriented dictators. All this has converged into the current covid pandemic and thus inviting the rage of the world masses. America and its allies have got the best opportunity to encash upon it in global well-being.

Pakistan has also emerged similarly as a danger to the whole humanity due to its religious fanaticism, open support by its government and military to Islamic terrorism, its dangerous designs through strong collaboration with China and misleading the world community. It is a failed destructive state, hence it should also be now forced to disperse as a nation. **North Korea** should be freed from the clutches of its autocratic regime and better be forced to merge with South Korea. All these can now be done within a short span keeping in mind the readiness of the enraged world community in present. *Initial focus should be limited to handling the two most irresponsible ones--China and Pakistan.* Any other sympathizing with them should also be within purview when required.

National Sovereignties to World Government

National sovereignties have always obstructed the efficacy of United Nations, World Trade Organisation,

Security Council, WHO and so many other so called world bodies by reducing them to mere treaty status subject to convenience and mercy of sovereignties of the powerful nations. National sovereignty needs to be put in subservience to world governance as well as peace and welfare of the world community, else it will always create dangers to world peace and security as has been indicated earlier. History has also shown as how the powerful nations of Europe like Germany, France, Britain, Spain, Portugal, Italy, etc. first propagated their national sovereignties, then promoted imperialism and thereafter perpetuated colonialism for hundreds of years—all in the name of rightful promotion of their national interests. The same has been done in the 20th Century by the USA and Russia along with allies of each other during the second world war and thereafter during the cold war days. Now China with its allies is doing the same in extremely irresponsible and dangerous manner. The world organizations like the UNO have been so far bound to honor the mutually contradictory and clashful national sovereignties making these bodies ineffective. Hence, India should also persuade America and its allies to materialize the collective mind of the world community into a formalized **really representative, responsible and**

responsive world government overriding the national sovereignties. The USA is already aspiring for a democratic front of its allies including India in its fight against PLA of China. A strong possibility is that it would force PLA to disband just as Japanese army was forced so after the Second World War.

Effective and Lasting Solution

An effective and lasting solution to their irresponsible and dangerous acts is needed *not only as a lesson to them but also as a learning to all such other self-centered and self-imposing extremist dogmatic and exploitative tendencies.* To minimize losses during the forthcoming great global venture it is necessary for Indian and also European leaderships to remove the misunderstandings of Russia about the role of the USA in disintegration of USSR as well as persuade the USA to reduce its selfish capitalist and pseudo-capitalist tendencies so that hesitation of Russia in cooperation with America against the dangerous designs of tyrants as mentioned earlier may wane and both may cooperate with well meaning people of the world. Their clashes for hegemony and supremacy over the world are not good in global search for peace, collective welfare and cooperation.

Nuclear Power—No Existential Guarantee for Any Government or Country

If Russian government does not cooperate even after all persuasions of welfare & peace oriented countries, it will invite rage of its own people. One should not forget that USSR was the largest nuclear power with four times more arsenals when it got disintegrated in 1991. *Being a nuclear power is no existential guarantee for any government or country*—this is a great learning particularly for China and its allies. After all, this time is a worthy opportunity for lasting world peace and welfare. This opportunity should be utilized strongly and speedily. ●

The Great Recession of 2008 was both far-ranging and long-lasting. But at the end of the crisis, the world was fundamentally unchanged. The Neoliberal paradigm, which emphasized markets and individuals, still held sway. The crisis we are currently experiencing will also be far-ranging and long-lasting. But with each passing day, it is becoming more apparent that the world may likely change in fundamental ways as we emerge from this pandemic. Not that this is in any way guaranteed, only that the daily experience of virtually everyone on the planet can't hope but foster an understanding that we have been living in a world that greatly overemphasized the importance of the individual, and severely undervalued the role of the community. As this awareness grows, great forces will develop to reestablish the balance between the individual and the community.

And this will make possible the development and implementation of new ideas that will serve to foster the development of people within their communal experience. Part of the

THE ECONOMICS and Politics of Crisis

Prof. Edward McKenna

Those out of work face uncertainty about being able to feed and shelter their families

reason why the world will change is due to the unique nature of this crisis. In all previous economic crises, the economic problems began on the demand side. Businesses would reduce their purchases of new machines, consumers would reduce their purchases of new houses, and total demand would fall as a result. But this crisis began on the supply side. An unseen virus, whose spread is very rapid, and for which we have no cure, has required all of us to self-quarantine and to engage in social distancing. As a society we are asking those whose work is not absolutely essential for life to remain home. But what this inevitably means is that the supply of output that we will be capable of creating will be severely reduced. In



the United States, Janet Yellen, the former chair of the Federal Reserve, has stated that it is quite possible that within a few weeks we will reach Great Depression levels of unemployment, meaning unemployment of 25% of our workforce.

But this act of social distancing means that we are asking one another to share in the burdens created by this virus. For those who will be out of work, there will be great uncertainty as to whether they will have the income to feed and shelter their family, much less be able to provide the kind of education and healthcare every individual deserves. And there will be great uncertainty as to whether there will be a job waiting for them once this crisis ends. For those whom we are asking to work, whose work we have deemed essential for our existence, we are also demanding a great deal. In many cases these people must work in conditions that simply are not physically safe due to the coronavirus. Watching the almost daily outcry from medical workers, who literally put their life on the line and yet cannot acquire even the minimal protective equipment necessary for safety, reveals to us that there is a fundamental flaw in our society. The same is revealed by the factory workers who must work in close quarters without proper masks and gloves. And the same goes for agricultural workers, who provide the food so necessary for our welfare.

We are coming to understand that the truly valuable workers are a different group from those we have admired in the past. We must be clear about the basic bargain that those who are staying home to protect the lives of others and those who are working in unsafe conditions have made. Those who work to produce output must share this output with those who are staying home to bring an end to this virus. This is no individualistic bargain made by unseen workers in a market. This is a decision that our community is making, that is necessary for the communal well-



being. Such a decision cannot be left to individuals on their own, it can only be made at the community level, and can only be successful if individuals have trust that those who are making communal decisions are making them in the interest of all of us. Even the highly individualistic politicians in the United States seem to understand this.

In the 2008 crisis, the financial institutions that were responsible for the poor decision-making that led to the housing crisis were completely bailed out. But the homeowners, whose home was often their only source of wealth, lost their homes in the millions. This time, however, we see politicians going out of their way to emphasize that we must pass legislation that will help everyone, from those workers who will lose their jobs, to those small businesses that will go out of existence without help, to those state and local governments whose finances will be in shambles as a result of this pandemic. Of course, we will have to be extraordinarily vigilant to make sure that the politician's words are matched by their actions, already we are learning of the unequal impact that the virus and the ensuing economic destruction are having on various groups in society.

Long delays are occurring for workers attempting to receive unemployment insurance, while the

Federal Reserve lends to large businesses on a daily basis. But it is not likely that these types of inequalities will go unnoticed or unpunished. The average person knows we are in this together, and not as individuals. It is very unlikely that people will accept the kind of unequal bargains that were drawn in the 2008 crisis this time around. A small, but illustrative, example of this is something occurring in a race for a United States senatorial seat in Georgia. The revelation that one of the candidates had sold stock on the basis of inside information just prior to the growth of the pandemic has led from her going to the leading candidate, to having virtually no support. People will simply not accept that some people can gain and some people lose as a result of this crisis. We are facing this crisis as a community, and we must treat one another with this understanding.

There are other forces at work that are also contributing to our understanding that while we may be individuals, we are individuals within a community. Just recently I was listening to a report on National Public Radio given by the station's national health reporter. This is a person whose entire career is devoted to health issues, and yet he was explaining that he was shocked to learn, as a result of this crisis, how dependent the United States is on the

rest of the world for acquiring medical supplies and pharmaceuticals. It is stunning, he related, to come to learn that because China has had to close down part of its economy, that the US suddenly finds it cannot obtain the drugs and medical supplies it requires to fight this virus. I must say, it certainly is stunning, stunning to learn that even experts in the field have been unaware of the degree to which the interconnectedness of the global economy has grown over the past 40 years, the era of neoliberalism.

And this has not been an accident. For more than two centuries, economists have extolled a doctrine known as comparative advantage, a doctrine that essentially states that any particular area should specialize in the production of that which it does most efficiently, and rely on trade with the rest of the world to obtain whatever else it requires. So we should not be surprised to learn, for example, that while the assembly of a good such as an automobile might take place in one country, the parts that go into that automobile may come from more than 50 countries around the world, countries that were most efficient in the production of that particular part. This extended supply chain, as economists would refer to it, works fine in an idealized world where interruptions such as pandemics never occur. But as we are now learning, in our actual world, such interruptions can bring production to a halt all over the world. This, in turn, will undoubtedly lead to a more critical

view of doctrines such as comparative advantage.

Every region of the world must be capable of producing all of those things that are necessary for its existence when crises such as the present one occur. Regions must plan their development in such a way that they have the independent capability of sustaining themselves, and such planning may mean that a region must be capable of producing the essentials of life when extraordinary circumstances occur, even if such things cannot be produced in what appears to be the most efficient manner in normal times. And, this may also require holding ample reserves of essentials to meet extraordinary times, even if the holding of such reserves runs counter to the idea of cost minimization in normal times. In other words, we will have to find ways to balance the irresistibly individualistic logic of the market with the overarching needs of the community, for it is only within a community that individuals can flourish.

While I believe that it is virtually inevitable that we will become more aware of the importance of community as a result of our present experiences, we should not take it for granted that such an awareness will automatically lead to a positive outcome. As awareness of the importance of community grows, so also does the awareness that we have to imbue a community with the power that it requires to act in the interest of all of us. But such power

can be easily abused. In crisis times, peoples' heightened fears of catastrophe make them more open to support authoritarian and/or dictatorial individuals whose delusions of grandeur lead them to claim, often quite charismatically, that is only through them that the people can be saved. The study of recent history is invaluable in understanding these dangers. World War I, 1914-1918, was immediately followed by a flu pandemic that, over three successive waves, actually killed more people than died in the war. Less than a decade later, a great depression followed, ending in World War II.

One can only imagine what someone born in say 1905, and who experienced all of these events, must have come to believe about the nature of human beings and their place in the world. But it was also during this time frame that we see the rise of Lenin and communism in Russia, Mussolini and fascism in Italy, and Hitler and Nazism in Germany. Each of these dictators emphasized the importance of the community, but they did so for their own aggrandizement, and not for the welfare of the community they claimed to speak for. So it is that in our own time we find the rise of Trump in the United States, Bolsonaro in Brazil, Oban in Hungary, and Duterte in the Philippines, each claiming they will protect the community and lead it to greatness. So, as difficult as it may be, given the challenges that we are all facing, we must nevertheless find the strength to speak for the importance of community, but to see its role as important precisely because it is only within community that individuals can flourish. And this means all individuals. Perhaps the heaviness of our burdens can be lightened by the hope that this time we can create a world that is truly different. ●

The author is Professor of Economics at Connecticut College in New London, CT, USA.

Courtesy

<https://gurukul.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Issue50.pdf>



Innovation in the Time of CORONA

Avdhutika Ananda Devapriya Acarya

As Corona virus swept around the globe, shutting down whole economies in its wake, our NHE projects in Romania were no exception. Both the Rasarit kindergarten in Bucharest and the Fountain of Hope after school in Panatau were forced to suspend their activities by government orders. Initially, our kindergarten team saw it as a welcome respite to focus fully on catching up the mountain of bureaucratic requirements for accreditation, as the final inspection was scheduled for May. Within a week or so, however, it became

apparent that this was not just a temporary closure of a couple of weeks, but something much bigger, without a predictable end in sight. Parents started contacting us, asking for reductions in fees, or pulling out. We also started wondering, how were the children coping with the scary streams of news, and the restrictions of staying inside small apartment buildings? Innovate and Adapt It was time to innovate and adapt. I quickly organized crash courses in online meetings for the teachers, and we met on Zoom to discuss meaningful ways we could

support the parents and the children. Teachers started out by sending their weekly planning emails, with ideas that parents could do with their children at home. Sorina started to record herself telling stories, using her mobile phone. The children were so comforted to hear her voice, and parents were soon sending us photos or stories of their child snuggled up in bed, listening to her voice.

Online Trial and Error

We then experimented with having an online version of circle time with





the children by Zoom. It was a trial and error experience. The children were so relieved and excited to see each other and their teachers that they all wanted to speak at once, which resulted in chaos, of course. We discovered that it isn't so easy to hold their attention from a distance, or to have them wait their turn to speak (even when using the mute options – some got very upset that they couldn't be heard). Aware that screen time presents its own dangers to the sensitive, developing mind of young children, we didn't want all of our activities to be screen dependent, and we really debated what the best use of the online meetings should be. We decided that its principal use would be for maintaining the social connections between the children and with teachers. We found that interactive games, like “Simon says” are more fun and engaging than trying to hold the attention of the whole group on a story or lesson. Sharing experiences, demonstrating experiments they can do with their parents, singing (if everyone is on mute, otherwise it becomes chaotic as the audio is not perfectly synched and lags), worked well – and some storytelling, though mostly we found that the stories work better if recorded and sent to the parents to use at other moments. Virginia

suggested painting on the windows, to children, and some sent back beautiful photos of their experiments.

New Emerging Talents

Soon the teachers were curious how to make video versions of their stories, with background music and effects, and images. I held another online crash course in how to use a simple free video-editing software (Videopad). Madhavii and her teenage daughter Kalyanii began producing gorgeous stories with images from storybooks. Next we will explore storytelling with puppets and maybe even stop-motion animation.

Who Are the Teachers Now?

In the meantime, we realized that in this period, our role is more that of consultants or coaches for the parents. It is the parents who are actually the ones leading the educational activities, as there is only so much you can do in a short online meeting. Many of our parents are quite overwhelmed with balancing working from home with also having to take care of their children. They seem to appreciate the suggestions and ideas for activities that otherwise they would not have had time to research. It is a real joy to receive photos that the parents send us of the children engaged in different activities that



we have suggested, and seeing the children's own creativity as they explore and improvise new, unexpected directions.

Prioritizing Socio-emotional Support

Providing interesting activities has been helping to channelize the children's energy towards positive, interesting, educational experiences. However, we also recognize that more important than ensuring progress towards typical educational goals, is to provide the socio-emotional support as we all collectively navigate a worldwide, historic natural disaster. We have been translating therapeutic stories that our friend and expert Susan Perrow has been publishing for this purpose. Indeed, my experience participating in the AMURT/ EL Child Friendly Spaces programs, after natural disasters and in refugee work, has been very useful. Routines and predictable, familiar structures help to normalize the situation, such as the ritual of meetings with teachers and friends online, instead of morning circles. I have been sharing resources for parents and children on how to use belly breathing to switch off stress

and enjoy peaceful moments together. Mihaela will be experimenting with using persona dolls, to help open up discussion about the children's feelings of frustration or sadness in not being able to go to kindergarten or outside to play.

So part of my role has also been to research and send parent's child-friendly, appropriate resources for explaining COVID and dealing with the emotions that may come up. Activities, like making masks, can help to demystify and even make a game out of this otherwise potentially alienating or scary new addition to people's attire. An experiment with glitter can illustrate how germs spread in a fun way: the child puts their hands in a jar or plate with glitter and some stick. The parent does the same – and then they shake hands, pick up things, and notice how the glitter gets everywhere! Children need honest, but reassuring explanations about what is happening. Parents can reassure children that they and lots of other grownups are doing their best to keep everyone safe. They can highlight the roles of helpers, like doctors, scientists and police in positive ways. However, it is also

important to find ways for children to feel actively involved in doing their part, as this decreases the sense of powerlessness and helplessness that is characteristic of traumatic experiences, and increases their resiliency. Instead of simply telling children to wash their hands, parents and caregivers can frame these rules as ways that children can also help protect their communities. They then can give them encouragement and positive feedback whenever they see that they are remembering such rules on their own “You are really being such a great helper to our whole community by washing your hands right away – good job!”.

Indeed, in times of crisis, those that find ways to actively help others tend have greater psychological resiliency, even emerging stronger and more empowered by the experience, than they were before. This taps into our Neohumanist understanding of the core nature of human beings, in particular our deep, innate need to serve those around us. It is one of the keys to a robust, healthy sense of happiness and meaningfulness in life. ●

The author runs a children's school and home in Romania.





Why the Indus Valley Civilization Perished

 Karunakshim Vatslam

A new study on the human skeletal remains from the ancient Indus city of Harappa provides evidence that interpersonal violence and infectious diseases played a role in the demise of the Indus, or Harappan Civilization around 4,000 years ago.

The Indus Civilization stretched over a million square kilometers of what is now Pakistan and India in the Third Millennium B.C. While contemporaneous civilizations in Egypt and Mesopotamia, are well-known, their Indus trading partners have remained more of a mystery.

Archaeological research has demonstrated that Indus cities grew rapidly from 2200-1900 B.C., when they were largely abandoned. "The collapse of the Indus Civilization

Rapid urbanization in Indus cities, and the increasingly large amount of culture contact, brought new challenges to the human population.

and the reorganization of its human population has been controversial for a long time," lead author of the paper published last month in the journal *PLOS ONE*, Gwen Robbins Schug, explained. Robbins Schug is an associate professor of anthropology at Appalachian State University.

Climate, economic, and social changes all played a role in the process of urbanization and collapse, but little was known about how these changes affected the human population.

Robbins Schug and an international team of researchers examined evidence for trauma and infectious disease in the human skeletal remains from three burial areas at Harappa, one of the largest cities in the Indus Civilization. The

results of their analysis counter longstanding claims that the Indus civilization developed as a peaceful, cooperative, and egalitarian state-level society, without social differentiation, hierarchy, or differences in access to basic resources.

The data suggest instead that some communities at Harappa faced more significant impacts than others from climate and socio-economic strains, particularly the socially disadvantaged or marginalized communities who are most vulnerable to violence and disease. This pattern is expected in strongly socially differentiated, hierarchical but weakly controlled societies

scientists can glean important insights from the past, addressing long-standing and socially relevant questions. "Rapid climate change events have wide-ranging impacts on human communities," Robbins Schug said. "Scientists cannot make assumptions that climate changes will always equate to violence and disease. However, in this case, it appears that the rapid urbanization process in Indus cities, and the increasingly large amount of culture contact, brought new challenges to the human population. Infectious diseases like leprosy and tuberculosis were probably transmitted across an interaction

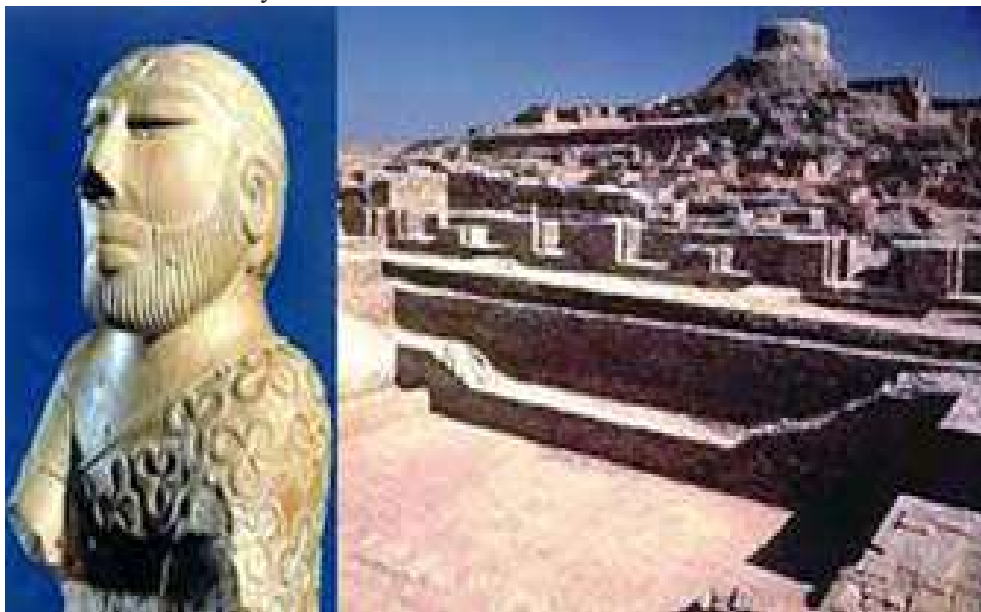
combine that with social changes and this particular cultural context, it all worked together to create a situation that became untenable," she said.

The results of the study are striking, according to Robbins Schug, because violence and disease increased through time, with the highest rates found as the human population was abandoning the cities. However, an even more interesting result is that individuals who were excluded from the city's formal cemeteries had the highest rates of violence and disease. In a small ossuary southeast of the city, men, women, and children were interred in a small pit. The rate of violence in this sample was 50 percent for the 10 crania preserved, and more than 20 percent of these individuals demonstrated evidence of infection with leprosy.

Robbins Schug said lessons from the Indus Civilization are applicable to modern societies.

"Human populations in semi-arid regions of the world, including South Asia, currently face disproportionate impacts from global climate change," the researchers wrote. "The evidence from Harappa offers insights into how social and biological challenges impacted past societies facing rapid population growth, climate change and environmental degradation. Unfortunately, in this case, increasing levels of violence and disease accompanied massive levels of migration and resource stress and disproportionate impacts were felt by the most vulnerable members of society."

The above explains the reasons for the fall of the Indus valley civilization. Today we observe something similar happening - environmental destruction, struggle for dwindling resources leading to greater violence and all this driven by terrible social inequality. (The Indus civilization had caste, tribal, ethnic/samaj inequality. We should learn from these lessons of the last 4000 years. Shiva gave the solution which forms the basis of PROUT, sama-samaja. ●



facing resource stress.

Robbins Schug's and colleagues' findings add to the growing body of research about the character of Indus society and the nature of its collapse. "Early research had proposed that ecological factors were the cause of the demise, but there wasn't much paleo-environmental evidence to confirm those theories," Robbins Schug said. "In the past few decades, there have been refinements to the available techniques for reconstructing paleo-environments and burgeoning interest in this field."

When paleoclimate, archaeology, and human skeletal biology approaches are combined,

sphere that spanned Middle and South Asia."

Robbins Schug's research shows that leprosy appeared at Harappa during the urban phase of the Indus Civilization, and its prevalence significantly increased through time. New diseases, such as tuberculosis, also appear in the Late Harappan or post-urban phase burials. Violent injury such as cranial trauma also increases through time, a finding that is remarkable, she said, given that evidence for violence is very rare in prehistoric South Asian sites generally.

"As the environment changed, the exchange network became increasingly incoherent. When you

COVID-19

Pandemic Inspiration

 **Didi Ananda Kalyanmitra**

The last few months have been very challenging and inspiring at the same time: in a matter of weeks we went from a hectic extroverted world, full of appointments and commitments, to a calm, quiet and introverted world with plenty of time on our hands. This sudden change created a sense of loss in our daily life together with a feeling of uncertainty that destabilized our routines. At the same time, as humans often do, we adapted pretty soon to the new situation and we realized that this was a golden opportunity for us to slow down, breathe, and re-arrange our thoughts and priorities.

Thanks to the power of social media and other communication channels, we transformed this unusual isolation into a hub of new online activities and connections. We all sprang into action and started new ways of keeping in touch with margiis: online classes, kiirtan, a'sanas, kaos'ikii, DCs, Seminar classes, and so on. Everything has become available at the tip of our fingers: long distance is no longer a physical separation and people from all corners of the world are able to attend the same programs; this has also given the chance to those who have been out of touch with the marga for some time to restart their spiritual journeys: the unique family which is Ananda Marga is nowadays even stronger and richer than before.

I have been blessed with the opportunity to give classes on the phone about Ananda Marga philoso-

Thanks to social media the isolation was transformed into a hub of new online activities



phy, both in Spanish and English, and one to one consultations with sisters from all around the Sector. This pause in time, gave me also the opportunity to work on a 20 minutes video about the 3 basic A'sanas for women which I have been working on for a while. It will be released shortly once the editing is finished. You will be able to find it on <https://www.youtube.com/user/>. During the pandemic, I also kept running several pages of FB like WWD NYSector, Ananda Marga Mexico, and Devotion in Motion, as well as the WWDNY Sector website.

I have been also inspired by my fellow Didis in the Sector, who in spite of the often critical isolation, have been running programs online of Kiirtan, Kaos'ikii, A'sana classes, and DCs: I truly admire their fighting spirits! Women are

naturally gentle, humble and emphatic, but I see they are also natural leaders, secure of themselves even without knowing their own strengths, and very adaptable to difficult situations. I am truly glad to be given the opportunity in supporting their empowerment and growth on the spiritual path.

These are uncertain times for sure, and we do not know what the future has in store for us: in these last months I felt a lot of extra blessing from Baba (my Spiritual Master) during sadhana, and this has given me and my sisters the chance to really understand the meaning of surrender. Baba is the starting and the ending point, all the rest, as we experienced plenty, is very relative and under the spell of time, place, and person. •

Baba kpra hi kevalam

VIRUSES and MICROVITA

Henk de Weijer

Molecules and their Smartness

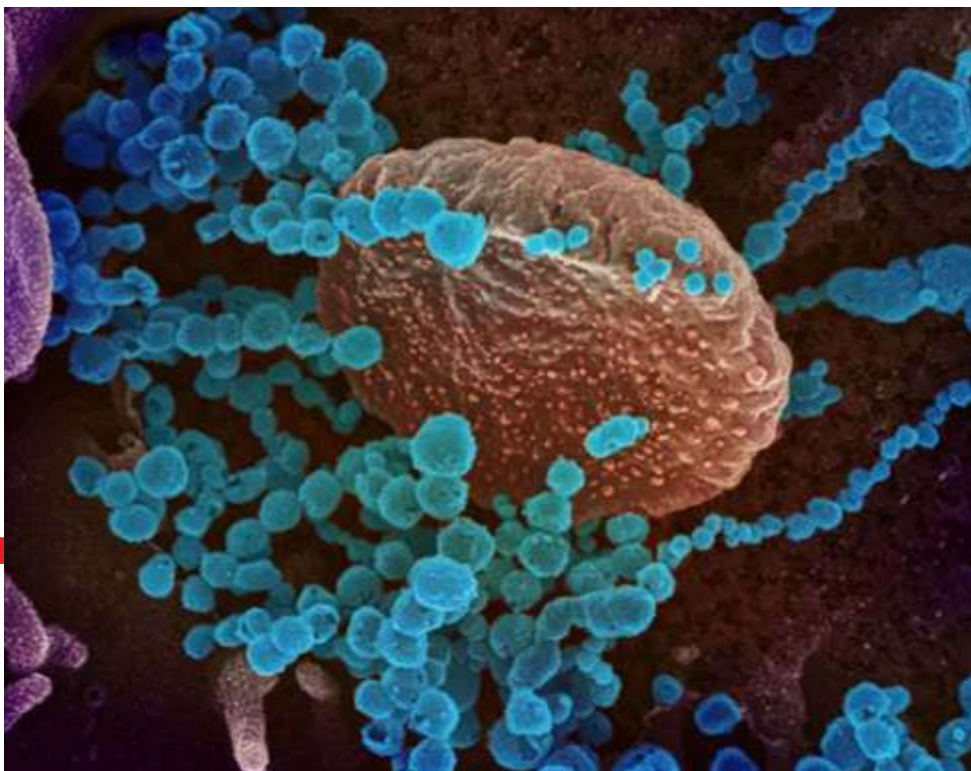
Currently, almost everyone on our planet is confronted with the Corona Virus Disease, COVID-19. Small as they are, with their size of approximately 0.1 micrometre, they flatten entire countries. In RNA, nucleotides are compositions of molecules. These single-stranded, very long molecules, are enclosed by a layer of proteins. The poliovirus, with its genome of 8.000 nucleotides, is one of the smallest viral genomes. COVID-19 has almost 30.000 nucleotides and is one of the longest genomes. However, this number does not make it more dangerous. It only means that it has more skill to overcome host resistance.

***How can the current COVID-19 disease be controlled?
Collective good thoughts can do this.***

A virus cannot be called a living organism because it can only reproduce at the expense of a host. That certainly does not mean that a virus is stupid. Once it has invaded a host, it can multiply for days without

waking up the immune system. Viruses observe, select and remove modified pieces of RNA. Also, they mutate constantly, allowing them to respond quickly to a potential host's defence mechanism. Viruses are smart. Another example of

there is enough wind? Not its components, paper, wooden bars, rope or tail. These are undoubtedly important, but controlled flying also depends on the intelligence and know-how of the maker and the skill of the player. Viruses are



smartness: Kite flying is an interactive game with the forces of nature. Without enough wind or in the opposite situation, during a storm, the game remains a dream. What makes kite flying possible if

heterogeneous compositions of atoms and molecules.

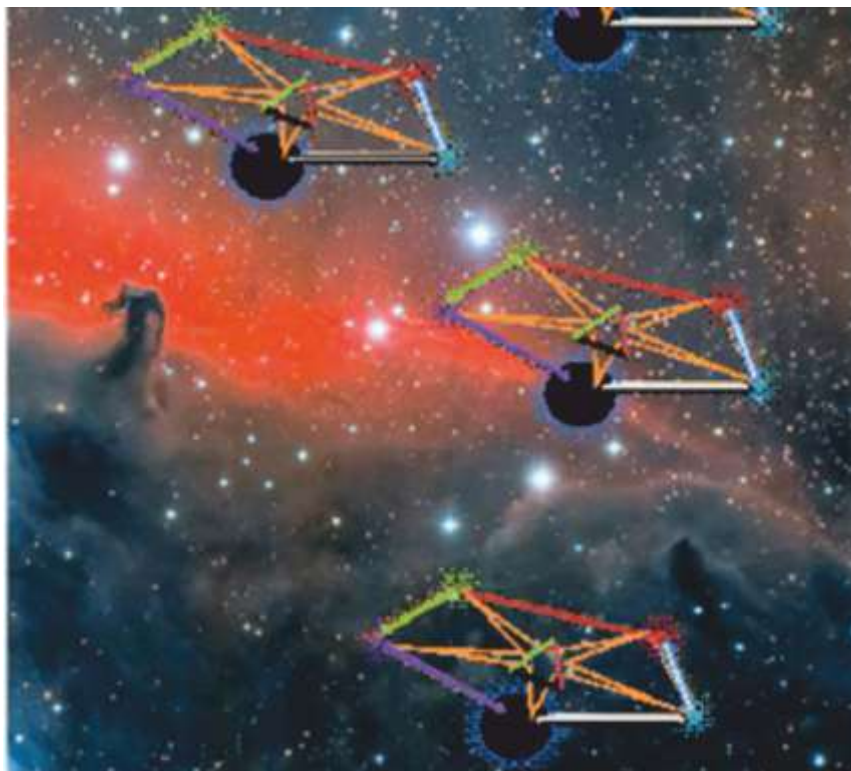
What makes them so smart, dangerous and parasitic? Could it be that, just like with kite flying, also a smart component is included? Are

viruses "complicated molecular machines" or biological beings with a rudimentary mind? If unicellular organisms, and with them viruses, don't have a brain, what explains their ability to observe, read, translate, and then respond appropriately? Microvita and Mind In the previous paragraph questions were asked about a possible carrier of intelligence in uni- and multicellular organisms. Humans are made up of unicellular organisms and equipped with a body and a mind. Their Last Universal Common Ancestor LUCA at the beginning of evolution, must have been a unicellular organism or even groups of organelles. Did the ultimate human mind come out of the blue, or did it evolve from the smallest imaginable mind in LUCA to the current human mind in the current human body? If it is possible or even probable, that mind is something that can evolve, what is the substance of that 'something'? A

quest for clarity in a whole new way. He indicated that the universe is a composition of two components, of which consciousness is the material factor and Cosmic energy the operative principle. Consciousness is all-pervading, while energy is not. Energy is required to perform any action. Energy, the blind force, cannot do anything in a systematic order, unless and until it is supported by intellect. Now, look at some ideas that he mentioned about 'microvita.' 1 - There are entities which come within the realm of both physicality and psychic expressions, which are smaller or subtler than atoms, electrons or protons, and in the psychic realm may be subtler than ectoplasm. 2 - Billions of microvita produce a single carbon atom. 3 - Regarding these microvita of crude order, which may come within the scope of a microscope, people give them the name "virus." They say, "This disease is of virus origin." But virus is a vague term. The better term

"virus," damage human beings. 6 - These living creatures, with their mysterious movement, create minds and bodies. 7 - Collective good thoughts can check the flow of negative microvita. 8 - One category of subtle microvita functions within the mind.

Some Findings - Microvita are granular entities and much smaller than protons. - Their substance is either consciousness or energy. They cannot be particles of energy, because it is a blind force and microvita at least have contact with intellect. The blind cannot lead the blind, which here means that microvita are not particles of energy but consciousness. Consciousness has two forms. Its first form is ubiquity; the second is granularity. In other words: it is both non-local and local, which explains entanglement and shows that empty space does not exist. - Microvita are present in body and mind. They are also permeated by non-local consciousness. - Every structure, whether concrete or subtle, has a mind that can be manifested or remain dormant. Hadrons, e.g. are compositions of quarks, which means that they can be structures with a mind but maybe in an inert form. Viruses have a structured body composed of small and huge molecules. They don't have a brain but still have a mind that is composed of crude and subtle, negative microvita. These microvita do explain the crude behaviour and cleverness of viruses. - The word "virus" first appeared in 1898. The Latin word "virus" means "slimy liquid" or "poison." This word does not even hint at the parasitic nature of its reproduction. - How can the current COVID-19 disease be controlled? Collective good thoughts can do this. At present peace has returned to many cities. People feel more involved and behave accordingly. This almost automatic increase of good thoughts can undoubtedly influence a decrease of negative microvita. Calling that reaction "a practical solution" goes a long way, mainly because economic worries are increasing at the same time.●



similar question also applies to viruses.

What is the breeding ground, the substance for their cleverness? Shrii P.R. Sarkar (May 21, 1921 - October 21, 1990) approached the

will be microvita and not virus. 4 - A mind is associated with every structure, either in manifested form or in dormant form. 5 - Various kinds of negative microvita which have, up to now, been called a

PROUT ON EDUCATION

Education is remoulding the mind and goading it unto the highest state of realization

■ Ganesh Bhat



According to PROUT, the aim of education is: **Sá vidyá yá vimuktaye** “Education is that which liberates.” The real meaning of education is trilateral development – simultaneous development in the physical, mental and spiritual realms of human existence. The sense of universalism should also be awakened in the child. Etiquette and refined behaviour are not enough. Real education leads to a pervasive sense of love and compassion for all creation.

The word E-D-U-C-A-T-I-O-N itself has special significance:

- E** – Enlargement of mind
- D** – DESMEP (D Discipline, E Etiquette, S Smartness, M Memory, E English, P Pronunciation)
- U** – Universal Outlook
- C** – Character
- A** – Active habits
- T** – Trustworthiness
- I** – Ideation of the Great
- O** – Omniscient grace

N – Nice temperament

In the Vedic language, “**shiksha**” means “to make others understand”. You know something but you may or may not be in a position to make others understand what you know. The psychological interpretation is to assimilate objectivity by internal subjectivisation. Education is just remoulding the old structure of the mind and goading it unto the highest state of realization, the exalted status of Supreme Veracity, the highest status of factualities.

Education is a must not only for human beings, but also for all living beings. So, what is the need of education? Proper education enables one to stand against the influence of the physical environment and awaken the psychic urge to attain a higher life, that is, the ideological goal.

The words **prāṇa dharma** means the cardinal characteristic of a person which differentiates one person from another. Just as each

human being has his or her own traits, similarly an entire race living within a particular geographical, historical and cultural environment will also inhere some traits which distinguish that particular race from other. These traits or specialities are inseparably embedded in the internal behaviour of the entire population, and they help to form a particular bent of mind, expression of external behaviour, attitude towards life and society, and on the whole a different outlook.

Take the example of India. The people of India have been inheriting their own **prāṇa dharma** since time immemorial. They are basically **subjective** in their approach to life and the world. By nature they are **parabhimukhi** from the very inception of childhood – that is, they ascribe Godhood to every action, thought and expression. The reason for this is very clear. In ancient India, at the age of five, a boy was sent to the residence of a Guru or enlightened teacher to learn till the age of twenty-five. The child

used to learn mainly paravidya or spiritual knowledge and some aparavidya or mundane knowledge from the Guru. In the educational system of India, the cultivation of spiritual knowledge was primary, and this instilled in the students a high standard of behaviour, reverence and modesty.

Now, the best way of enmity against a person or a race is to deprive the person or the race of the freedom to cultivate their prāṇa dharma, and to prevent them from channelizing their potentiality accordingly. Capitalism and communism are both ultravires to the prāṇa dharma of the people of the world. PROUT wants to maintain the integrity of prāṇa dharma of each and every race.

We should remember that morality, spirituality and humanity, and a happy blending of occidental extroversial science and oriental introversial philosophy is the very foundation of our system of education. Ananda Marga believes in one universal society with one ideology and one cosmic goal. The ideological component of the unit mind which provides the initial inspiration for the individual to attain that Cosmic state is called “**morality**”.

We have to keep in view **three fundamentals** before imparting education. The **first** is that education must always be based on factuality. There must not be the injection of any dogma or fanaticism or any type of geographical or racial chauvinism in the education system.

The **second** fundamental is that education must awaken the thirst for knowledge in the students' minds. The students themselves will create environmental pressure by persistent demands for answers to queries like: What is the answer? Is it correct? The longing, “I wish to know... I wish to understand and assimilate the entire universe” should be created. Society will gain no lasting benefit if teachers force students to swallow knowledge like quinine pills instead of awakening the thirst for knowledge in the minds of young children, or for that matter in the mind of any student.

The **third** fundamental of education is that teachers and students should have a balanced mind, unaffected, unassailed by unimportant entities.

It is not proper, under any circumstances, to burden the young shoulders of students with a heavy load of languages simply to satisfy the political whims of the leaders. If, however, the nationalistic sentiment can be to some extent restrained, all the languages can be excluded from the syllabus except two: **English and the mother tongue**. If students study in or awaken their thirst for knowledge through these two languages, then in time, propelled by their own urge, they may learn ten or twenty more languages as well. In schools and colleges also, it is desirable to offer as many optional languages as possible. Such a policy is not likely to be criticized by anyone.

In order for people around the world to be able to communicate, a vishvabhaṣā [universal or world language] is needed, and the teaching and study of that language should be given equal importance in every country. If we consider the following three qualities of a language – that it should be widely spoken, be easily understood and be capable of powerful expression – English alone is qualified to become the world language. No one in the world should consider English to be the language of England alone, but should rather accept it with an open mind as the common language for the communication of ideas. Doing this, will in no way harm any mother tongue.

Some Educational Policies:

From the beginning, children in India can be taught **three** languages – their mother tongue or natural language, basic Samskrta or the appropriate classical language, and the world language. Students should be encouraged to learn the history of their respective mother tongues.

Proper care should be taken in the selection of teachers. Academic certificates are not the only criteria for selecting teachers. Qualities like a strong character, righteousness, social service, selflessness, an inspirational personality, and leadership ability should be evident in teachers. Teachers should get the highest respect in society and their economic needs should be properly looked after.

The framing of educational policies, the control of the educational system, and all other activities concerned with education should be

managed by a board comprised of efficient teachers. This board should enjoy full freedom and authority to carry out its duties. **Education must be free from all political interference. Education should be free at all levels.**

For spiritual practice you are to create a spiritual urge. Therefore you are to create a proper system of education. Education should be imparted in a spiritual and psychic style. When they get proper education, a proper spiritual urge is created and then they will start Sādhana.

The practice of morality should be the most important subject in the syllabus at all levels.

We must develop the physico-psychic aspect of the students through proper physical culture, which will include Yoga Āsanās, proper diet, games and sports, etc. And to develop the psycho-spiritual aspect, we must reorient the entire curriculum of all schools from kindergarten to post-university level according to the Neo-Humanist philosophy, and must incorporate the practices of Astāṅga Yoga into the curriculum in all grades. This will be the practical approach. And the guiding philosophy, the controlling philosophy should be: “This universe is ours” – and “**we** means humans, animals and plants.

Teachers must be selected carefully. High academic qualifications do not necessarily confer on a person the right to become a teacher. Teachers must possess such qualities as personal integrity, strength of character, righteousness, a feeling for social service, unselfishness, an inspiring personality and leadership ability. They are samāja gurus and for this reason it is not possible to accept just anyone as a teacher. Because teachers have an extremely important role to play, their professional standards must be very high.

If teachers are to be held responsible for building ideal men and women, they must also be given the right to formulate educational policies, instead of being mere teaching machines. They should always keep higher ideals before them as they work. Those who are not teachers should not be allowed to interfere in educational matters that come within the jurisdiction of a school. ●

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Agra turns out 250,000 pairs of shoes every day. Most of them are made by invisible home-workers at the bottom of the global supply chain, who earn as little as Rs 30 a pair

INVISIBLE, EXPLOITED Home-workers of Agra's Footwear Industry

Aakash Mehrotra

Sarojini is a home-worker at one of the 4,500 home-based units in Agra, the footwear capital of north India. For her, each new day marks a search for work to keep food on the table, a roof over her family, and her children in school. To her sub-contractor, she is known by a number. She is, quite simply, one piece in the supply chain of a footwear brand -- one of the million invisible workers in this industry.

Sarojini wakes up at 6 every morning and gets to work assembling the upper parts of shoes, stitching them together. But her work and therefore her income are irregular. When it comes, her small thatched house turns into a warehouse for the domestic footwear brand (she cannot pronounce the name properly). When she delivers, she gets paid. Since she is not recognised as part of the company's workforce, she is not entitled to sick pay, maternity benefits, medical insurance, or pension. Like Sarojini, Rehana works for one of the 200-odd sole-making units clustered around the inner city. They supply material



either to other units or to traders dealing in shoes in the main wholesale market of Hing ki Mandi. Although the home-workers usually get work throughout the year, the months between August and March are peak periods, when production and thus business is good.

According to ILO Convention 177, home-workers are sub-contracted or dependent workers working for an employer, intermediary or sub-contractor for a piece rate. This means they are not entitled to a minimum wage. Often, they are paid one-third or one-fourth of what a typical factory worker earns on a per piece basis, apart from what they have to pay for supplies and transport.

Low pay is only one of the problems home-workers face. Most home-workers are usually involved in the most insecure areas of employment; they enjoy no visibility in the supply chain; there are no occupational safety checks despite complaints about health hazards arising out of poor working conditions, use of toxic chemicals, especially glue, infected fingers and stress from long working hours. And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Agra is one of India's most diverse and tightly knit footwear manufacturing regions, still bearing the characteristics of an artisan-rooted low-tech cluster. The locally available skilled artisan labour belongs mainly to the Muslim and Jatava communities -- traditional



shoe-makers from the Mughal era -- residing in the inner city areas. Some artisans are home-workers; others are wage workers who opt to work on a per piece basis during the slack season. Home-workers are usually involved in five major shoe production activities -- cutting, upper stitching, upper closing, pasting and finishing. Activities like upper stitching are better priced, at around Rs 10-15 per piece, while cutting will get a worker something like Rs 4-6 on a per piece basis. Assembly of an entire shoe could fetch something in the region of Rs 30-40. In the traditional home-

working system, per worker productivity of a complete shoe varies between three and five days.

India is the second largest global producer of footwear, accounting for over 13% of footwear production, and coming up with over 2,065 million pairs of footwear every year. The country's \$35 billion footwear industry provides over 20 lakh jobs, of which 70% are in the unorganised sector. In Agra alone, the daily footwear output ranges between 250,000 and 300,000 pairs of footwear for both the export and domestic markets. Its share in the domestic market is over half, and in the export market one-fifth. It hosts around 60 exporting units, 200 large domestic units, more than 200 small domestic units and over 4,500 home-based units.

Then there are a number of footwear accessories manufacturers, all accounting for a huge workforce and an even larger number of home-workers sub-contracted for the task. For every factory labourer, there are over 10 home-workers working on a per piece rate. Having an army of home-workers is a win-win situation for the industry. Indeed, many major footwear companies are linked to home-working. Brands like Nike and GAP have all been guilty of





violating the requirements for reasonable working conditions at their production facilities. They have been criticised for being complicit in breaching the ethical lines set out by their company. An internal report by Nike, for instance, found that nearly two-thirds of the 168 factories making Converse (one of the company's brands) products failed to meet the company's own ethical manufacturing standards. The trend as regards domestic brands is worse; domestic companies operate on a smaller scale and most do not have an ethical code of conduct.

Home-working brings about a complex relationship between employee and employer. Although retailers do not directly employ home-workers, supply chain decisions do directly impact them. And although suppliers do not directly source materials from home-workers, they work on their products and are deemed to be 'working on contract'. They are therefore invisible to the actors at the top. Likewise, home-workers are unaware of the range of actors in this long sub-contracted chain and their responsibilities or ethical obligations.

Because of their 'invisibility', traditional trade unions have never

been able to address home-workers' issues, although small steps are being taken. In Tamil Nadu, for instance, a home-workers federation has set up a savings and life insurance scheme, offering members greater security and access to loans. Companies themselves are moving to improve the precarious working conditions of home-workers in their employ. Efforts are on by the Ethical Trading Initiative to develop a multi stakeholder platform directed at improving the condition of home-workers by offering them training in health and safety issues, ensuring that they receive fair payment, and that companies introduce artisan cards for them to increase their visibility in the supply chain.

Apart from this, various international declarations like the ILO Convention and the Kathmandu Convention have recognised and appreciated the rights of home-workers. Business sustainability reporting frameworks like the Global Reporting Initiative, Business Sustainability Initiatives, UN guiding principles on business and human rights focus on the value of human rights in the business supply chain; CSR forums recognise that businesses have a social responsibility and that the sphere of

influence for any business begins by taking an ethical stand towards the workforce.

Dialogue between businesses, NGOs, trade unions and human rights organisations would help create the required impetus on this issue. Improving the work conditions of home-workers will bring greater transparency and sustainability to global supply chains and also help organise the informal economy. One of the principles defined in the National Voluntary Guidelines (NVGs) developed by SEBI for 100 top listed companies in the NSE (this could be applied to the top 500 companies) recognises human rights and ethical sourcing as integral parts of business sustainability.

The Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) and Stop Child Labour organised two stakeholder meetings, in Agra and Chennai, to discuss the issue of home-working and child labour in the footwear industry. Each stakeholder meeting drew a diverse audience of local footwear suppliers, business associations, government officials, international brands and retailers, international and local NGOs, trade unions, and social compliance experts to analyse and chart out a sustainable path that could be taken to eradicate child labour in the industry. The consultations yielded the idea of initiating bottom-up research to better understand the socio-economic realities of home-workers and to develop tools and guidelines to bring in greater transparency and accountability in the supply chain. An encouraging trend is that buyers are themselves voicing interest in such tools and are slowly graduating to the concept of ethical supply chains. The bottom-up research should help businesses devise specific initiatives to improve the condition of home-workers.

Ethics is the new competitive watchword for any labour-intensive industry. Businesses must come forward and realise that good business means much more than good profits. ●

BOOK REVIEW

by Acarya Maheshvarananda

Reincarnation : Science of the Afterlife by Steven Richheimer (San Germán, PR: InnerWorld Publications, 2019)

The author, Steven L. Richheimer, PhD, is a very able guide for this extraordinary in-depth study of a strange subject. He received his doctorate in chemistry from Stanford University and for more than fifty years has been engaged in the practice of tantric meditation and in the study of how science is consistent with spiritual philosophy. He defines reincarnation as the transmigration of an individual's soul from one body to a new body following death.

As a scientist, he takes us on a journey of exploration. In the first part of this book, he explores the history of reincarnation as a central tenet of many ancient cultures and religions, including the indigenous beliefs of Africa, East Asia, Siberia, Oceania, and North and South America. The Kabbalist and Hasidic sects of Judaism and the Sufi, Ismaili, and Druze sects of Islam accept and teach the doctrine. During the first four to five hundred years of its existence, Christianity had a strong connection with reincarnation. The Law of Karma is fundamental to all the major Eastern religions today.

In the second part, the author reviews the large body of scientific evidence that some children have accurate memories of a previous life. He shows us substantial evidence that birthmarks, birth defects, and elements of personality are passed from one incarnation to the next. Then he examines cases of genius, savants, and the recall of previous lives by hypnotic regression.

Next, in part three, we see evidence that indicates that the mind is not physical and hence can survive after the death of the body. Mystical experiences, out-of-body and near-death experiences are all fascinating. Extra-sensory perception includes clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition, and psychokinesis. Finally, the most amazing results of all are explained in the chapter "Nonlocality of Quantum Mechanics",



which includes entanglement and the quantum wave function. Whereas many neuroscientists today equate the mind with the brain, there is extensive evidence that contradicts this hypothesis.

Finally, in part four, the author shows us that reincarnation is relevant if the true purpose of life is to achieve union with the Supreme Consciousness. The importance of moral behavior in this endeavor leads to the goal of ultimate merger, the end of rebirth, which is found in the Eastern religions, and in the mystical traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

The book includes an excellent bibliography and index.

DEVOTION

The Only Path

Shrii Shrii Ānandamūrti

I will say something regarding the necessity of devotion (bhakti) in the path of spiritual cult. Everybody knows that jñāna (knowledge), karma (action) and bhakti (devotion) are the three aides for progress along the path of spirituality. A jñānii (person of knowledge) reaches near the goal but yet a little distance remains in between. A



karmii (person of action) reaches nearer the goal but even then a little gap remains. A bhakta (person of devotion) reaches right to the goal. The jñānii has to repent ultimately that he or she wasted a long life on dry discourses of knowledge and could not fulfil their mission. Karmiis too, repent likewise. They think that they worked and reached nearer to the goal but could not achieve the same. There is no repentance in the minds of the bhaktas, however, because their minds are always full of bliss. They neither feel exalted nor humiliated. There is nothing else in their minds except bliss, the unbroken flow of happiness (ānanda), and therefore they remain unaffected by pain and pleasure.

Only a devotee can say this, and not the intellectual or the one dexterous in work. However simple an intellectual may be, vanity always remains concealed in the inner cells of the mind. Intellectuals think they are not ordinary people. They feel that they know what other people do not know. These feelings exist whenever there is vanity. Pride causes downfall. Thus we see that an intellectual is prone to fall down. Where there is the possibility of downfall, the path may be good but it may not be safe. Karmiis, too, feel proud when they think they have accomplished some work. Outwardly they may express that they have done nothing, but secretly they harbour desire in their minds that newspapers may publish their names. A dexterous worker falls prey to these weaknesses. Bhaktas have nothing to lose. Since they realize Parama Puruṣa as their own, they have nothing to lose or to gain. Only devotees can say that He is the same for all. Whether He causes pleasure or pain makes no difference because He who causes pain, like the one who give pleasure, is the manifestation of Nārāyaṇa. But, this feeling is not with intellectuals because they think objectively. Therefore, they feel pleasure, pain or humiliation whenever confronted with different circumstances.

Devotees have no malice against anybody. Why should there be malice against anybody? While a great spiritualist was eating cooked rice, a hungry dog came and sat on his lap. The dog, too, started eating with him. When both were eating together an intellectual came and said, "Fie, fie, the dog is a filthy animal and yet you are eating with him from the same plate. What kind of person are you? You are untouchable". The devotee replied, "I am Viśṇu, this dog is Viśṇu. Why then do you laugh at me? The whole universe is pervaded by Viśṇu. Your abuses and praises are all the same to me. I love flowers and thorns equally." Only a devotee can speak like this. ●

AMURT/AMURTEL Serves the People Hit by Lockdown

The Government of India announced nationwide lockdown on 24th March 2020 to stop the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. This created panic among the daily wage earners, vendors, self-employed, retailers, and small and big industries. Migrant labourers became the worst victims of stress and anxiety. Because of the apathy and lack of concern by the employers, they were forced to flee on foot from their workplace back to their native villages or towns.

Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team (AMURT/AMURTEL) has been rendering relief services to the people affected by the lockdown for last four and half months. AMURT has provided cooked food items and food grains like rice, pulse, potatoes, salt, soap, oil, soybeans, tarpaulins and other essential commodities in West Bengal, Assam, Tripura, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Karnatak and Tamilnadu. More than three lakhs people were benefited by AMURT/ AMURTEL relief activities throughout India during Covid-19 lockdown period. Presently AMURT/AMURTEL is rendering services in Purulia, South Kolkata and Darjeeling Districts of West Bengal.



Ananda Nagar (Jaipur Block) : AMURT/AMURTEL is still providing rice, potatoes and other essential commodities among the distressed people in and around Ananda Nagar villages, Purulia District, West Bengal. The Team is led by Acharya Muktananda Avadhuta and others

Kolkata; AMURT / AMURTEL has been organising homeopathic medical camps to combat Covid-19 pandemic disease around South Kolkata for last two months. So far sixty thousand people have benefited. The team is led by Avadhutika Ananda Rasaprajina Acharya & others.

Siliguri : AMURT / AMURTEL has been providing rice, pulse, bread, vegetables and other essential commodities within Siliguri city for last two months. Relief work is still going on. About thirty thousand people were benefited by the said relief work. The team is led by Acharya Samresh Brc, Abhijit Das and others.

Samastipur and Muzaffarpur : AMURTEL (Anand Marga Universal Relief Team Ladies) organised a food distribution programme for the victims of this calamity in Samastipur and Muzaffarpur, India, for which Didi Ananda Rupadhara, acting SWWS, and Sectorial GV secretary, organized a 500 USD donation from generous donors Sujata and Mehool Dave from Toronto, Canada.

PBI (UP) to Start Anandam Rasoi

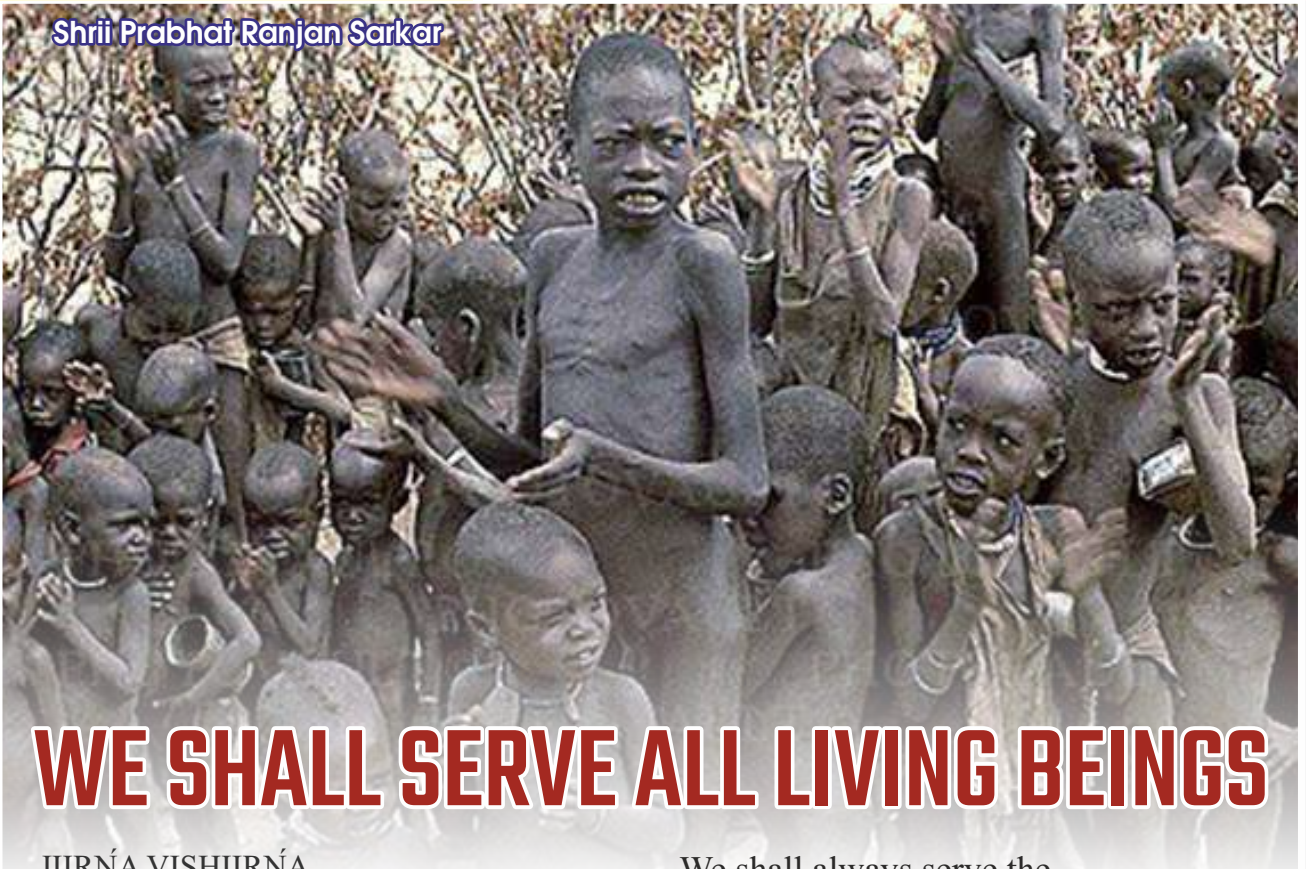


On 20 August the core committee of Uttar Pradesh unit of Proutist Bloc, India met at the office of the state President R. P. Singh Chauhan in Kakadev, Kanpur. The meeting was presided by the party's national convener Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta. Those present in the meeting included Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta, R.P. Singh, Moti Lal Gupta, Abhishek Pandey, Pradeep Saini, Sandeep Tyagi and Renu Singh Chandel.

The committee unanimously decided that :

1. The party will engage in various activities of social service. Educational projects will be started in the areas where children are not getting quality education.
2. Anandam Rasoi, a daily cheap kitchen, will be launched soon to provide food at a nominal cost to labourers, industrial workers, the homeless etc.
3. The committee discussed the ways and means to take the party to the grassroots. It was decided that the state committee will include at least one representative from each of the 75 districts of the state.

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar



WE SHALL SERVE ALL LIVING BEINGS

JIIRNÁ VISHIIRNÁ
JIIVER KARIBO SEVÁ
ÁRTE KŚUDHÁRTE
BÁINCÁBE NATUVÁ KE BĀ
JIIVER KARIBO SEVÁ
JIIRNÁ VISHIIRNÁ
JIIVER KARIBO SEVÁ

ÁDHITE BHOGE JÁRÁ
VYÁDHI YÁ TANÁTE SÁRÁ
ÁDHITE BHOGE JÁRÁ
VYÁDHI YÁ TANÁTE SÁRÁ
SE MÁNAVA PASHU VIHAUNGA
SABÁRI JANNYE MORÁ
LATÁ GULMERA ÁCHE PRÁN
TÁDERO TARE BHÁVÁ
JIIVER KARIBO SEVÁ

DÚR KE KÁCHE TÉNE CHI
SAUNGE SABE NIYECHI
DÚR KE KÁCHE TÉNE CHI
SAUNGE SABE NIYECHI
PRÁNE O MANE MENECHI
SAMPADA SABÁRI MÁPÁ
JIIVER KARIBO SEVÁ
JIIRNÁ VISHIIRNÁ

We shall always serve the
Old and emaciated impoverished
Otherwise, who else will save them?
We shall serve all living beings
We shall always serve the
Old and emaciated impoverished

Those who suffer pain
Are sick and in torment.
Those men animals and birds
We are for all of them.
Vines shrub and plants have life
We shall feel for them always
We shall always serve the
Old and emaciated impoverished

Those who were far
I've taken them along
And brought them near
Heart and soul
I've realised
That the wealth of the world
Is meant to be shared by one and all
We shall always serve the
Old and emaciated impoverished



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