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# PROUT

A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis



## MYANMAR EARTHQUAKE LESSONS FOR INDIA



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# Fundamental Principles of PROUT

Today there is catastrophe and misery in human society for one reason : the defective leadership of society. People blindly follow even unintelligent leaders.

– Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

-  No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth without the clear permission or approval of the collective body
-  There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution of all mundane, supra mundane and spiritual potentialities of the universe
-  There should be maximum utilization of the physical, metaphysical and spiritual potentialities of unit and collective body of the human society.
-  There should be a proper adjustment amongst these physical, metaphysical, mundane, supra mundane and spiritual utilizations.
-  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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Ácárya Santosánanda Avadhúta

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Main Road, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi - 110017  
Mobile No. : 09212199658, 9810625082 Email : prout.am@gmail.com



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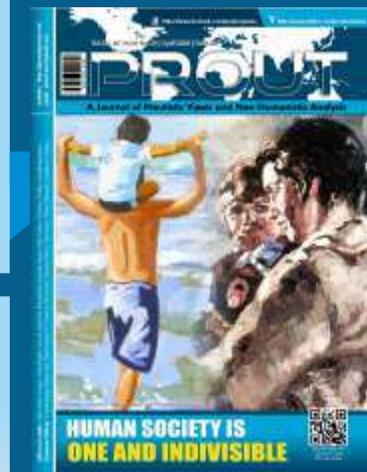
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# JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

**T**he recent fire and discovery of burnt piles of cash have created a lot of stir in Delhi and beyond. Reports have been filed and replies sought. The Supreme Court has formed an inquiry panel. Political leaders are once again debating which process is better for appointment of judges. It all started around midnight on March 14, when a fire was reported from the official residence of Delhi High Court Judge Yashwant Varma. At the time, the Judge was in Bhopal. In a rare public disclosure, the Supreme Court uploaded a video and photographs of a gutted room with piles of half or fully burnt currency notes. It also set up a three-member inquiry committee to look into the matter. Justice Varma, meanwhile, said the video “appeared to be a conspiracy to frame and malign me”. This has reopened the debate on Judicial Accountability and who should appoint and how to judge the judges.

Ever since January 26, 1950, when HJ Kania was appointed the first Chief Justice, the Executive has been trying to influence constitutional court appointments and the judges have been stoutly defending this. Three days before he took oath he made some comments about Bashir Ahmed, a Madras High Court judge, to which Prime Minister Nehru took umbrage and complained to Home Minister Sardar Patel, who deputed the Home Secretary to convince Kania not to give an adverse opinion about the Madras HC judge. The Nehru era saw repeated attempts to dilute judiciary’s independence.

In 1958, the first Law Commission blamed the Chief Ministers becoming a source of patronage for those aspiring to become HC judges. The seventh CJI (Chief Justice of India) Gajendragadkar objected to Home Minister Nanda’s proposal of large scale transfers of HC judges saying it would create great bitterness and uneasiness among judges and impact independence of the judiciary.

Till 1970 the Executive always appointed the senior most among SC judges as the CJI. This criterion was ignored by Indira Gandhi and AN Ray was appointed superseding HM Shelat, KS Hegde and AN Grover; all three self respecting judges resigned on April 25, 1973. In a crude defence of these supersessions it was said in Parliament “Certainly we as a government have a duty to take into consideration the philosophy and outlook of the judge to whether he should or should not lead the Supreme Court”.

In 1976 during the Emergency leading lights of the apex court capitulated to brute executive power. In the ADM Jabalpur case they cravenly upheld the suspension of fundamental rights including right to life. Justice HR Khanna’s next in line for becoming the CJI courageously dissented in a 4-1 verdict. When Ray retired in 1977 he was superseded and he too promptly resigned. Thereafter the government strictly followed the seniority rule but continued to try to appoint loyalists as constitutional court judges. Post Emergency Janta Dal Govt. implemented an important change by insisting that CJI must consult his two most senior judges while recommending persons for judgeship in order to broad base selection by merit.

Against this backdrop Parliament passed the National Judicial Accountability Act in 2014. It was meant to infuse transparency in judges’ appointments. The proposed NJAC would have consisted of the CJI as ex-officio chairperson, two senior most Supreme Court judges, the Union Law Minister, and two eminent jurists nominated by a committee comprising the Prime Minister, the CJI, and the Leader of the Opposition. SC even though it admitted to shortcomings in the Collegium comprising 5 senior most judges of the Supreme Court of selecting judges struck this down saying it would hurt judicial independence. So what could be the answer?

As suggested by eminent jurists there could be a way to break this impasse in the conflict between the Executive and Judiciary which would infuse transparency and maintain the primacy of the judiciary in the judge selection process. The NJAC composition could be modified to comprise CJI and four senior most SC judges, the law minister and an eminent jurist. But until a Sadvipra Samaja (Moralist Society) is established and without individuals following universal cardinal principles of exceptional morality, this approach which at best is a short term compromise, its efficacy would always be in doubt.

Way back in 1969 Prout’s founder Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar said: “The Judicial Board of Sadvipras shall be elected by Sadvipras and consist of those Sadvipras who are experienced in the work of the judiciary. It shall frame the rules and procedures for the appointment of judges and different personnel of the judiciary.” So establishing a Sadvipra Samaja is of utmost importance and should be done so without undue delay. ●



## Human Society is One and Indivisible

A very exciting concluding issue. Beautiful paintings by Mouth and Foot Painting artists, especially the cover design, very apt. Thank you for publishing this wonderful discourse in three parts.

- Neelkanth Srinivasan Vallore

## April 2025 Issue

It featured many noteworthy articles, particularly Women-Society's Wing. The best judge of whether or not a country develops is how it treats its women. Women leaders in politics enhance social development and those in the corporate sector contribute to inclusive workplace policies.

Women are the mothers of society and therefore men are greatly indebted to them. UNDP defines women's wings within political parties as "internal sections that aim to strengthen women's representation and participation within the party and in the political process in general". Women's wings throughout the world have achieved significant strides towards increasing women's representation and political power within governments. They initiate a moral and spiritual awakening; impart knowledge of health rules and norms; awaken them about their role in establishing peace and happiness in the family and society; bring out their hidden powers and talent by encouraging women education and initiate a self-effort on their part to identify their spiritual self and to realize it.

- Acarya Dhanjoo Ghista USA

## 3 years Ukraine War

This long war with its untold human misery should stop forthwith. Russia undoubtedly is the aggressor and should be made to pay war reparations by the World Body. That is difficult to conceive as there is no World Govt. in force. That is the world's highest priority today.

- Barkha Date, Mumbai

## Globalisation in Stakeholder Capitalism

A very interesting and thought provoking article. Prout's economic model is the one for the future, capitalism is on the wane. It is about time, because it has been the single most cause of ecological destruction on the planet.

- Arun Sain, New Delhi

## Falling Indian Rupee

This continuous fall of the Indian Rupee is disastrous for the nation's economy. Its fall should be arrested immediately before it causes further damage. Suggestions made by the author should be looked into at the highest level.

- Surinder Singh, Patiala

## Poverty in India

A very well written article. Poverty in India is still there even though there's been improvement. India should have zero poverty at the earliest. In a country aiming to be the world's third largest economy without removing poverty such lofty economic goal has little meaning and would show the country in poor light.

- Arjun Bhatia, Dehra Dun

## Indian Institutes of Technology

IIT's have produced excellent technocrats but unfortunately the vision of the founding fathers of providing scientists and technocrats of high caliber for research work, design and development have not been fulfilled. They have been unable to stop India's brain drain. This should be stopped forthwith by

providing adequate and well paying opportunities within the country.

- Manoshi Chatterjee, Kolkata

## Global Tech Divide

An extremely thought provoking article about India's tech development. Sadly it is nowhere near China even through the latter got independence two years later. What could be the cause? Perhaps China despite being a totalitarian regime has better leadership, with better vision and disciplined implementation of policy and plans for the country's betterment.

- Tamil Srinivasan, Kurnool

## Social Media : Opportunities and Threats

Social media revolution has taken the world by storm, with its accompanying advantages and disadvantages. Providing free knowledge is one of its highlights which has benefited billions of people all over the world. Disadvantages are also there like cyber fraud, attacking elders and senior citizens.

- Ranjana Bhasker, Pune

## Waste Collectors' Health Hazards

The govt. is meant to look after the health of all the people and waste collectors are no exception. Every day they are exposed to diseases and injuries, they should get free medical and proper attention whenever required.

- Danish Hyat, Bhopal

## Bastar Blast

It is true this problem of insurgency can be fully solved by political means and not military. It's a well researched article tracing the history of insurgency in the country.

- AK Tarapore, Navi Mumbai

## Avalanche Rescue

It was a tragic event that took lives of our defence personnel. The fact that many came out safely is a credit to those disciplined brave hearts working in such harsh conditions. ●

- N/Sub (Retd) Sarabjit Singh, Jalandhar

## A BLIND MAN WHO TOOK ON A BLINDED SYSTEM

**T**his is a story about a blind man who battled a blind system for 15 years and emerged victorious. Shivam Kumar Srivastava fought for the right to be seen. In 2008 he cleared the UPSC exams for the Central Civil Services with a rank high in the merit for selection. But when the final list came out his name wasn't there and no explanation was forthcoming nor given. There was also no rejection letter, only silence. It was deliberate erasure of his accomplishment.

Though the Persons with Disabilities Act 1965 guaranteed visually impaired candidates a fair chance in the Civil Services but laws meant nothing as the concerned officials looked the other way ignoring the legal protections. Vacancies were not filled and his rightful selection got buried under piles of paper work.

Shivam's legal battle began in 2009 when he and another visually impaired candidate Pankaj Srivastava discovered that vacancies for visually impaired candidates were not filled from 1996 to 2005. The two challenged this in the Central Administrative Tribunal which ruled in their favour in 2012. The Govt's appeal in the High Court was also rejected in 2013. Not satisfied the Govt. appealed in the Supreme Court, it was a mischievous move knowing fully well this takes long. If they had not appealed he would have got into the service then as the Supreme Court took ten years to decide and in July 2024 ordered the Union Govt. to appoint him, ten years Shivam lost unnecessarily. It was a bitter victory as bureaucratic blindness had cost him prime years of his career something no court ruling could compensate. By then his batch mates had spent 15 years and received their due promotions, some had become Joint Secretaries while Shivam had just started.

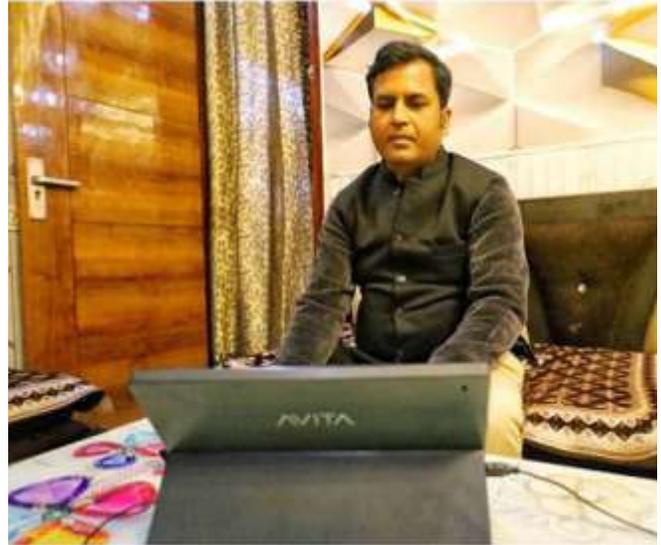
Born in Motihari, Bihar, in 1978 Shivam a school topper's world collapsed when he was 17. Leber hereditary optic neuropathy a rare genetic disorder permanently took away his sight. His father took him to all kinds of specialists but nothing seemed to work. For five years he clung to hope, yoga, meditation, alternate medicine but in 2001 he had to accept the reality — there was no cure for his blindness.

Determined to rebuild his life he moved to Delhi and trained at the All India Confederation of the Blind and National Institute for the Empowerment of persons with Visual Disabilities. There he discovered text to speech software which allowed him to scan, digitize and listen to books, a tool that became his lifeline in the UPSC preparation.

In 2016 he was married to Pushpanjali Rani who never doubted even for a moment about Shivam's ability to fulfill his dreams. They now have two daughters aged 7 and 2. His dauntless approach taking life head on has inspired many including Sunil Kumar, a judicial officer in Tis Hazari Court, who credits him for pushing for major workplace reforms.

There was no promotion quota for disabled employees in Delhi courts but thanks to Shivam, Sunil became a senior judicial assistant. Now six months into his new job in the Indian Information Service as an Assistant Director in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, he commutes daily 60 km up and down to the Indian Institute of Mass Communications where he is undergoing two years of induction training which he should actually have begun in 2008.

Says Shivam "I despise the term blind, because I believe I am more capable than many who have vision. The fight was never about me. It was about proving that people like me deserve a place in this system even when the system refuses to see us". For such a bright young man and fighter as Shivam the Supreme Court should have given him a retrospective appointment. This would have given him the same benefits as his batch mates, which he would have got had it not been for blind bureaucracy. ●



# Law and Justice

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

When a large number of people who may or may not be criminals are murdered at the same time, it is called ganahanana. Even if a large number of criminals are murdered at the same time this term is used because it is very difficult to theoretically judge who is a criminal and who is not. Sometimes innocent people may be subjected to severe punishment because wrong information appeared in the documents and records concerned with their trials. At other times judges may deliver incorrect judgements, and in fact there are numerous cases where judges have made mistakes. In such circumstances even innocent people may be given capital punishment. Then again, innocent people or those who have committed minor crimes are sometimes deliberately given capital punishment because of malicious judgements. Such punishments can never be supported. For example, the murder of Socrates can never be supported, neither can the hanging of King Nanda Kumar or the assassination of Siraj-ud-doola. These murders can never be justified by logic or reason.

Over and above these examples, the very institution of capital punishment cannot be supported. Those who kill other human beings violate cardinal human principles. What to speak

of human beings, those who kill animals also overstep cardinal principles hence their actions can never be justified. One who has killed another in the name of justice is even more condemnable, but even then the system of capital punishment cannot be supported.

Nor can we support the actions of diehard criminals who strut arrogantly through the streets waging a campaign of terror and destruction. Assassins and murderers must be brought within a penal code based on Neohumanism so that their thirst

At times judges deliver incorrect judgements and on numerous occasions judges have made mistakes.



for blood is permanently eliminated.

It is usually found that those who are victorious in war try others once the war is over, as if they had a holy dispensation. Those who are vanquished are branded as murderous and antisocial elements even though they may be simple, harmless people. In the last world war the Allied Forces (England, France, USA and USSR) were victorious and the Axis Powers (Germany, Italy and Japan) were defeated. The Allied forces passed judgement on many so-called war criminals without properly verifying who were guilty and to what extent. Even the Axis leaders died before the term of their natural lives – Signor Benito Mussolini of Italy died an unnatural death, Adolf Hitler poured petrol over his body and ignited it, and Prime Minister Tojo of Japan was hanged. It is said that the British undertook an intensive search for Subhash Chandra Bose in order to try him as a war criminal. Dr. Radhabinod Pal of Bengal was one of the judges at an international tribunal which was established to try the so-called international war criminals, but he disapproved of the way politicians were declared war criminals and given death sentences. So, when many people



*The trial of Galileo*

are murdered at a time – whether they are ordinary criminals or not – it is called ganahanana.

During the Second World War the Allied forces mercilessly killed hundreds of thousands of absolutely innocent men, women and children in Hiroshima and Nagasaki by dropping atom bombs on them. They threw innumerable men, women and children into the jaws of death, and poisoned, maimed and mutilated countless others through nuclear fallout. Was this action humanistic? Under

what right did they dare hang Prime Minister Tojo? These questions will crop up repeatedly in the minds of enlightened people. This black history can never be suppressed by mouthing hollow, high-sounding slogans and flying white pigeons of peace.

Once a certain prime minister discarded his much vaunted humanism and love of non-violence on the basis of rumours. I am aware of certain politicians – and many others are also aware of them – who preach the gospels of peace by flying white pigeons but sharpen the weapons of war behind people's backs. They hold garlands of felicitation in their hands but conceal knives in their sleeves. Their policy is: “Preach the gospels of peace but keep your powder dry”. They pretend that out of love for humanity their hearts will melt. In the fervour of political rallies their eyes dissolve with tears and flow like the Ganges, but in their hearts they crave for a menu of roast chicken – slaughtered after ignoring the cries of innocent hens. The gospels of peace do not fit in such mouths. Let them raise the slogans, “Victory to roast chicken. Victory to rump steak.” ●



*Royal Courts of Justice, London*



*Collapsed Ava Bridge near Mandalay, Myanmar March 29, 2025*

# LESSONS FROM MYANMAR

## Why India Must Act before the Great Himalayan Earthquake

**T**he recent 7.7 magnitude earthquake in Myanmar and Thailand killed over 3085 people (with 341 missing) and 4700 injured. Such incidents in our neighbouring countries serve as a wake-up call for us to reflect on how prepared we are to deal with such a situation if it were to happen in India. This is critical as most Indians do not know what to do in earthquakes, hospitals, schools, and public buildings need to be built to survive earthquakes and fast city growth with bad construction

makes things worse

Experts warn there is a very high probability a major earthquake will hit India. And when it does, it can be worse than what we are witnessing in Myanmar if it hits big densely populated cities like Delhi or Guwahati. Our country remains dangerously unprepared.

In Myanmar, the earthquake was caused by a horizontal motion along the Sagaing fault. It was like huge portions of land sliding past each other horizontally. The occurrence of a strike-slip fault

***A "Great Himalayan Earthquake" with magnitude 8+ is overdue. It will happen and it will be catastrophic.***

**Dr. Elia Jaffar**

was similar to some historic earthquakes like the San Andreas Fault in California. It was a shallow, high-magnitude earthquake leading to intense shaking of the surface and visible damage.

India sits on one of the world's most earthquake-prone regions. The Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates crash together, creating enormous pressure under the



*The collapsed bridge over River Irrawaddy*

Himalayas. A "Great Himalayan Earthquake" with magnitude 8+ is overdue. It will happen. And it will be catastrophic. In North East India the Indian plate is subducting beneath Sunda and Burma plates. Big subduction earthquakes and devastating tsunamis are possible. Even central and Peninsular India is at risk of rare but deadly intraplate earthquakes such as the Latur Earthquake in 1993.

About 59% of India faces earthquake risk. Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, and Northeast states face the highest risk. Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata lie in dangerous seismic zones. Buildings keep rising without proper earthquake protection. When earthquakes hit, falling buildings kill more people than shaking ground. Past earthquakes have wrecked India including the 1905 Kangra earthquake, the 1934 Bihar disaster, the 1950 Assam earthquake, and the 2001 Bhuj tragedy in Gujarat.

Each time a disaster strikes, the response follows a predictable pattern—initial shock, a burst of quick fixes, and then a slow slide into dangerous complacency. The

urgency fades, lessons are forgotten, and the cycle continues.

The collapsed Inwa Bridge over Irrawaddy River near Mandalay, Myanmar. Countries like Japan and Chile, having learned from past catastrophes, have taken proactive steps to reduce destruction. They have built earthquake-resistant structures, enforced stringent building codes, and developed robust early warning systems. Their commitment to preparedness has saved countless lives.

India, despite facing similar — if not greater—seismic threats, has yet to adopt such measures on a nationwide scale. We know the risks. We have seen the devastation. And yet, we wait.

Earthquakes wreck economies and claim lives. India lost about \$79.5 billion to climate disasters over twenty years. The Bhuj earthquake alone cost Gujarat \$10 billion. The Nepal earthquake hit northern India too, causing \$7 billion in damage. Strong buildings save money and lives. Fast city growth with bad construction makes things worse.

Most buildings in earthquake zones lack safety features. Hospitals, power plants, and schools would fall in a big quake. An earthquake hitting a crowded city during daytime would kill countless people. India knows how to reduce earthquake risks. We lack action, not information. These changes must happen now:

India has building codes designed to withstand earthquakes, but they are often ignored, and enforcement is weak. Every new construction must follow safety standards—no shortcuts. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has set guidelines, but without proper implementation, they do not mean much. Builders who violate these rules should face strict penalties.

Regular structural audits are just as important, especially for high-rises and critical infrastructure. But there is a demand supply gap. There aren't enough qualified professionals to handle the demand. Some cities are making progress—NOIDA, for example, has partnered with institutions like IIT-Kanpur, Delhi

Technical University, MNIT Allahabad, BITS Pilani, Aligarh Muslim University, MNIT Jaipur, and the Central Building Research Institute Roorkee to conduct these audits.

Still, inspections alone will not solve the problem. We need more trained experts. Universities, the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), NGOs, and technical consultants should run training and certification programs for structural auditors. These professionals could then carry out on-ground inspections, while institutions review their work for quality control. With experience, they could be certified as independent auditors, ensuring more accountability and better-built cities.

Uncontrolled urban growth is adding to the problem. Cities are expanding haphazardly, with lax zoning laws, unchecked construction, and corruption in real estate making many buildings unsafe. Even vital infrastructure—bridges, hospitals, and other essential facilities—are not always built to endure strong earthquakes.

If a major quake were to strike Delhi, Mumbai, or any other densely populated city, the destruction could be catastrophic. Most Indians do not know what to do in earthquakes. Safety drills in



*Rescue personnel work at the site of a collapsed building in Mandalay, March 29, 2025*

schools, offices, apartments, and public places save lives. Every home should have emergency supplies - water tablets, food, flashlights, batteries, and medicine. Schools must teach earthquake safety—safe spots, warning signs, and escape routes.

Hospitals, schools, and public buildings need to be built to survive earthquakes. Cities should also have open spaces for people to evacuate safely, but unchecked urban growth is eating away at these crucial areas. The 2015 Nepal earthquake was a harsh lesson—when hospitals collapsed, medical help was nearly impossible. India can't afford to make the same mistake. Emergency services must stay up and running, no matter what.

A devastating earthquake will hit India. We just do not know when. Our nation stands totally unprepared. This dangerous situation needs immediate action. Government agencies, architects, builders, city planners, engineers, and everyday citizens share responsibility.

Doing nothing costs more every year. We cannot wait for another disaster to wake us up. Time runs short. The Myanmar-Thailand earthquake warns us before worse comes. India must turn knowledge into action, rules into reality, and awareness into preparation. ●

*The author is a seasoned expert in disaster management, governance and climate change adaptation*



*Nepal earthquake devastation May 12, 2015*

# WHO TRULY BENEFITS FROM CARBON TAXES

Carbon taxes are often promoted as a key tool in the fight against climate change. They are intended to reduce carbon emissions, encourage greener practices, and generate revenue for climate initiatives. However, the brutal truth is that carbon taxes create a system where specific groups disproportionately benefit, and those groups are not always the ones most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Governments and politicians are among the biggest beneficiaries of carbon taxes. These taxes bring in billions for governments, offering a steady stream of funds that can be allocated to public projects. In addition, they allow governments to exert greater economic control by influencing energy markets and consumer behavior. Politicians, on the other hand, can use carbon taxes to project an environmentally responsible image, even if the funds collected are not effectively utilized for climate action. In reality, carbon tax revenues are often redirected to general budgets or politically driven projects

***Governments and politicians are among the biggest beneficiaries of carbon taxes.***

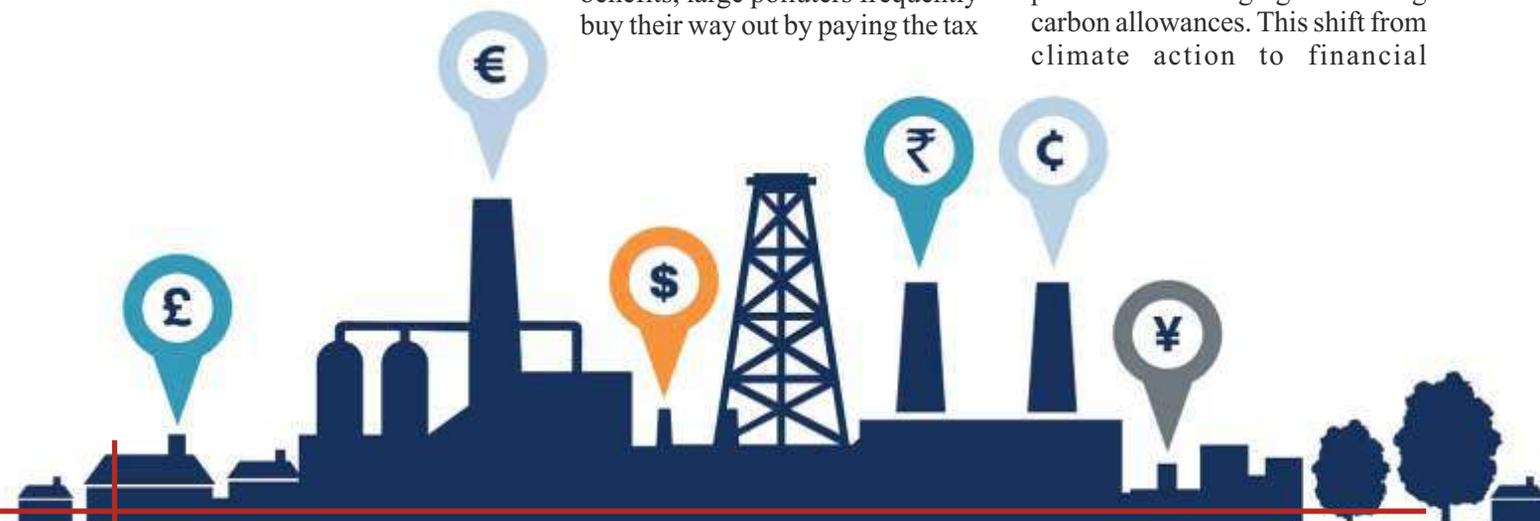
Ganga Grace

unrelated to environmental efforts. Funds may also be used to fill budget deficits or support industries that are already wealthy and politically connected, ultimately allowing governments to increase their power and revenue while politicians gain political capital.

Wealthy elites and large corporations also benefit significantly from carbon taxes. Wealthy corporations that can afford to transition to renewable energy or are already established in the clean tech sector thrive, as carbon taxes make their products and services more competitive. Governments often provide subsidies and incentives that overwhelmingly benefit these corporations, and carbon markets allow wealthy individuals and companies to profit from carbon credit trading and green investment funds. Despite these benefits, large polluters frequently buy their way out by paying the tax

or purchasing offsets while continuing to emit carbon, leaving smaller businesses and lower-income households struggling to keep up with the green transition. This results in a widening wealth gap and further consolidation of corporate dominance.

Financial institutions and investors are another group that profit immensely from carbon taxes. The boom in green investments, such as renewable energy projects, green bonds, and carbon credit trading, allows banks and investment firms to capitalize on the transition to a greener economy. Carbon taxes often lead to the creation of cap-and-trade systems that financial institutions dominate, turning carbon credits into tradable commodities. However, financial institutions do not necessarily contribute to reducing emissions; instead, they focus on making profits from managing and trading carbon allowances. This shift from climate action to financial

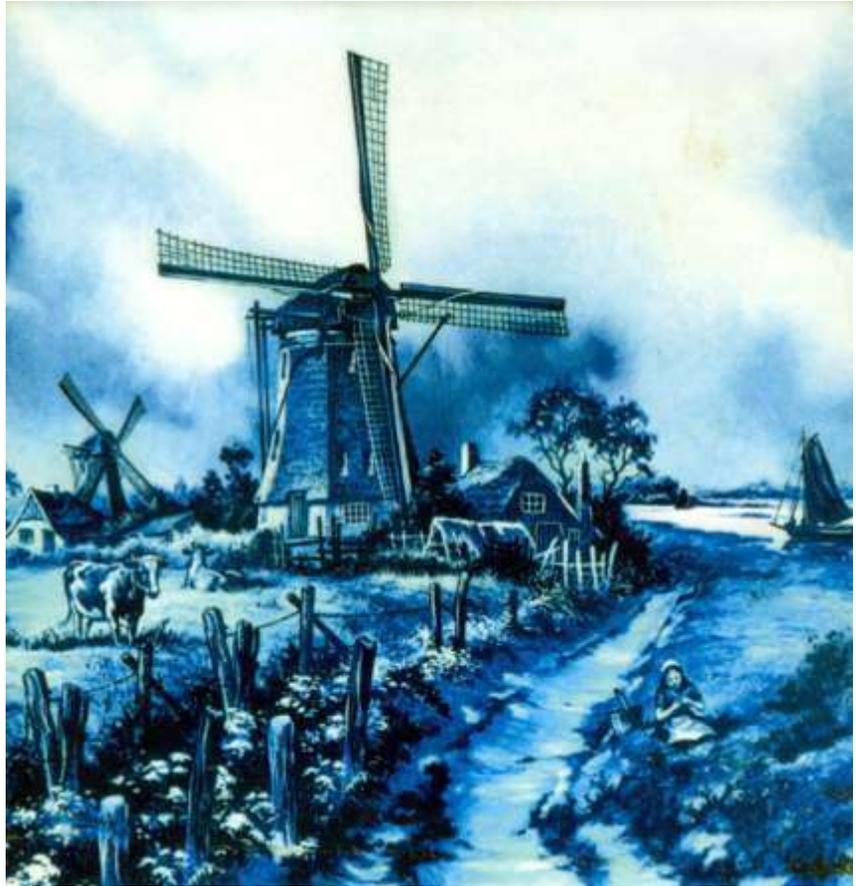


speculation benefits investors far more than it benefits the environment.

Wealthier households also stand to gain from carbon taxes, as they can afford to invest in energy-efficient appliances, solar panels, and electric vehicles, which reduce their carbon footprint and tax liability. In revenue-neutral systems, rebates or dividends are provided equally to all households, meaning wealthier individuals who consume less energy benefit disproportionately. Meanwhile, low-income households, which spend a larger proportion of their income on energy, are hit hardest by rising prices. Without targeted rebates, carbon taxes can exacerbate social inequality, favoring the wealthy while increasing financial burdens on the less affluent.

The renewable energy and clean tech sectors experience significant advantages due to carbon taxes. As fossil fuels become more expensive, the demand for renewable energy sources, electric vehicles, and energy-efficient products increases. Companies operating in wind, solar, and electric transportation thrive as consumers and industries are forced to transition. However, while these industries are crucial for combating climate change, their profits often flow to a small group of major companies and shareholders rather than being distributed equitably. The emergence of green monopolies mirrors the dominance once held by fossil fuel giants.

Wealthy nations also benefit disproportionately from carbon taxes. Developed countries with advanced renewable infrastructure and financial resources can adapt to carbon tax policies more easily than developing nations. Wealthy nations gain from exporting green technology to developing countries struggling to meet



*Idyllic 18th century Holland countryside, no requirement for carbon tax*

emission targets. However, developing nations, which rely heavily on fossil fuels for energy and revenue, face significant challenges in transitioning to greener alternatives. In many cases, wealthier nations outsource their emissions by shifting manufacturing to poorer countries, further perpetuating global inequalities.

Politically connected groups often find ways to benefit from carbon taxes as well. Industries with significant lobbying power, such as aviation and agriculture, frequently receive exemptions or subsidies despite being major polluters. Powerful corporations influence carbon tax policies to ensure they bear minimal costs while shifting the burden to smaller players or consumers. This undermines the fairness of the system and allows certain industries to continue polluting with minimal consequences.

While certain groups benefit from carbon taxes, others bear the brunt of the costs. Low-income households face rising energy, food, and transportation costs, which can significantly impact

their financial stability. Fossil fuel workers and communities experience job losses with limited opportunities for retraining or alternative employment. Developing nations struggle with the financial and infrastructural challenges associated with transitioning away from fossil fuels. Small businesses, lacking the resources to absorb increased operational costs or invest in greener technologies, often struggle to stay afloat.

The real winners of carbon taxes are those with power, resources, and influence. Governments collect revenue and increase their control, wealthy elites and corporations adapt quickly or profit from subsidies and investments, financial institutions exploit new markets for carbon trading and green bonds, and wealthy nations gain a competitive advantage while poorer regions struggle. Without equitable policies and proper revenue distribution, carbon taxes can exacerbate inequality, allowing the rich and powerful to profit while vulnerable populations bear the burden. ●

# WHAT CAN I, WE, DO

## Historical Patterns of Change and the Possibility of Optimistic Agency

■ Sohail Inayatullah

Optimism is hard to maintain in many societies today, especially when the future envisioned in the 1960s – what the macro historian Immanuel Wallerstein calls “the social revolutions of the 60s” – of a green, gender-equitable, peaceful, and progressive society, seems to be facing a major setback.

However, for many of us who study long-term historical patterns (the *longue durée*, as Fernand Braudel puts it), these setbacks feel like more than the typical swings we see between centralization and decentralization, progressive and regressive movements. Instead, they seem to echo an earlier period – pre-WWII and the Dark Ages of Europe. This is not the gentle society envisioned by futurist and feminist Elise Boulding. Rather, it resembles what Elon Musk seems to celebrate – a return to fascism but with AI. Are we entering a dystopian world like *The Handmaid's Tale* where fact and fiction blur and misinformation, malignant information, and disinformation thrive?

### The Futures of Capitalism and Rising Contradictions

Theories from thinkers like Sarkar provide insight into these patterns. He argued that the end of the capitalist era can be observed through multiple signs: extreme exploitation, growing inequality,

and the rise of the billionaire class. But more telling is how the capitalist class uses democracy to maintain their privileges. A possible sign of change is when the capitalist class no longer bothers to use the guise of democracy but puts one of their own in the highest

*“Human beings must not be pessimists under any circumstances. I am an incorrigible optimist because I know that optimism is the essence of life.”*

- Shrii P.R. Sarkar



*A scene during Industrial Revolution Europe*

offices. With contradictions heightened, we can imagine more and more disruption. AI is likely to not solve these challenges but heighten the current situation. AI can be used to create a new global social contract in terms of work, guaranteed work, and reduced working hours for all but more likely it will create new weapons of destruction, distraction, and coercive compliance.

I remember Johan Galtung's 1982 speech where he boldly predicted the fall of the Soviet Union by 1990. At the time, we were incredulous, but he was right – the system had become so rigid that it had no flexibility and had to self-destruct. Similarly, Galtung later predicted that in the 2020s the U.S. might face a similar fate. The contradictions between labor and capital, patriarchy and gender equity, democracy within and empire outside, growth and nature, dominant and suppressed are unresolved. Contradictions, he argued, are part of the nature of social existence. For Sarkar, they are embedded in the ontology of reality – there are centrifugal and centripetal forces that move toward division or toward integration.

I remember well an article I wrote on Shri Sarkar's vision of the future titled, "Sarkar's spiritual dialects: an unconventional view of the future." After reading the article, Shri Sarkar commented that there are no dialectics in spiritual life, only in the mundane world. Thus, in the material world, there will always be contradictions. The goal in the material world is, as Ivana Milojevic argues, to ensure that conflict is constructive leading to win-win solutions for all stakeholders. In inner life, however, one can move toward blissful states irrespective of the opposites found in the mundane.

If we look at current events, we might conclude that 2024 could be the last U.S. election. The

fragile bond between citizens and the military, already strained during the January 6th insurrection, could further unravel. Revolts may spread throughout the system, and we might even witness a *shudra revolution* (a revolution of the working class) in the coming decade. The military could split between those who uphold the Constitution (as General Milley has stated, "We do not support king nor tyrant, but only uphold the Constitution.") and those who support the president's mandate who sees progressive forces as a threat to American dominance.

### Can There Be Evolution

But can there be a peaceful evolution? Could we shift to platform cooperatives or peer-to-peer economics, moving away from market-based or state-

controlled models? Sarkar suggested that the social cycle can move without violence, especially if the majority of people are democratic in ethos. AI could help in this transition in novel ways including creating real time low friction markets matching the needs of individuals and communities and thus eliminating the middle-man. This is the shift from the invisible hand to a narrative of shared hands and eventually as spiritual evolution continues to the imagination of magical hands. This could be done in the energy markets as well as to some extent with direct voting once issues of disinformation, misinformation, and malignant information are resolved.

In any case, we are undeniably facing dramatic social and economic challenges ahead.

### Possible Scenarios for the Future

What does the future hold? Let's consider a few possible scenarios:

#### 1. The Rise of Fascism

In this scenario, fascism rises throughout the Western world. While figures like Osama Bin Laden may not be the sole cause, their actions have contributed to a climate of fear ensuring that the West sees danger everywhere. AI is weaponized, civil liberties are reduced, and patriarchy is restored. The surplus wealth that could have gone toward social innovation is diverted to military power.

#### 2. Workers' Revolution

The deepening contradictions in the U.S. could lead to a revolt against the tech oligarchs and the political leaders who support them. However, as we have seen historically, the revolt can often lead to new military leaders coming in to stem the chaos. The country might become more militarized, both externally and internally, as we note occurred after the French Revolution with the rise of Napoleon.

#### 3. The Realization of the 1960s Vision

In this scenario, the green, gender-equitable, and peaceful society envisioned in the 1960s becomes reality by the 2030s. Platform cooperatives become the norm, AI is used for the common good, gender equity is achieved, and the United Nations reforms to become a more democratic, multi-house system with nature integrated into decision-making. We enter an era focused on well-being and sustainability.

#### 4. A Spiritual Revolution and Global Governance

This goes even further. Technology and spirituality merge leading to a global governance system based on trust and cooperation. A mass spiritual awakening leads to a Star Trek-like world economy where abundance and peace prevail powered by tech, spirit, and global trust. The international system is transformed into multiple houses comprising a house of nature, nation-states, businesses, and community organizations.

## What Can Each of Us Do

Which of these futures will unfold is unclear. For progressive movements, they must keep the vision of a just society alive, expanding the tent so that everyone is included, and recognizing that while history follows macro-patterns, there is still room for individual action. Each of us can make a difference. Shrii Sarkar's teachings remind us that the goal for each individual is to become exceptional. He wrote:

"Those people who are society's exceptions are extraordinary people. Keeping our ideology fixed before our eyes, we must also become exceptional people. For those who are treading a new path, constructing something new, being an exception is as valuable as their very lives."

He also said:

"You should know that you are exceptions. You, too, will do something great, something historic."

If you're reading this, you are

## The Strategy for Individuals

### 1. Spiritual Practice

Stay calm and grounded, especially when the world around you seems chaotic.

### 2. Focus on the Positive

Try to find positive aspects in every situation no matter how challenging.

### 3. Use Prout as a Guide

Evaluate all movements through the lens of Prout:

- ❖ Is the person ethical?
- ❖ Do they support gender equity?
- ❖ Do they advocate for science and technology for the greater good?
- ❖ Are they beyond nationalism or religion, seeking a universal perspective?
- ❖ Do their economic policies aim to create abundance for all?

### 4. Understand Social Cycles and Agency

Recognize the difference between deep historical patterns (social cycles) and the potential for individual agency. Each of us can still make a meaningful impact.

### 5. Learn Cooperation and Connection

Develop the skills to work with others so that instead of focusing on minor differences, we come together to steer toward a brighter future.

an exceptional person and there are things you can do right now in this time of uncertainty, mistrust, and stress.

## United with Others

Finally, there are countless individuals and movements already working toward transformation. These include movements for workers' rights, climate action, racial justice, decolonization, new waves of feminism, and efforts within international organizations. By joining forces with these movements and sharing the core ideas of Prout, we can help create a broad, planetary movement for change.

While the challenges are immense, and at times it feels like we are pushing a boulder up a hill like Sisyphus, Sarkar reminds us that optimism is key. We must remain present, envision the future we want, and move forward with urgency—but always taking one step at a time. ●

*The author is UNESCO Chair in Futures Studies and Professor, Tamkang University, Tamsui and the author of Understanding Shrii Sarkar and Prout in Power*



This is the first article of a seven part series. In this series we continue our exploration of standard economic theory that we started in a four part series in the *Prout Journal* in 2023: how contemporary standard economic theory draws its adherents into a particular way of perceiving the world. In this series we examine climate change, financial disasters, money, and several other concepts in orthodox economic theory. Through this query we gain a deeper understanding of how these issues are interconnected. We see the warnings, and also begin to envision the bright future Shrii Sarkar saw for humanity. Let us start with money.

There are 11 documents in which Shrii Sarkar used the word bullion. Of these there is one of particular interest, the September 13, 1987 discourse. It asserts the monetary authorities use an actual bullion system. Not a bullion support system of which the Bretton Woods System was an example.

Over the years there have been various interpretations of this discourse by Proutists. In the 1980s it was asserted that Shrii Sarkar promoted a gold standard. Years later it was interpreted that bullion can be one of the reserves a central bank maintains. Most recently it has been said Shrii Sarkar was merely speaking metaphorically: what he “really meant” was all natural resources. This particular reinterpretation was discussed with the AMPS Translations in charge, Ac. Acyutánanda Avadhúta in the spring of 2022. He did not know of any evidence to support such an assertion with respect to this discourse and further, does not see any textual evidence in the passage to support an assertion that Shrii



# The Choices We Make

***Bullion as a monetary token is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for a society based on moral and ethical principles.***

Michael Zimmerman

Sarkar was speaking metaphorically. At the time “bullion” meant precious metal, gold and/or silver. Shrii Sarkar was addressing one way to check or dampen inflationary and deflationary pressures by using precious metal.

If we look closely to samaja shastra in the spirit of Mantra Múlam Guru VákyaMIT is not necessary to use such metaphorical devices to understand Shrii

Sarkar's original text. We must simply ask, in what conditions, in what circumstances, would a literal bullion monetary system work? What would lead our modern society to do that?

In order to address these questions, it is helpful to understand how ineffective bullion is as a mechanism to manage a modern economy. Drawing from the economic historian Barry Eichengreen (2019, 2018), for the

quarter century before World War I global monetary policy was based on a gold standard that was managed at the national level. For a variety of known technical reasons it did not work.

Why is this important? In the modern era a gold standard has been portrayed as synonymous with financial stability. Yet, just the opposite was true. It is acknowledged that bullion does not work as historically represented. Bullion is not an automatic stabilizer. Why is that? People and countries don't follow the rules: they subvert the rules, they cheat, to achieve personal or national self-interests (Wray, 2015; Levitt & Dubner, 2005). This tendency to cheat in zero-sum games is also evident in some artificial intelligence systems when self-preservation is perceived (Booth, 19 February 2025).

Given the deficiencies of a bullion standard, is it possible for it to provide monetary, social, and environmental stability? Consider that the stability people believe bullion brings to an economy is not inherent, is not embodied in the inorganic element of bullion. Those attributes are found in the *choices* made by people, by women and men, guided by their ethical framework and expressed in their social and economic institutions. If a society, and its

trading partners, choose to eschew geo-sentiment, socio-sentiment, war, differentiating feelings rooted in pecuniary self-interests, perhaps bullion could work as the monetary token, the money “thing”. In fact, almost anything could function as the money “thing”. A world functioning as described above would be quite foreign, practically unrecognizable, to a person of the modern age. Indeed, Shrii Sarkar clearly said a bullion monetary system could only be implemented by a Prouistic government (Sarkar, Economic Dynamics, September 13, 1987). Yet, when we understand how deficient bullion is as a money “thing” we begin to see a warning within this discourse.

Could Shrii Sarkar literally have meant what he said? We note Dr. Ravi Batra in his Zoom presentation to the December 31, 2021 NY Sector AMPS retreat, in response to a question, stated bullion and other monetary tokens are, “gimmicks and are Avidyá Prakrti, and are to be defeated” (source: author's recording). The benefits provided by the social technology of “money” for people and the planet are defined in part by inflation and also within limits placed by nature: by the environment, the ecosphere. Shrii Sarkar asserted, “the word Prakrti is not equivalent to the word nature

of the English language. As a matter of fact, nature is the property or Dharma of Prakrti. Whatever Prakrti does is commonly known as nature” (Sarkar, 1955). What people do with the money “thing” is a *choice*. Money operates within constraints. Our global civilization has understood, in a general way, inflationary and deflationary constraints for millennia. Yet, it has ignored environmental constraints, the constraints of nature, the property of Prakrti.

We need to acknowledge that standard economic theory has contributed to this situation by *masking* certain relationships we will address in these essays. In the June 2023 edition of *The Prout Journal* we addressed money as a subtle idea, *a subtle resource*, as defined in the second fundamental principle of Prout. This principle applies not only to physical resources but *subtle resources such as ideas*. Physical resources can be used for good or ill. Likewise, subtle resources like money “things” can also be utilized for good or ill. What people do with this social technology this money “thing” is a *choice*. Money is not a real resource. It is synthetic wealth. *Money is simply a way of organizing and marshalling real resources*. Money is a social architecture through which a society or community expresses itself.

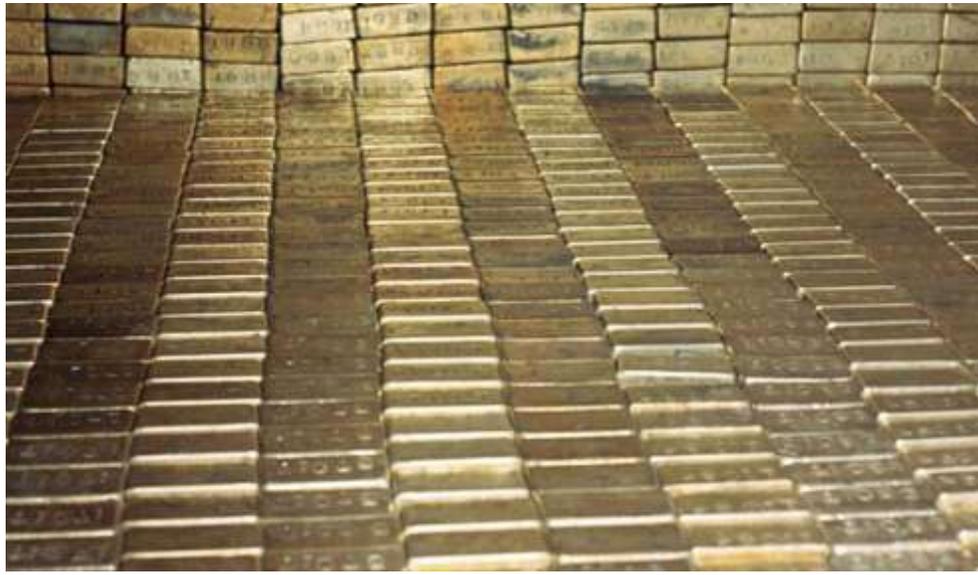
*Bullion as a monetary token is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for a society based on moral and ethical principles*. There are more important criteria as expressed in Neohumanism and Shrii Sarkar's *Six Spokes of the Social Cycle*. A society functioning along those principles will display the qualities of a socially, economically, and ecologically balanced community. Yet, to



preserve the integrity of Shrii Sarkar's target discourse we must ask, under what conditions would bullion work? This question forces us to consider a post-civilization-collapse world: a world in which the enormous powers of global central banks are no longer relevant or effective. A world with a fraction of the current global population struggling to survive. A world made simple or perhaps traditional rather than modern, by the collapse of our technologically concatenated civilization.

Today, nations embrace a chart a list conception of money. This translates into fiat money. Money that can be created at will by the state. To a large extent this was both cause and cure of the global financial crisis of 2008 – 2010. The cause: the financialization of the economy in which chasing basis point differentials in the pursuit of pecuniary arbitrage is normalized. The cure: the expansion of global central bank's balance sheets, flooding the banking system with excess bank reserves. Paraphrasing Hyman Minsky's financial instability hypothesis(1986), the cure is the cause for the next crisis.

Drawing from Kregal (1992), the indirect impact on asset prices by excessive reliance on sales of government securities to control bank un-borrowed (i.e. excess) reserves had long been criticized: it's effect on asset prices is known. Yet, solutions came with unintended consequence. The U. S. central bank was created to provide an “elastic currency” to protect the payment system. However, there is no mechanism in capitalism in which everyone “wins”. There are only *choices*. The monetary mechanics underlying the tension between big government and big banks makes obvious there is no “free market”. In that tension the meanest aspects of capitalism flourish: our



*Gold at Fort Knox, Louisville, Kentucky, USA*

obligations to our planet are ignored, the common people forgotten.

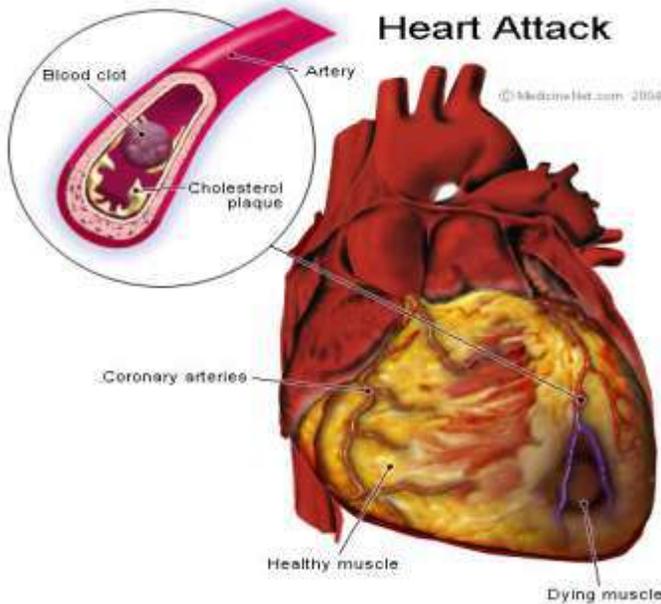
Central banks have tremendous power over monetary policy and financial markets. The chief responsibility of global central banks– the U.S. is the primary example – to maintain stable prices and protect the payment system. That is, facilitating the clearing of both domestic and international payments. Maintaining full employment is given meagre attention, although it is a congressional mandate. How could it do otherwise? Doing so would be a historical event within the arc of capitalistic growth. This is the system that our global civilization utilizes to maintain and sustain itself, to replicate itself. In this system the environment is ignored by our monetary authorities. This system *masks* deeply embedded faults that presage planetary misfortune.

To influence the domestic economy, there are various tools available to national monetary institutions, our special-purpose institutions called global central banks and ministries of finance or treasury departments. Among these tools are the overnight interest rate, quantitative easing (QE) which address the *quantity* of bonds the central bank may purchase and yield curve control which addresses *prices* of bonds that central banks pay. The question we must explore is, what

would disrupt markets to such an extent that those techniques used by central banks to influence the economy would be either impaired, significantly diminished or non-existent? Possibly an ecological disaster, global warming, a novel viral pandemic, a coronal mass ejection, a pole shift (Sarkar, 1996).The list is almost endless and the consequences almost too formidable to consider.

Shrii Sarkar's socioeconomic theory is not deterministic; social movement may be progressive as well in as regressive. He addressed one possible future that until recently was only whispered and did not appear in any books, (Ac. Shamitánanda Avadhúta, anticipated publication 2025). In a world with such loss of life, would the necessities of a technologically concatenated modern society be intact? Or would the systems by which modern societies maintain, sustain, and replicate themselves be irreparably compromised. Would old nation states still exist? Or would people organize around new national and regional political units: perhaps new polities aligned with ecological *samajas*? Would moneylook and function much like it does today? Or would survivors, out of necessity, grasp and cling to something familiar? Next month we explore when this occurred in the past. ●

*The author is a board member of the Prout Research Institute, Asheville, North Carolina, USA*



**It even has known to affect young children of 8, 10 and 14 years**

**Arun Prakash**

# Sudden Cardiac Arrest

**C**ardiovascular diseases (CVDs) are the leading cause of death globally. According to a World Heart Federation report of May 2023 an estimated 20.5 million died from CVDs in 2021, this was nearly a third of all global deaths. In 1990 it was 12.1 million — a significant increase. Over three-quarters of CVD deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries.

Heart disease is scary because it rarely betrays a symptom until it is too late. It has become the leading cause of global death and disability. Among them, sudden cardiac arrest, occurring unexpectedly within an hour of when symptoms begin to show, is particularly alarming. It seems that even healthy individuals may experience this form of heart related death, or what doctors call sudden cardiac death. This risk

extends to both healthy people and those with known stable heart conditions. In cases of cardiac arrest in young individuals, especially teenagers and those in their 20s, heart muscle diseases, or cardio-myopathies, are often the cause.

It even has known to affect young children like it happened in the USA an 8-year-old child playing football went into cardiac arrest suddenly after practice. A 10-year-old's heart stops beating just as he takes the long-awaited turn down a water park slide. A 14-year-old student sitting in math class falls to the floor unresponsive. A 16-year-old high school basketball player collapses on the court after making the game-winning shot.

Sudden cardiac arrest is rare in young people, but it can happen. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(CDC), about 2,000 young, seemingly healthy people under age 25 in the United States die each year of sudden cardiac arrest. These deaths leave behind a huge and devastating impact on families and communities. But there are ways to help identify risk factors that can help prevent these tragedies.

Sudden cardiac arrest is the sudden loss of heart activity due to an irregular heart rhythm. In this, breathing stops. This event may occur when the heart arteries are clogged with cholesterol or other deposits, reducing blood flow to the heart. Sudden cardiac arrest is not uncommon among young individuals and is on the rise.

According to medical experts around 80% of cases occur in people with coronary artery disease. If angiography (medical imaging like X-ray to check blood vessels) is done, these people have

narrowing arteries or blocks. Yet most do not have a heart attack which, in medical terms, denotes a sudden block of a coronary artery with damage to heart muscle. Most instances are not linked to heart attacks but are primarily due to abnormal heart rhythms, such as ventricular tachycardia and ventricular fibrillation.

Since there is a rise in sudden cardiac arrests in young people, it is necessary to understand the risks and mitigate them. "Addressing risk factors for coronary artery disease is crucial. This includes managing hypertension (the number one cause), quitting smoking, and controlling diabetes, maintaining a healthy weight, staying physically active, and eating nutritious food. As Hippocrates the Father of Medicine said, "Your foods shall be your remedies, your remedies shall be your foods.

One way to prevent this is early and regular screening for heart disease and risk factors. Screening every three years after the age of 40 is recommended, or earlier for those with a family history or high-risk features. Drug therapy, especially for conditions like high blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes, may also be necessary. High-risk individuals may even require implanted defibrillator devices, which can be life-saving. Despite concerns about exercise-related risks, regular well-paced exercise is protective. Endurance and high-intensity athletes may benefit from regular screening exams. Since cardiac arrest is often fatal, prevention is paramount, reiterate medical experts, who also suggest that since cardiac arrests are fatal, the best strategy is prevention.

One way to save lives is cardiopulmonary resuscitation CPR. This training is essentially for the public. Recently as reported in newspapers a young woman (a CRPF officer) performed timely

CPR in Delhi's Metro on a person who had collapsed and brought him back to life. There was another case about a person in Bihar who did so and saved a life. Besides these recent ones there are many other instances in the country and rest of the world. Also the availability of automated external defibrillators in public places, and increased awareness programs can significantly reduce the incidence of fatal cardiac arrests.

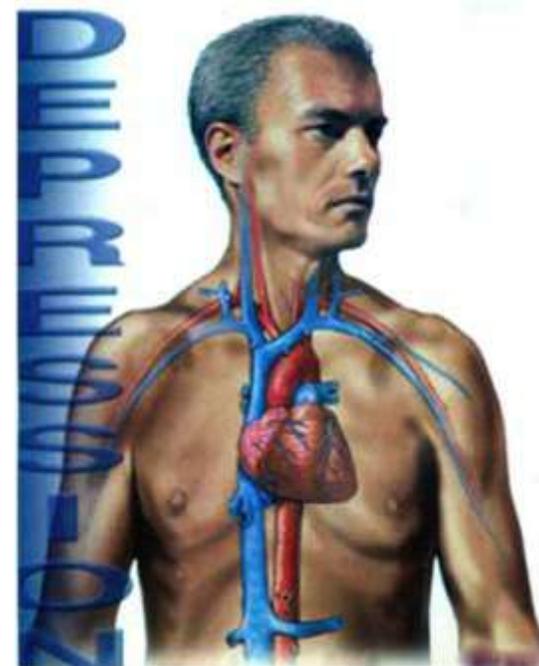
Although sudden cardiac death in young people isn't common, even one life lost is too many. Take steps that can help reduce the risk of these tragedies, such as scheduling regular well-child visits, sports physicals and encouraging CPR and AED training in the community.

Prevention is better than cure is an age old saying. What better than to go back to our ancient roots. Yoga plays an important part in the prevention of cardiovascular diseases. Shavasana (corpse posture) relaxes knotted muscles and frayed nerves. It also helps lower blood pressure for those suffering from hypertension, the number one cause for heart diseases. Something as simple as clapping, lowers cholesterol. Our palms have all the points of internal energy system and clapping mounts pressure on these points and all the internal organs get the energy from it and start functioning well and the body becomes healthy. Similarly a simple heart massage helps strengthen the heart. Best to make a cup with the right hand and gently tap left side of the chest.

Besides this as prevention is better than cure for a healthy stress free lifestyle it is essential to follow these: Prevention efforts should start early in life, as heart disease tends to progress from higher risk in young adults to early death in middle age. Most diseases are caused by what we eat and how. We are what we eat because the

organs of our body are nourished by food. The type of food we eat affects the formation of cells and our entire being, body, mind and spirit. It is important to eat in a peaceful and happy mood taking care not to overeat, not too many varieties and avoid eating very hot or very cold foods and also not to eat between meals. Food should be chewed well; raw foods are nutritious as they are full of vital energy.

Whole grains and unrefined foods are better than refined and processed ones. Curd (yogurt) is also very good. Food should contain adequate proteins but not excessive, and should not be oily or fatty and without much sugar. It is also important to drink plenty of water every day. Getting plenty of fresh air and exercise is most necessary as it is one of the secrets of long life. Morning walk in the fresh air is most beneficial the air is pollution free and concentrated with Oxygen. And it is better not to sleep during the day and staying awake at night. One should go to bed as soon as one feels sleepy and wake up at the ambrosial hour of dawn, as the old saying goes, "Early to bed early to rise makes a man healthy wealthy and wise". ●



# Delhi's Yamuna Floodplains

## Dangers and Resident's Woes

*Plight of Yamuna floodplain residents is a stark reminder of the challenges Indian urban dwellers face*

 Bhupendra Singh



In August 2024 over 15,000 Yamuna Floodplain Residents stretching from Mayur Vihar Phase-1 to the Yamuna River Bridge were left homeless due to Delhi Development Authority's (DDA) demolition. This event highlights the urgent need for inclusive urban planning, housing rights, and rehabilitation, as displaced residents face significant challenges and marginalization. The aftermath of this has left a trail of human suffering and an urgent need for relief and rehabilitation. The

DDA, a body responsible for planning, developing, and constructing housing projects, commercial land, and land management, as well as providing public facilities, has been at the centre of this crisis. The reasons for this demolition are as yet not fully known.

A floodplain is an area adjacent to a river or stream that floods during periods of high water, like the rainy season. These regions are crucial to the water supply and water level stability ecosystem, and disturbing them can have severe ecological

consequences. The Yamuna Flood Plains are highly beneficial to Delhi and the challenges it faces. 1. Delhi was traditionally developed along the river's course, which helped the city avoid water scarcity and extreme flooding. 2. Floodplains recharge groundwater and store excess water, acting as natural buffers that slow down water runoff during floods. 3. Floodplains have historically provided affordable housing.

Construction on floodplains, including developments like Commonwealth Village, has restricted the river's natural flow.

The struggle for a place to call home is a standard narrative for many urban dwellers in India. The Yamuna floodplain residents are not alone in their plight. According to a Housing and Land Rights Network report, over 1 million people are displaced annually in India due to urban development projects. This number is expected to rise, with 70% of India's population expected to live in urban areas by 2030, with as much as 30% of Delhi's population still living in slums or informal settlements.

Experts say the broader implications of this event are far-reaching, affecting not just the displaced residents but also the city's approach to urban planning and development. This is a classic case of urban displacement, where the rights of the poor and marginalised are ignored.

DDA's actions are a stark reminder of the need for inclusive urban planning, where the needs of all residents are considered. This mass displacement results in the establishment of ghettos. Due to this, society starts discriminating against those displaced. This seclusion further leads to trust issues, and the lack of resources restricts their earnings and impacts their livelihood. These residents' lack of prior warning or resettlement plans has raised serious questions about the city's approach to housing rights and urban development.

The demolition and displacement of people could have been handled better, if the DDA stuck to the court orders. There is a way to execute such operations. A protocol needs to be followed, such as advance notification and compensation for those affected. There are rules to keep a check and balance. Still, nowadays, there seems an unprecedented way out - the authorities try to punish the marginalised before the court can come to a judgement. The lack of

awareness, literacy, and financial acumen affects those at the bottom of the line, most. This becomes a bottleneck for citizens. Builders and authorities find ways to fool people, so it's important that we know everything about the land we live on.

The plight of the Yamuna floodplain residents is a stark reminder of the challenges many urban dwellers face in India. The struggle for a place to call home is a standard narrative for many, and this event has brought it to the forefront. The crisis also presents an opportunity to stimulate a much-needed conversation about urban displacement and housing rights in India. It is a chance to discuss potential solutions and the way forward. Proper laws must be laid down and implemented strictly to mitigate and prevent such situations from arising in future. People and institutions with unbiased opinions should be hired and given the responsibility to make and amend laws to benefit all and not just one group.

The crisis presents an opportunity to discuss potential solutions and the way forward. Moving forward, we require a collaborative effort from urban development authorities,

policymakers, and civil society to build sustainable, inclusive cities for all. We also need to rethink our approach to urban planning to ensure that the rights and needs of all residents are considered. To prevent such mass displacements in the future, we need to adopt inclusive urban planning and provide adequate housing and compensation to displaced residents. Rehabilitation programs for affected residents and community engagement and participation are just as essential to uplift those affected.

The social sector plays a vital role in providing short-term relief. Advocacy groups and social institutions have been of enormous help, such as Khargone and Mandla in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar Sharif, where institutions like Miles2smile have restored several houses. But the challenge arises when the long-term things kick in.

The government should go hand in hand so that the damages can be compensated. The crisis on the Yamuna floodplains is a wake-up call for urban development authorities and policymakers. It calls for rethinking our approach to urban planning, for ensuring that



the rights and needs of all residents are considered, and for action to ensure that no resident is left without a place to call home.

There's yet another source of danger — illegal construction, it is rampant along Delhi's Yamuna River, eliminating floodplains. Along the 55-kilometer long stretch of the Yamuna within the boundaries of Delhi, the floodplains have been reduced from their natural 5 to 10 kilometers width, to just a few hundred meters, in some places it is next to nothing. This leaves the city vulnerable to floods, and is affecting its groundwater levels. As in so many major cities around the world, land in Delhi is scarce.

Though further north, the river is flanked by fields of corn and rice, construction on the floodplains upstream has also left its mark. This is forbidden, but that hasn't prevented the emergence of several residential colonies. One of them is Jaitpur. Hundreds of new brick houses have been built along the southernmost stretch of the river - on the wrong side of one of 10 embankments built to protect Delhi from flooding. Major public roads also cut across the land, and

even the 2010 Commonwealth Games Village stands in the floodplains.

Removing all these recent constructions is the only way to restore some of the floodplains and wetlands. These constructions are only possible with the tacit backing of local officials and politicians - and they are often authorised before elections, in exchange for votes as said by Bhim Singh Rawat of the NGO South Asia Network of Dams, Rivers and People. Exactly who is responsible for stopping further construction appears to be a moot point. The DDA stated it was up to the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC), who in turn says it is DDA who should. Actual work is thus stuck in bureaucratic blame game and passing the buck.

Floodplains can absorb and store floodwaters, and the wetlands are also home to wildlife. Both serve to recharge the groundwater, which is necessary for agriculture and drinking water needs. Floods are characteristic for rivers. But with the floodplains narrowing, floods become more intense and damaging. Without space to accommodate excess

water, water will enter the city - particularly during the monsoon season in July and August.

Despite the dire situation, experts are of the view that Floodplains and wetlands can be restored. To the Yamuna Biodiversity Park in the north Delhi, migrating birds have started coming again - as have certain types of fish and previously extinct animals, like wild boars. And there would be benefits even beyond flood control and richer biodiversity. The floodplains of the Yamuna, if completely restored, could provide drinking water to the entire population of the water-starved city of Delhi.

But given that most of the original floodplains have long been built over with irremovable structures including Delhi's essential ring road, that is unlikely to happen. Nonetheless, with the right legislation and restrictions, precious free land could at least play some part in resolving the city's drinking water problems. One wonders how wonderful it would be if the remaining floodplains would be cleaned, wetlands restored - and all managed better. ●



*The mushrooming of the residential areas near Okhla, Kalindi Kunj and Ashram have raised serious questions on the issue of urban planning in the capital.*

# INDIA'S CALL CENTRES

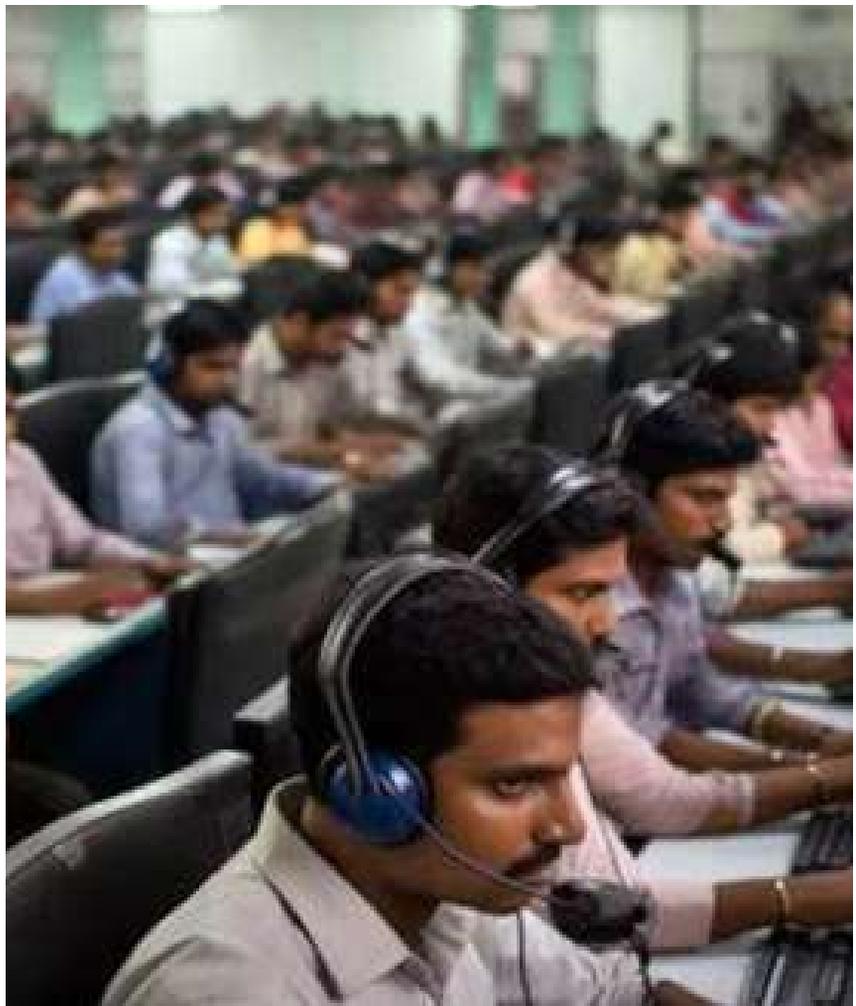
## Overworked Sweat Shops

In the last two decades, India has witnessed a very rapid economic growth. One of the most important factors related to this rising growth has been the Information Technology (IT) industry. Business Process Outsourcing (BPOs) companies have mushroomed and are a visible concrete expression of this IT revolution. The availability of cheap labour costs and the pool of skilled, English-speaking workforce are the foremost factors for the call center boom in the country. When a company concentrates on the core business and out sources its noncore activities like payment services, customer services, and administration, then it is referred to as BPO. A call center can be identified as the voice-based part of a BPO organization.

Call centers in India are both domestic and international, but the prominence arises in transnational call centers wherein the clients are from developed countries like USA, UK, and elsewhere. Due to the difference in time zones between India and such countries, most work is performed during night hours corresponding to a time suitable to their international customers. Such erratic work timings are often called "graveyard shift" or "UK-USA shift". Most of them are forced to live as Indians by days and Westerners after sundown with changed identities and locations to suit their international customers. The burden of work along with

*A typical Indian IT worker is uncharitably called a cyber coolie or code coolie*

■ ■ Nand Varma



dual identity creates severe personal dilemmas and might result in anxiety and related disorders.

But India's IT sector business is essentially driven by low-cost call centres, first-line tech support, simple repetitive code writing, and execution of pre-defined test suites. A typical Indian IT worker

is uncharitably being called a "cyber coolie" or sometimes a "code coolie". The country has become the world's top provider of business-process-outsourcing (BPO) call centers, with revenues nearing \$50 billion a year by selling cheap back-office services. The call center revenue constitutes the bulk of India's IT exports.

Many believe that India's call centers are brutally exploitative and its employees are no better than cyber coolies of our global age, working not on plantations as 200 years ago but on flickering screens, and lashed into submission through vigilant and punitive monitoring, each slip in accent or lapse in pretence results in a cut in wages.

Opinions may vary but it cannot be disputed that our IT industry is at best a glorified labour provider, and our renowned IT Giants have failed to provide even a single proprietary product which could create waves in the global IT industry except perhaps for Finacle, a banking and finance solution by Infosys, and which is used by a number of MNC banks

worldwide. So, what does Indian industry actually excel at? We are the leaders in the so called IT Enabled Services, or ITES. These are basically services such as BPOs, call centers, KPOs etc, which extensively use IT to provide backend and customer services to primarily overseas customers. That our ITES industry is hugely dependent on foreign clients is also not a secret anymore, with hardly any Indian company enlisting the services of such companies.

This pathetic letter written recently by an IT worker from Bengaluru to 'The Hindu' a national daily says it all: *"This is how people in the West have started referring to people in developing nations. In the old*

*days, of course, we Indians were referred to as "coolies" because we provided cheap labour. Nowadays, we are being called cyber coolies. Why? Because most software companies find it cheaper to get their job done in countries like India and other developing nations. There are many people in the U. S. and Britain who raise a hue and cry when jobs get exported to countries like India — especially jobs related to call centres and the software industry. The fact that they refer to us as coolies shows that they haven't lost their imperialist outlook".*

People and the media are often misled by "R&D" in the name of some of the western companies' locations in Bangalore. But actually Bengaluru appears to be the code coolie capital of the world...it's not about tech, it's about cheap labor performing low-level tasks at rock-bottom wages. It's just cost arbitrage in the service sector. No doubt there are some smart techies in India doing leading edge high-technology work, but these are exceptions. The overwhelming majority of the so-called IT work in India is call centres or low-level routine software tech support, maintenance, testing, etc. it's not advanced tech.

The call center business in India is unregulated by government, exposing workers to working in small spaces for long hours, close monitoring, and harsh working conditions. This is of considerable worry to call centre workers who feel like cyber coolies in bondage and are exploited, held back and their lives are totally controlled by foreigners under the "high-tech" and "IT" labels. Even the identities of call center workers are changed in the same way as were those of the African slaves in the West. They are forced to take on western names and put on fake accents to





please their customers in the West for a few bucks. The sad part is that, after over 60 years of independence from the British, some of the Indians still crave western approval and boast about the polls showing high approval ratings of India in the US. It shows that Indians' mental slavery after "globalization" is much more powerful than the physical slavery they endured for over a thousand years.

According to reports in the Business Times, London some of these workers of India are beginning to revolt creating "e-unions" and are planning to target British and American clients in a campaign to improve their working conditions. Some are protesting over low pay and aggressive management that will not negotiate with traditional trade unions, according to the Times story. Instead of appealing to the deaf ears of Indian government or unresponsive managements of Indian-owned BPO firms, their strategy is to approach their British and American clients for support. Those who refuse may face a

sabotage campaign by the same workers who have helped cut their costs.

The above aside, these call centre workers face many health issues. While employment in BPOs means that young adults are becoming financially independent at a relatively young age compared to before, surveys show that workers in the BPO sector experience high levels of stress and its related disorders, primarily due to its contemporary work settings. Safeguarding the health of youngsters employed in this new, growing economy becomes an occupational health challenge to public health specialists.

Call center employees are expected to express positive emotions and suppress negative emotions like frustration, resentment, and anger, in their interactions with customers so as to create a desired state of mind in the customer. If not given a healthy expressive outlet, this emotional repression can profoundly affect a person psychologically. Call-time pressure, dealing with hostile customers, reading prescribed

conversations on the phone endlessly, system monitoring of call activities, and difficulty in providing good customer service while simultaneously meeting time targets, were found to be significant sources of job stress. This work is vividly characterized as repetitive brain strain.

Most call center workers work at times when they would normally be sleeping, this disrupts the sleep-wake internal clock which is at odds with sleep wake cycle of the shift schedule resulting in sleep disorders. A majority of workers in night duties are unable to sleep adequately during daytime and hence may develop cumulative sleep debt leading to significant sleep deprivation. Sleep deprivation further complicates their health, resulting in fatigue, mood changes like depression, decreased cognitive functioning, making them prone to infections. Occupational health experts opine that permanent night shift duties resulted in serious health concerns for call center employees, wherein sleep disorders were observed.

Call center employees are a distinct class in themselves and by Indian standards such employment is considered unconventional night shift, a young employee base and western lifestyle including holidays. With high disposable incomes at a young age, they easily resort to smoking and drinking. Smoking was considered by many to be a quick-fix solution to their stress problems. They also fall victim to poor eating habits like skipping meals, overeating, and excessive drinking of coffee and other beverages. Call centre work not only demands cultural transformation, nocturnal labour, and hours of monotonous work from its employees but also brings with it insecurities and vulnerabilities by diminishing their interpersonal familial and social interactions.

Many workers felt socially alienated, completely cut-off from their family and friends circuit owing to nocturnal labor. Some also complained of having little time to spend with their family members even though they were physically present at home during daytime. Sleeping during the day was their main hobby and they slept for as long as they could due to the high fatigue levels of the night duties. Disruption in family life and lack of socialization due to odd shift timings were reported more among women as they had to balance between the dual burden of work and home.



Call center workers are exposed to a variety of health problems physical, mental, and social, owing to their unique job profile. There is a need for de-stressing facilities like gymnasium, games, yoga, meditation, library, and counseling facilities at the respective work places. Periodic health examination may be required for early detection and treatment of psychological disorders and other lifestyle diseases by engaging physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, and public health experts. The importance of having a stress-free and healthy lifestyle should be stressed upon through regular IEC (Information, Education and Communication) activities.

As per current research call

centers experience significantly higher employee turnover compared to other industries. The annual turnover rate in the call center industry often ranges from 30% to 45%, which is substantially higher than the average turnover rate in other sectors. This is mainly due to the above reasons.

Since call centres are here to stay, public health physicians who traditionally have concentrated mainly on the conventional workforce like agricultural and industrial workers, should now look at them too. With the increase in number of call center workers to cater for both Western and Indian clients, there is a need to concentrate on this significant workforce and address public health issues related to them as well. ●

**In capitalism, production is for profit. The amount of the bonus is usually fixed. The actual profit is hidden from the workers and goes directly to the owner, so workers do not get any incentive to work harder and better. In communism, production is for the state. Workers do not feel oneness with the job so there is little incentive to work. In PROUT, production is for consumption – our industrial system will be based on consumption. Profit will be minimized, so capitalists will not get the scope to exploit the workers and there will be rational distribution of wealth.**

**-- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar**



# FLIGHT ATTENDANTS' Hard Life

*The job is hard and requires a tremendous degree of patience, empathy, and attention to detail*

 Karunakshim Vatsalam

Many young women see a career as flight attendant an exciting and glamorous one. Dressed in smart catchy uniforms flight attendants get to travel the world, but they also get to meet new people and learn about various cultures, which extroverts by nature would love. However, many do not understand how hard their day-to-day existence is. However, it's not all perks! There are many challenges they have to face

regularly, like long working hours, handling obnoxious passengers, and even performing medical services 30,000 feet in the air.

The prospect of travel is its most exciting element. Flight attendants are frequently needed to fly to various places all over the world. This might be a terrific opportunity to explore new locations and learn about various cultures. However, it is important to realise that flight attendants remain away from home for

extended periods of time. This can be difficult for some people especially those with families or other responsibilities. And there are no fixed hours for flight attendants. It's not a 9–5 job. They can get called to operate a flight anytime, at times with only 2 hours notice; this can be tiring especially in the beginning. It also disrupts their family or personal time. However, the senior one gets, easier it becomes.

It's critical to recognize that being a flight attendant is a difficult profession. As part of cabin crew flight attendants are responsible for guaranteeing the safety and comfort of passengers on flights. This includes safety demonstrations, aiding with seat belt operations, and responding to emergency situations. They are

also supposed to help passengers with specific requirements, such as those flying with young children or with mobility challenges. This demands a tremendous degree of patience, empathy, and attention to detail.

In addition to safety they are expected to deliver exceptional customer service. They must be able to converse effectively with passengers and address any complaints or problems that may occur. This necessitates good communication skills as well as the capacity to remain calm under pressure. Another aspect often overlooked by many is the physical rigours of the job. Flight attendants are frequently obliged to stand for extended periods of time and stroll up and down tiny airline corridors. They may also be needed to lift and carry bags and other goods. This demands a lot of stamina and physical strength.

Today with a flurry of low cost airlines travelling economy class is becoming cheaper. In India the price of domestic air travel in India, is similar to a 3 Tier AC coach by rail. Thus, many people are flying today which is great for aviation management. However,

the problem arises when people travelling in economy class want the same service that a passenger travelling in business class is getting. They want complimentary drinks and more. They do not understand that business-class travellers pay at least five times more than what they are paying. It can lead to aggression and bad behaviour among many passengers. They become rude and behave badly with the flight attendants. It is one of the top challenges faced as they have to stay polite and calm even while dealing with unruly or rude passengers. Some may refuse to follow safety rules, while others might be rude or aggressive, especially after drinking too much. Flight attendants need to stay calm and professional while managing such situations, which can be stressful and sometimes scary, especially if things escalate and require intervention from the flight crew or airport authorities.

Flight attendant's day begins early, often before the sun rises. They meticulously prepare for the day, ensuring they look perfect and presentable. Personal grooming is of the utmost importance, as their

appearance reflects the airline's image and professionalism. After the grooming routine, they head to the airport to start their shift. Before the passengers board the aircraft, air hostesses attend a briefing session with the cabin crew and pilots. They discuss the flight plan, safety protocols, and any specific instructions. This is a critical part of ensuring a smooth and safe journey.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the job is greeting passengers with a warm and friendly smile. Air hostesses make passengers feel welcome and ensure they find their seats easily, always ready to assist with any special needs or concerns. Once the flight takes off, air hostesses focus on in-flight services. This includes serving meals and beverages, assisting passengers with their requests, and ensuring everyone is comfortable.

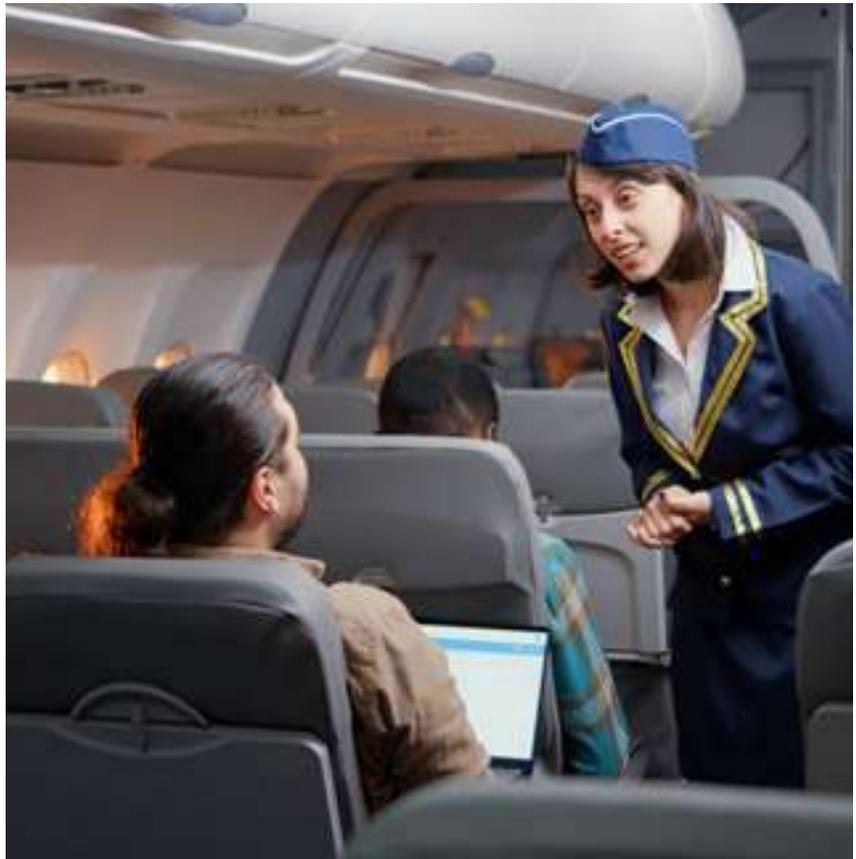
However the physical demands and health risks are many viz.: (1) They spend long hours on their feet, lifting luggage, and bending to serve passengers, leading to potential back pain, joint problems, and other physical injuries. (2) Turbulence in the air



can make the job even more difficult, leading to accidents like cuts, bruises, or even broken bones. (3) The confined space of an aircraft, combined with exposure to varying climates and altitudes, poses several health risks. (4) Long-term exposure to radiation at high altitudes: is also a concern for flight attendants. (5) Standing for long periods can lead to varicose veins and joint problems. (6) Working in environments with recycled air, varying temperatures, and many people from different places, they are prone to catching infections like colds, flu, or other diseases. The stress of the job, combined with irregular sleep, can weaken their immune systems, making them even more vulnerable.

Despite their long hours, cabin crews get little time to rest between flights. Sometimes, they arrive in a new city only to have a few hours of rest before the next flight. This can make it hard for them to relax and recover fully, leading to burnout, constant tiredness, and even mental health issues. Having to work in different time zones can also take a toll on health. Such time changes are frequent and jet lags can be hard to handle. They have to be ready to battle the effects of lag like fatigue and headaches. The best way to keep fit and healthy is by sleeping whenever one gets the chance during round trips.

Besides this they have to maintain weight. With time, age, and due to internal or external factors, weight fluctuates. However, air hostesses have to maintain a healthy Body Mass Index (BMI). If they go even slightly above their BMI, they get a period in which they have to reduce their weight. Another problem they face is limited growth potential. They have to stay in the same position they were hired for a long time. If they take a break in between and apply to a new airline,



sometimes they have to start from scratch. This limited growth potential is a cause for worry.

While being a flight attendant offers travel and unique experiences, it's also a demanding job with challenges like irregular hours, physical strain, and emotional stress, impacting work-life balance and personal relationships. Those with young children at home feel the maximum pressure. Since one may have to spend days traveling at a stretch, one doesn't get as much time as hoped for with loved ones. This results in feeling homesick missing home and family. That can be emotionally stressful but this is alleviated somewhat with technology thanks to Facetime and other social media apps, which enables staying in touch through video calls and instant messages.

A flight attendant's job has no possibility of work from home. It is difficult and demanding one, requiring a great degree of patience, empathy, and attention to

detail. It's not only about the flights, but also about the hard work and attention that goes into guaranteeing the safety and comfort of passengers. Though the pay is quite lucrative with opportunities to travel the world the hard work involved is often ignored. This career is more than just flying and involves a lot of behind the scenes effort, like creating flight plans, attending safety and customer service training, and doing normal equipment maintenance.

Due to the nature of their job, flight attendants constantly meet new people but rarely build long-term relationships. Forming close friendships or relationships can also be difficult because of their constantly changing schedules. Saying goodbye becomes a routine, whether to passengers they've assisted or colleagues they've bonded with. Over time, these frequent goodbyes can lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation. ●



# India's MALNUTRITION CRISIS

■ Sanjana Chawla

India faces a severe malnutrition crisis despite economic growth, with 36% of children stunted, 17% underweight, and 6% wasted. Tackling this requires multi-sectoral approaches, improved nutrition policies, and community engagement.

The country's malnutrition crisis remains a pressing concern. Despite rapid economic growth, millions of Indians, particularly children and women, suffer from malnutrition. The latest 2024 data from the Women and Child Development Ministry reveals alarming statistics, with about 36% of children under 5 suffering from stunting, 6% wasted, and 17% being underweight. The three terminologies—stunted, wasted, and underweight—are the primary

indicators that reflect levels of malnutrition in children. Wasting is a sign of acute malnutrition used for children who are too thin for their height. Stunting is attributed to children who are too short for their age. In contrast, underweight children have a low weight for their age, thus carrying traits of both stunting and wasting or either of them.

What are the parameters for measuring nutrition? Body mass index (BMI) is a standard measurement for malnutrition in school-aged children in India and internationally. BMI is calculated using the formula  $\text{weight (kg)} / \text{height (m)}^2$ . Height is a primary indicator of nutrition, public health, and standard of living. A decline in average height can indicate that a country is

regressing on public health and economic goals.

Body composition is an essential part of nutritional assessment. Studies show that Indian children have higher body fat for a given BMI than Western populations. Skin fold measurements are a widely used anthropometric method for assessing nutritional and fat status. It can determine the proportion of fat to non-fat tissue. Recumbent length is used to measure the "height" of young children (below two years). The child is laid on their back on an infantometer with their head touching the headboard and legs towards the sliding board.

Physical examination is an essential component of nutrition assessment that can identify muscle wasting, subcutaneous fat

loss, and oedema Based on the data announced by the WCD minister, Uttar Pradesh tops the stunting chart with rates as high as 46.4%. In comparison, Lakshadweep leads in wasting with almost 13.22% children affected. When it comes to the rate of underweight children, Madhya Pradesh assumes the top position, with the percentage of affected children being at 26.21%. These strikingly high figures are a result of primarily inadequate food intake, diseases, poor dietary diversity and quality, inadequate access to healthcare and sanitation, limited awareness about nutrition, lack of healthy eating practices, and socio-economic disparities and poverty.

India's malnutrition crisis also has far-reaching health as well as neurological consequences, including impaired cognitive development and learning abilities in children, increased risk of chronic diseases, reduced productivity and economic growth, and perpetuation of poverty and socio-economic disparities. However, while malnutrition remains a black spot

in India, some states have fared better when caring for their children's nutrition. Goa, for instance, has the lowest malnutrition rates across India, with stunting being at only 6%, wasting at under 1%, and underweight children at 2.2%. These numbers are the lowest across the country and suggest a dire need for better nutrition policies and health conditions.

Nutritionists and healthcare professionals also emphasise the importance of addressing malnutrition through a multi-faceted approach, including improving access to nutritious food, enhancing healthcare services, promoting sustainable agriculture practices and food security initiatives, and encouraging policy reforms to address the socio-economic determinants of malnutrition. Initiatives like the National Nutrition Mission (NNM) or the POSHAN Abhiyaan aim to address malnutrition through targeted interventions. With all these initiatives in place, India needs increased funding,

improved implementation, and community engagement to achieve significant progress and meet the target of eradicating malnutrition.

We must also adopt a comprehensive approach that involves strengthening healthcare systems and nutrition services, promoting nutrition education and awareness campaigns, and encouraging reforms.

Addressing malnutrition requires a multi-sectoral approach involving government agencies, civil society organisations, and the private sector. Collaboration and coordination among these stakeholders are crucial to effectively implementing nutrition programs and schemes.

To make the most of today's technology, innovation, and data-driven society, novel solutions, such as mobile health technologies and digital platforms, can enhance nutrition services and facilitate access to vulnerable populations. Our key while addressing malnutrition is to ensure that vulnerable populations have access to nutritious food, healthcare, and education. This





can be achieved through sustainable agriculture practices, food security and social protection programs, and community-based initiatives.

Regarding community-based initiatives, India can learn from successful nutrition and credit-based programs in other countries, such as Brazil. Their Bolsa Familia program has shown significant reductions in child malnutrition,

and by adapting these models to the Indian context, we can develop practical solutions to address its malnutrition crisis. Guidelines to counter malnutrition

The National Institute of Nutrition has laid down some guidelines to counter malnutrition in India: Eat a variety of foods: Eat a balanced diet by eating a variety of foods from at least eight food groups. Eat more protein: Increase

protein consumption to 14% of total daily energy from the current 6-9%. Good sources of protein include pulses, meat, poultry, and fish. Reduce processed foods: Avoid processed foods that are high in salt, sugar, and fat.

**Breastfeed:** Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, and continue breastfeeding for up to two years or more. **Provide micronutrient-rich foods:** Provide micronutrient-rich foods to elderly people to help them stay fit and active. **Get vitamin D:** Get exposure to sunlight to obtain vitamin D. The complex issue of malnutrition requires a comprehensive and sustained response. By understanding the root causes and adopting a multi-faceted approach, we can significantly progress in addressing this challenge.

We must also empower local communities to take ownership of nutrition programs to ensure that interventions are tailored to meet the specific needs of vulnerable populations. With all these steps and concerted efforts, India can provide its citizens with a healthier, more nourished future and achieve zero hunger and malnutrition. ●



We need a new definition of malnutrition. Malnutrition means under- and over-nutrition. Malnutrition means emaciated and obese.

— Catherine Bertini —

# THE KALKI AVATAR

■ Ganesh Bhat

The atmosphere in India is thick with speculations and debates over the incarnation of **Bhagavan Kalki**, also called **Kalkin**, the prophesied tenth and final Avatar of Lord Vishnu. This is mentioned in the ancient epic Mahabharata and numerous other Hindu texts.

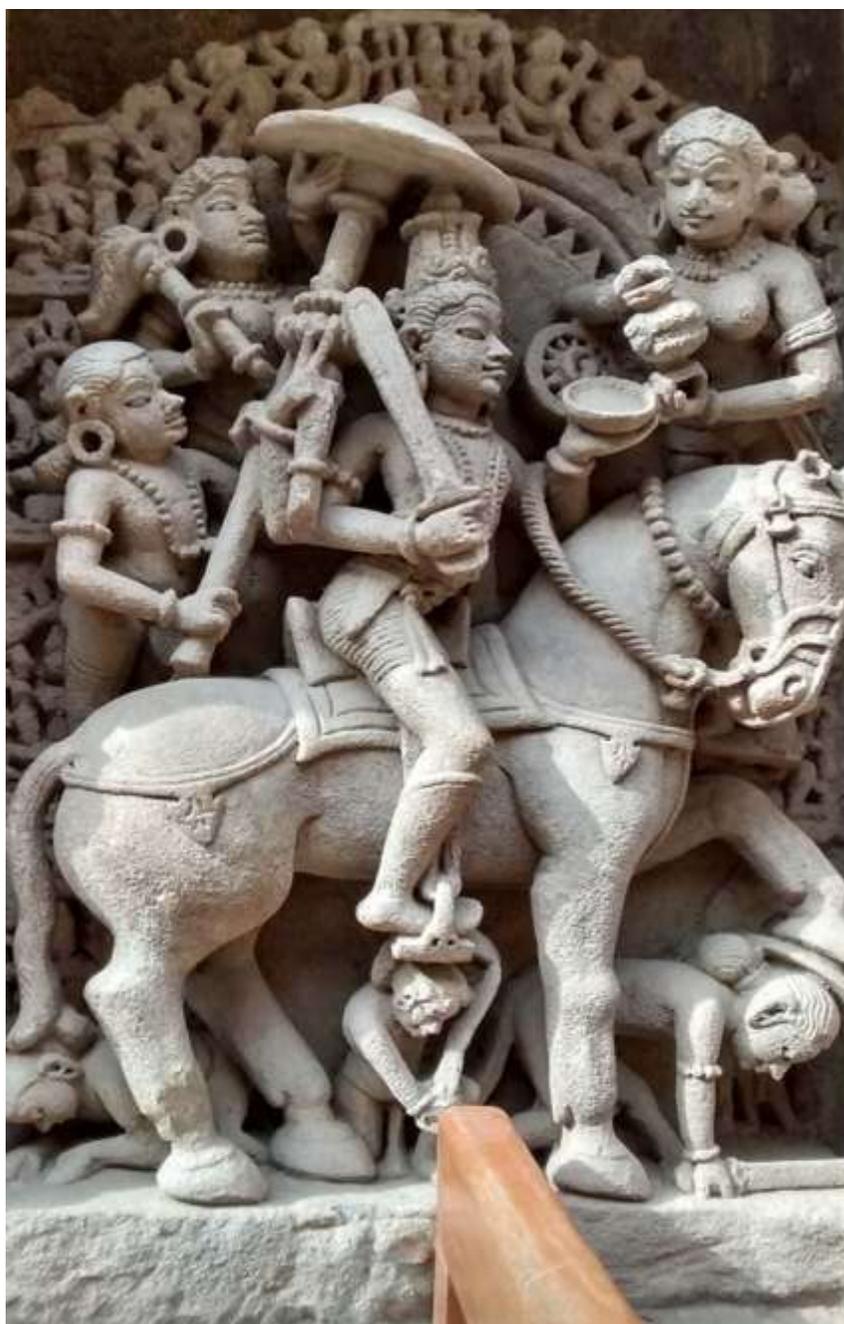
It is believed that after the physical departure of Lord Krishna from Dvapara Yuga, Kali entered and started Kali Yuga in the world. Kali Purusha has been described as the Lord of Evil, the biggest and most dangerous Demon on the Earth until now, symbolizing everything unholy and the one who promotes only chaos and the destruction of balance, peace, and life itself.

It is said that during this Kali Yuga, most people's minds will be diverted, and they will try to do unwanted things. Mankind will abandon the Gods, and morality will be replaced with open hostility and depravity.

## Is the Kalki Avatar real?

For many, the idea of **Kalki** is a source of hope – a reminder that no matter how bad things get, a force of good will always rise to set things right.

Kalki is described in the Puranas as the avatar who rejuvenates existence by ending the darkest and most destructive period to remove adharma (unrighteousness) and ushering in the Satya Yuga while riding a white horse with a fiery sword. This is interpreted as symbolic of an inner awakening, urging each of us to fight the evils within ourselves and create a better world.



*Statue of Kalki avatar in Patan, Gujarat*

Some see it as a metaphor for the cyclical nature of time and the eternal struggle between good and evil. Others believe it to be a

prophecy of a future event or figure who will bring about transformative change. For some Kalki is just an invisible force destroying evil.

## The Necessity of the Advent of Parama Purusa

Lord Kṛṣṇa says “Whenever there is the degradation of dharma and wherever adharma becomes the dominating factor, and under such circumstances it becomes difficult for the sadvipras (the developed personalities), to tackle the situation, and under such circumstances I find no alternative but to come over here – tadātmanam srjāmyāham – 'under such circumstances I create myself.'”

According to Ananda Marga the Advent of Parama Purusa onto this earth again and again is necessary because, at the transitional point, human beings become confused; they lose the ability to discriminate between dharma and adharma, what they should and what they should not do. At that moment, the advent of a great personality becomes an imperative necessity. The Lord wants to bring about the welfare of human beings. 'Human welfare' here means, primarily, welfare in the spiritual sphere, and secondarily, in the mental and physical spheres. All created beings are His progeny. He will promote welfare in all three – spiritual, psychic and physical spheres of life.

Whenever Dharma declines, whenever people feel helpless, at that stage it becomes imperative for Tāraka Brahma to come to the world with the help of the five fundamental factors, to inspire the depressed people, to encourage them to move forward, to make them realize that they are not forlorn or helpless, that Parama Purusa or Tāraka Brahma is always with them and will continue to help them.

### When Will He Come

According to mythology, Bhagavan Kalki will appear at the time when Kali Yuga reaches its worst phase when forces of evil will reign supreme, and sins will rule the world and good will be subjugated, humanity is consumed by greed, dishonesty, and moral degradation. It is believed that whenever evil gains the upper hand over good on earth, then Lord Vishnu incarnates to finish off all the evil and to restore the balance of good and evil.

Ananda Marga philosophy says, “Whenever the nadir point of degeneration is reached, the Supreme Entity applies His special power. This power takes the form of His Mahasambhūti. He applies His special power in the world when rules and regulations no longer remain effective when

institutions and values crumble. The special advent of Mahāsambhūti signifies that the human race will have a new awakening.

When people are stricken with fear and despair about the future, when the society, country, and culture appear to be on the brink of disaster, then the time is ripe for the advent of Mahāsambhūti. Through His special manifestation, Parama Purusa will certainly save the society”.

### The Time is Ripe

The Kalki Avatar is predicted to appear at the end of the current era, the **Kali Yuga** – a time filled with greed, dishonesty, and moral decay, the disappearance of virtue and dharma and the world being ruled by the unjust.

The world is now ruled by the demonic greed of crony capitalists who dictate the rulers (so-called people representatives) in the democratic set-up of all the countries. People are guided by self-centered, dogma-centered or matter-centered philosophies which are based on the principle of selfish pleasure. This has led to the disappearance of humanistic values and feelings from the hearts of people and resulted in the wanton destruction of the flora and fauna disturbing the deep ecology

**Kal + ki = kalki. The meaning of the word kalki is “omni-integral stance”, or viśṇu. In the Dashāvatāra stotra Kalki Avatāra is described as the tenth and final avatar of Viśṇu:**

***Mlecchanivahanidhane kalayasi karavālam  
Dhūmaketumiva kimapi karālam  
Keshavadhrtakalkishariira jaya jagadisha hare***

**“You brandish your sword for the destruction of the people who have deviated from morality; you are severe like the comet – terrible! O Viśṇu in the form of Kalki, victory unto you.”**

**Keep in mind that in this case mleccha means “one who has deviated from morality”. It is not in any way used to mean “those who do not follow the Vedas”. Those who use it in that way do so in order to vent their spleen.**

**-- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar**

and causing great injustice to Mother Earth. Huge wealth created by the hard work of the masses is cornered by a few persons and the majority of the population is forced to struggle for existence.

Religions which basically, were attempts to institutionalize spirituality have become the breeding grounds of dogmas, prejudices, hatred, sectarianism, fanaticism and fundamentalism. There is moral degradation all over and crisis in every sphere of human existence.

Humanity will not cease to exist; it has to evolve further on this planet earth by overcoming the crisis. The darkest period of night is the indication of the dawn being nearer. Some drastic change has to take place at this time and no doubt the time is ripe for the advent of an Avatar to establish the God-centered ideology which is the only alternative and panacea for the global malaise.

### **What Will Bhagawan Kalki Do?**

The Kalki incarnation represents a divine appearance predicted in the Purana, designed to annihilate evil and end oppressive rule, to combat the degeneration of rulers into plunderers, defeat the wicked, and heralding a new age of righteousness at the conclusion of the current dark age.

**Bhagawan Kalki** will unite the world and establish Dharma in the world and will destroy the bad things and force the bad people to change and become good people. The arrival of **Kalki** will not be just about destruction, but the establishment of Satya Yuga (The Golden Age) an age of truth and purity in the world. The minds of the people living in the Satya Yuga will be crystal clear and they will once again start treading the path of spirituality (Dharma). Human values will be reestablished paving the way for the evolution of all the entities on the earth and helping humanity to achieve their cherished goal of becoming one

with the Supreme Consciousness. In Satya Yuga, there will be peace, happiness, harmony, purity, and prosperity in the world.

### **What Will Happen with His Advent**

Ananda Marga says that by His advent two things happen simultaneously. On the one hand, He gets staunch supporters, and on the other, sworn enemies. The whole human society is divided into two camps – moralists and immoralists, the bad elements. Everyone has to join either of the two camps, and complete polarization takes place. He is crowned with success and glory and at the same time faces bitter criticism and infamy. One of His qualities is charm or “Shri”. Due to His charm people flock to Him knowingly or unknowingly.

Kali Purusha entangles the surrounding people around the Kalki Avatar and making them fall into his trap by spreading wrong word-of-mouth among them against the Kalki Avatar. The mind game of Kali Purusha is to make people go against the Kalki Avatar and uplift himself, so that he can rule the world.

Even though the Kalki Avatar is trying to make people understand the truth and free themselves from the trap of Kali Purusha, they are unable to understand it and continuing to give pain and suffering to the Kalki Avatar.

### **Guide to Identifying Lord Kalki**

It is said that the advent of Lord Krishna was foretold by Maharshi Garg, a great saint of that period. Sri Aurobindo, a freedom fighter who later turned in to a great spiritualist of 20th century, has prophesied that an Avatar will come and has described His features.

Sri Aurobindo emphasized on the necessity of spirituality in education. He also said, “Industry can only become again beautiful if

poverty and the struggle for life are eliminated from society and the co-operative State and commune organised as the fruit of a great moral and spiritual uplifting of humanity”.

Sri Aurobindo detailed the nature of the coming Avatar in the article The Past and the Future published in the magazine KARMAYOGIN NO. 14 dated 25 September 1909, “The men who would lead India must be universal and many-sided. When the Avatar comes, we like to believe that he will be not only the religious guide but also the political leader, the great educationist, the regenerator of society, the captain of cooperative industry, with the soul of the poet, scholar and artist. He will be in short the summary and grand type of the future Indian nation which is rising to reshape and lead the world”.

Few persons are projecting themselves as the Kalki Avatar. Some of them wear loads of jewelry, some dress in a peculiar way; some behave peculiarly as if they have supernatural powers. Such people befool the masses to amass wealth and lead a luxurious life. None of them have even a single characteristic described by Sri Aurobindo. But the dogmatic people, both educated and uneducated fall prey due to their ignorance or selfishness.

Shrii Aurobindo's description of scriptural Kalki Avatar perfectly aligns with the multifaceted philosophical tenets of Ananda Marga (AM). AM's teachings emphasize the importance of spiritual growth, self realization and service to humanity.

AM's thoughts are essentially the embodiment of perfection due to its comprehensive and transformative approach to spirituality, society and human development. It is through the concepts of this (AM's) ideology and its implementation, the coveted Golden Age will arrive on the earth. ●

# INVISIBILISED LOCALITIES

What kinds of challenges do residents of *jhuggis*, resettlement colonies and transit camps encounter when they deal with displacement, seek essential services, obtain government documentation, engage in legal disputes and strive to make their voices heard? *The Right to be Counted and Politics of Resettlement in Delhi* is Sanjeev Routray's extensive ethnographic study on the networks, performances, cultural traditions and obstacles that such residents face in Delhi.

The book is structured into two parts. The first part establishes the context—the city-planning practices, which are immersed in informalities, arbitrariness, discrimination and violent demolitions. The second part offers a detailed account of the different types of intermediaries that connect the residents with politicians and government offices.

The author scrutinises the planning processes in Delhi, uncovering a landscape riddled with informal structures and networks, where political interference is an inevitable reality. The “planned city” bears the perception of resettlements being temporary. New projects are carried out, ignoring established planning norms, to accommodate international events, promote tourism and craft a world-class image for the city. Government offices and officials in Delhi disregard people living in *jhuggis* or resettlement areas. But not all illegal structures share the same fate. While temples and parks built

*An ethnographic study on the networks, cultural traditions and obstacles faced by residents of jhuggis and transit camps while dealing with eviction politics and inequalities in Delhi*

■ Amit Kumar



illegally are formalised by dint of religious or cultural relevance, the affiliation of an average resident to the informal settlement must rely

on political clientelism to avoid eviction.

The author also highlights the changes that have taken place in

the resettlement policy—from allocating plots to allotting resettlement flats. The other side of the coin is that resettlement projects negatively affect livelihoods, assets and social connections. Apart from facing poor living conditions and a tenuous relationship with the state, residents of *jhuggis* also encounter opposition from middle-class enclaves of the locality who desire beautification of the area and see *jhuggis* as hurdles to a rise in property prices. Through their residential welfare associations, middle-class enclaves often resort to judicial interventions, demanding demolition of *jhuggis*.

Part II of the book presents the most captivating and engaging account, where the author explores three localities—a *jhuggi*, a resettlement colony and a transit camp. The primary distinction between these localities lies in the degree of informality imposed upon them. *Jhuggis* are informal clusters of housing that constantly face the threat of demolition. In contrast, transit camps serve as ad hoc rehabilitation systems to which individuals living in *jhuggis* are relocated. Transit camps are often on sites marked as recreational land—areas not designated for living. Resettlement colonies, while planned for rehabilitation, are often situated near riverbeds and regions with hazardous health implications.

This part of the book also delves deep into how *pradhans* (local chiefs), *samaj sevaks* (social workers), *sarkari karamcharis* (government workers), *dalals* (brokers) and activist organisations play significant roles in the creation and maintenance of citizenship struggles. *Pradhans* hail from these localities. They are affiliated to political parties and function as active agents of vote bank politics. They participate in community activities and conduct



themselves as guardians of the community. *Pradhans* are an important link between residents, local councillors, ministers, police and government offices. They have the capacity to get things done for the community. They themselves face hardship in their political aspirations and understand the discrimination that people living in such settlements face; yet they cannot be completely trusted as they can let the settlement get demolished for personal benefits.

*Samaj sevaks* are from middle-class families that are educationally, culturally and economically uplifted. They work with these settlements because of their ideological inclinations and see their work as a sacrifice; they could have chosen jobs with greater comfort. They are a bridge between residents of these localities and the English language-oriented higher government offices and judiciary. They also connect the community with lawyers who can represent them in court cases filed by middle-class enclaves.

*Sarkari karamcharis* assist residents by providing vital contacts to hospitals and the state bureaucracy. Activist organisations mobilise the diverse population of these settlements to collectivise and protest. They act

as pressure groups through petitions and letters, organise events to foster solidarity among residents, and reinvent counter-discourses.

Though the given diverse intermediaries play different roles, they sometimes overlap and conflict with each other due to common interest and credit-seeking tendencies. The most common conflict is between *pradhans* and *samaj sevaks*, who are much more engaged within the communities.

As Routray mentions, the book is quite timely. It informs one about the kind of politics and the new hardships that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, and the National Population Register will impose on these communities. It is not only a well-written account for students of urban studies and social work, but is also articulated in simple language for anyone interested in the realities of the hidden, invisibilised localities of Delhi. The accounts of struggles to access rights provoke readers to reconsider the city they wish to inhabit and the damage their desire for a world-class city can cause to those already enduring challenging and hazardous conditions. ●

*The author is junior researcher at the Centre for Development Research or ZEF, Bonn, Germany*

*Courtesy 'Down to Earth'*

# REFORESTATION PLAN AND ANANDA NAGAR VILLAGE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

## Reforestation Plan

In continuation of reforestation of Ananda Nagar this year it is planned to grow over 1.5 lac plants and plant 1lac saplings in the field. The plot of more than 40acres is identified where the saplings will be densely planted. Following activities are planned and are in the process of growing seedlings.

1. Forest plant nursery is established in Ananda Nagar where we grow the seedlings, after collecting seeds from the forest in Ananda Nagar, some are bought from other nurseries across India, some are received as donation. In past when we are buying plants from other nurseries , it

*This is an update of the report published in the February issue.*

Acarya Kishan Sood

used to cost us >Rs.25 per plant. It was then we decided to grow plants in our own nursery. This was started last year when we were able to grow >60000 plants. Out of which 50000 were planted in the field.

This way there has been a substantial reduction in cost of the plants grown. The plants that are grown in our nursery are all native varieties suitable for this environment. We usually grow anywhere

from 80-100 varieties of plants the cost production of these 150000plants works out to 7.5 lac.

2. For protecting the crops from village cattle we have this year decided to build a GI fence with concrete pillars. This involves a total cost of 8.5 lacs
3. For irrigation purpose we are digging a well and building a network of spray pumping station and piping network at a cost of Rs.7.5 lac



4. Plantation in the field will cost us 6.5 lac with cost of fertilisers - cow dung, poultry cake, mustard cake, neem cake - as inputs and also rice husk.
5. Supervision will cost us about 2.5 lac a year
6. Total expenses budgeted is 32.5 lac + 2.5 lac for contingency; total 35 lac.

### Ananda Nagar village school's developmental programme - work in progress

Following schools have been taken up in the first phase of development. The jobs involved are detailed here. In the course of their development many new ideas evolve are incorporated in the developmental scheme one after the other.



1. **Patamjuri school** : this school was identified as its requirements were straight forward. First of the facility was inspected and works to be taken up identified in consultation with school staff. The jobs were - a. Roof leakage to be fixed, b. Jagrati room floor casting and repair, c. Repair of other rooms, floor, window sil repair, d. Diverting Terrace water drainage, e. Providing a terrace parapet, f. Painting of the building, g. Providing carpets for all rooms and chairs for teachers, h. Repairing blackboard, i. Writing school signboard. All these jobs have been completed. h. Land behind the school 23dec to be bought @ 2.5lac, The total expenses were: 35000+2.5lac
2. **Karchey school** : a. 8no. GI Windows with grills replaced, b. Jagrati floor casting to be done, c. terrace leak fixed, water drain pipes fixed, d. Window repairs done, e. Door masonry repairs done, f.



Carpets and chairs provided, g. Water tank for drinking water provided, h. Bamboo fence being built, I. Painting and signboard to be done after repairs completed. Budget: 85000

3. **Taherbeda school (foothills of Asthi pahar) :** a. GI Windows grills 5nos and doors 2nos to be fixed, b. Bath room pan to be fixed and septic tank to be repaired with its to be cast in situ, c. Main gate pillars to be cast and repaired steel gate to be fixed, d. Black boards to be painted, e. Carpets and chairs provided, f. Verandah floor and windows to repaired. g. Painting of the building and writing signboard, Work delayed due to shorts supply of sand. Expense budget: 1,20,000
4. **Mayadih school :** a. Clearing school surroundings of weeds, wild growth and debris within the boundary done, b. Terrace leak to be fixed, c. Repair of one floor to be done. d. Bath room wall to be built and door provided,

toilet pan to be fixed, septic tank to be repaired and top cover to be cast in situ, bath room door to be fixed, e. Painting to be done, f. Sign board done, g. Carpets and chairs provided, h. Painting of building to be done, I.roof leaks to be fixed, Expense budget: 50000



5. **Barudih school :** a. Plaster if the building of the face looking to the main road to be done, b carpets and chairs provided, c. Painting and signboard to be done, d. 8dec Land from the road to the school @ 2.5lac to be bought, e. Bamboo boundary to be fixed, f.plastering of the outside of the building to done and inside out painting to be done, Expenses budget: 2,90,000
6. **Tatuara school :** carpets and chairs provided, many jobs remain pending for want of funds
7. **Chamchaka junior high school :** carpets and chairs provided
8. **Guridih junior high school :** a. carpets and chairs and plastic drum for drinking water provided, b. Bath room, door, septic tank and pan to be fixed, c. Extensive Building repair to be planned at a cost of 2.5lac;
9. Painting of building and signboard, e. Expenses budget 4 lac ●

# THE SUBTLE ENTITY

- Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

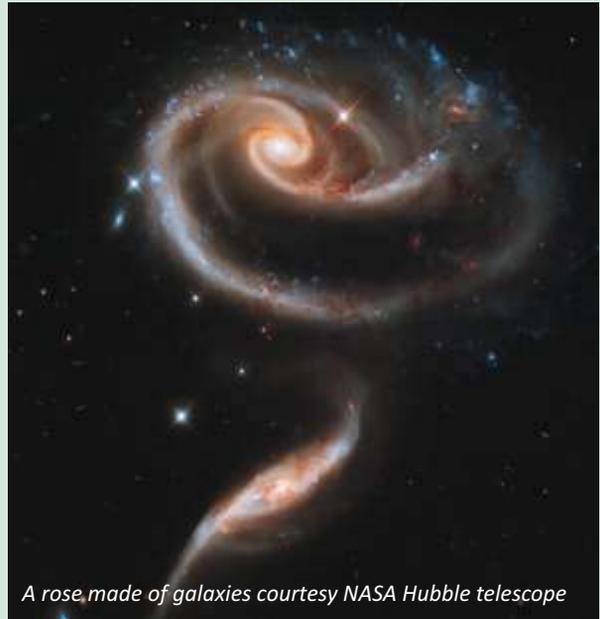
**P**arama Puruṣa is called sūkṣma, or “subtle”. What is subtle? Any object which does not usually come within the scope of the sense organs is subtle. When an object is so small or so vast that the human eyes cannot perceive it properly, it is called subtle. When a particular sound is so low or so high that human ears cannot perceive it, it is called subtle. Similarly, when an object is so sweet that our tongue cannot properly perceive its sweetness, it is called subtle. So it is said that anything which does not come within the scope of sense perception is called subtle.

And this subtle object human beings try to bring within the scope of sense perception through a machine – a telescope or a microscope or something of the sort. And that object is called very, very subtle which does not at all come within the scope of perception, even through subtle instruments. Now the difference between a subtle object and a very subtle object varies from person to person, from place to place. For instance, there may be some subtle object today which is not perceivable even by machines; but maybe some new machine will be invented tomorrow by which we will be able to perceive the same object. Then that object will no longer be considered very subtle. But even in that case there will be something, some entity, which will still remain very subtle for those days. This is the inexorable law.

Now the degree of human comprehension of this universe varies from person to person. For a human being this universe is certainly beyond the scope of total perception. But a certain portion of this universe is certainly within his reach. Again, to a cow the world is unlimited, no doubt, but the cow fails to comprehend that this universe is unlimited, and that only that part of the universe where she grazes comes within her reach. So there is a variation between human and human and between creature and creature as to the degree of comprehension of this universe. That's why some persons spend their lives in quarrels over land, while others may prefer to spend their lifetimes delving into scriptures, while others might be more interested in earning money. For these types of people, a very little portion of the universe is within their comprehension, whereas a vast portion of the universe remains untrodden and incomprehensible to them. Now [human] greatness or smallness is judged by how far a person has expanded his area of comprehension of the incomprehensible portion. You may find it a little difficult to understand this point. Suppose for instance a particular person has comprehended this earth; the solar system has come within the scope of his or her comprehension. In the case of a cow the arena remains quite limited; and if again a cow is tied to a stake, her arena may be still more limited. She does not know anything beyond that arena, nor does she want to know. She has no urge to know at all. In Bengal there is a popular saying that a cow which is tied to a fixed pole has a fixed quantity of grass to eat. Human beings who remain too preoccupied with terrestrial objects are in a condition no better than that of that cow.

For a person who is more evolved in intellectual erudition, the comprehensible portion of the universe goes on increasing. But the incomprehensible portion remains as large as before, because that is infinite. But a developed human being lives to reclaim the incomprehensible portion. For instance, when we fondle a little child, we think that the child is not merely a child, but rather Parama Puruṣa Himself has come to me in the form of a child just to enjoy my fondling, love, and care. He has willingly come to me for that purpose. This is called madhvidyā, and one should always remember to do it. And one who remembers to do it all the time is considered a great person in society.

So this is the explanation of vishva, the universe, of which part comes within the scope of human knowledge while another part remains inaccessible. So the universe never means the earth only. ●



*A rose made of galaxies courtesy NASA Hubble telescope*



## SSAC Holds Free Surgical Camp in Ranchi



On March 26, the 6th free surgical camp for the correction of congenital cleft lip, cleft palate, gum deformities, and nasal reconstruction was successfully conducted under the initiative and management of the Spiritualists' Sports and Adventurers Club (SSAC), Anandanagar, in collaboration with the international organization Operation Smile.

The camp was held at Anandamarga School, Bundu Balading, Ranchi, with the aim of helping both children and adults return to a healthy and normal life through life-changing surgical interventions.



### Key Highlights and Facilities of the Camp:

1. A total of 11 specially-abled individuals participated in the camp.
2. Out of them, 6 patients, above six months of age and with the required body weight, were selected for surgery.
3. Two infants, under six months of age and underweight, were found ineligible for surgery due to health concerns.
4. Those not fit for immediate surgery were provided free nutritious food to improve their health so they may qualify for surgery in the future.
5. For each selected patient, the entire cost of travel, accommodation, meals, and surgery at the Durgapur



# ACTIVITY



Operation Center was fully covered by the organizing body, including provisions for two accompanying family members or caregivers.

6. In addition, post-surgical follow-ups and health check-ups were conducted for individuals who had previously undergone similar procedures.

This compassionate initiative has brought smiles to many faces and continues to be committed to reaching out to more individuals in need in the future.

## Symposium on Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's Philosophical Contributions

The Department of Philosophy, Kazi Nazrul University, Asansol (West Bengal) successfully organized a thought-provoking symposium on “Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar’s Philosophical Contributions to Philosophy, Neo-humanism and Socio-Economic Theory” on April 9, 2025. The event brought together scholars, students, and thinkers to engage deeply with the rich intellectual legacy of Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar.

The keynote speaker for the symposium was Acharya Divyachetananda Avadhuta, Central Public Relations Secretary of Ananda Marga Pracharak Samgha, Kolkata. He delivered a comprehensive and



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enlightening talk, covering the core dimensions of Ananda Marga philosophy—spiritual, humanistic, and economic.

In his address, he highlighted three integral approaches of the philosophy. Beginning with the concept of Supreme Consciousness and Operative Principle, he emphasized the metaphysical foundation of existence and the universe's spiritual underpinnings. He then elaborated on the essence of Humanism and Neohumanism, explaining that while humanism arises from noble ideas, it lacks a perennial motivational source. In contrast, Neohumanism, as envisioned by Shri PR Sarkar, elevates humanism to universalism, embracing love for all living beings and rooted in the cult of spirituality.

He also offered insights into Shrii PR Sarkar's Socio-Economic Theory, PROUT, which advocates for guaranteed minimum necessities—food, clothing, shelter, education, and medical care—for all individuals. Additionally, the theory supports the fair distribution of surplus resources to meritorious and capable individuals, thus ensuring both equity and progress in society.

The symposium was graced by the presence of Dr. Bhabesh Gyan, Head of the Department of Philosophy, along with esteemed faculty members Dr. Kalyan Banerjee and Dr. Debrata Saha. The session concluded with an engaging discussion and reflection on the relevance of Shrii PR Sarkar's teachings in today's socio-economic and philosophical landscape.

The event marked a significant academic step towards exploring indigenous philosophical thought and its application in contemporary society.



## Chhattisgarhi Mahila Samaj Demand Justice for Rape Victims, & Liquor Ban

In a powerful display of unity and resolve, women activists of the Chhattisgarhi Mahila Samaj, under the leadership of Malti Parganiya, submitted a memorandum to the Durg Collector on April 9, addressed to the Chief Minister, demanding a complete ban on alcohol in the state. The call for prohibition comes in response to a horrific incident on Ram Navami on April 6, in which a young girl was sexually assaulted by an individual allegedly under the influence of alcohol. The Collector's office assured the women of action, acknowledging their concerns.

The outrage intensified as another tragic incident unfolded within 48 hours. On April 9, the Chhattisgarhi community, including both women and men, organized a candlelight march from Ghadi Chowk to Jaystambh Chowk in Durg to protest the rising cases of violence against children. The march was sparked by two separate assaults on minor girls—one, a six-year-old, who tragically lost her life, and another, a hearing-impaired girl, who was also victimized. The community expressed grief and anger over the incidents, highlighting the urgent need for stricter measures to curb alcohol-related crimes.

The candlelight march saw participants solemnly walking through the streets, holding candles and raising slogans against the unchecked sale and consumption of liquor, which they believe fuels such heinous acts. The Chhattisgarhi Mahila Samaj and other community members vowed to continue their fight until concrete steps are taken to ensure the safety of women and children in the state, and the alcohol is banned.



Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar



# Made My Life

TUMI MARME ESE ÁMÁR GHUM BHÁMGÁLE  
TUMI NIJER RAUNGE ÁMÁR MAN RÁUNGÁLE

*You came into my soul  
And roused me from slumber,  
You painted my mind  
With Your own colours.*

CHILO PATHER KLÁNTI, CHILO BOJHÁR BHRÁNTI  
JIVAN KE ASHÁNTI BISIYE CHILO  
TUMI NIJER HÁTE TÁDER SARIYE DILE  
TOMÁR CHANDE PRÁÑ NÁCIYE DILE

*Weariness was on the path  
The burden of blunders,  
Life was poisoned by turmoil.  
With Your own hands You removed them  
And made my life  
Dance to thy rhythm.*

CHILO MÁN APAMÁN, CHILO PÁVÁR PARIMÁNÍ  
SAKAL BOJHÁ TUMI SARIYE DILE  
TOMÁR ÁLOY ÁMÁY BHARIYE DILE

*There was respect and insult,  
There were a lot of dues,  
The entire burden You removed  
And flooded me in thy light.*



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