

PROUT



A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis



NUCLEAR REVOLUTION



The existence of exploitation in society can be ascertained through the prevalence of such factors as extreme poverty; social insecurity; injustices against the common people; lack of purchasing capacity to acquire the minimum requirements of life; huge economic and social differences between various classes; the irrational distribution of wealth; etc. The present social, economic and political conditions in India exemplify all these ailments. India is on the verge of revolution



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PROUT

Progressive Utilization Theory

Cry of the Suffering Humanity

**A
Vibrant
Magazine
which
Informs
&
Inspires**

What is PROUT :

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

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

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

Main principles of PROUT and Neo-Humanism :

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

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

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

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

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

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

For both civilization and science, intellectual knowledge is indispensable. Spiritual or intuitional development is possible through the happy blending between civilization and science. - Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

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COVER STORY**SOCIAL LIBERATION****Nuclear Revolution**

08

contents**14 SOCIAL ENLIGHTENMENT**

Are We Even Ready to Talk About Superstition?

18 SOCIAL JUSTICE

As Rich Get Richer Poor Get Prison

20 ECONOMIC DECENTRALIZATION

Local and Complementary Currency

29 PREJUDICE AND POLITICS

Can Donald Trump "Make America Great Again?"

30 WAR VICTIMS

Lives Starting With Horror

31 AGRO-ECOLOGYReversing Fate Through Love for Land,
Forests and Water**34 CORPORATE AGRICULTURE**

The Exxons of Agriculture – Fertilizer Companies

39 JUSTICE

The Right to Life – The Most Violated Right

41 HISTORY

Svetlana Alexandrovna Alexeivich - An Extraordinary Human Being

45 EUGENICS

Supreme Court Investigating Gates Foundation Vaccines



30



45

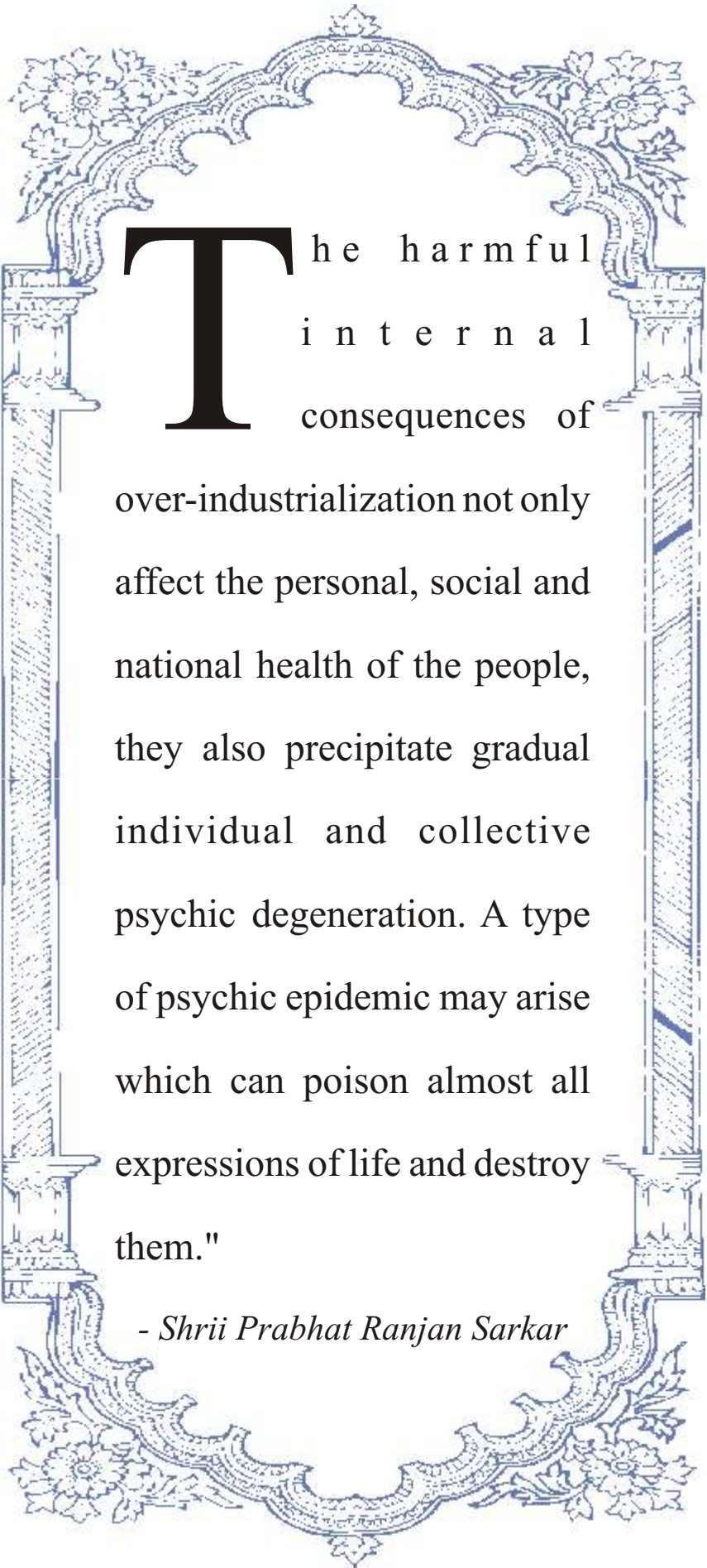
regulars**05 EDITORIAL****06 LETTERS****07 INSPIRATIONAL****47 ACTIVITIES****For Enquiries
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Fundamental Principles :

1. No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth without the clear permission or approval of the collective body.
2. There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution of all mundane, supra mundane and spiritual potentialities of the universe.
3. There should be maximum utilization of the physical, metaphysical and spiritual potentialities of unit and collective body of the human society.
4. There should be a proper adjustment amongst these physical, metaphysical, mundane, supra mundane and spiritual utilizations.
5. The method of utilization should vary in accordance with the changes in time, space and person and the utilization should be of progressive nature.



The harmful
internal
consequences of
over-industrialization not only
affect the personal, social and
national health of the people,
they also precipitate gradual
individual and collective
psychic degeneration. A type
of psychic epidemic may arise
which can poison almost all
expressions of life and destroy
them."

- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

Neohumanism or Barbarism

This month marks the anniversary (Niilakantha Divas) of the nefarious attempt of vested interests working through the Indira Gandhi regime to try to stop the mission of Shrii Prabhat R Sarkar to create one and indivisible human society. What is less known was that it was not just the communists and capitalists who were uniting in this persecution, a good number of religious personalities also joined this campaign of false propaganda against Shri Sarkar.

Today we see the perilous situation in the country where armed religious mobs freely loot and murder at will such as seen in the mob murderers of alleged cow killers and in the recent riots in Malda and Purnia. In Muzaffarnagar, an investigation into the riots found that the Samajwadi party that panders towards Muslim extremists and the Hindu supremacist BJP party worked together to polarize their electoral base causing the murder, violence and rape of thousands of innocent people. The recent riots centred on slanderous religious comments. Shrii Sarkar clearly showed how all these religions are Adharmic (unrighteous or sinful).

“As religions are dependent upon various changing factors, they differ widely from one another. They criticize and mock each other, exaggerating the other's defects and refusing to acknowledge the other's positive qualities. As they have no Eternal Entity as their goal, they are influenced more by allegiance to their own sect than by any love for humanity. But real Dharma (sublime righteousness) teaches that all living beings of the universe belong to one family; all are bound by the common touch of fraternity. The entire universe is everyone's homeland, and all the animate and inanimate entities are the various expressions of one and the same Supreme Being.” (Five Kinds of Conscience)

Since the current government took power, religious majoritarian hate speech and mob action has created fear and paranoia amongst the Christians and Muslims. The difference being that the latter are prone towards violent responses. On October 20, 1990, Shrii Sarkar explained the mass psychology that led to the Partition of India and warned that it was again returning to India saying,

“Most of the minorities [in 1922] could not rely on the Hindu majority of the country. That is why out of fear complex they wanted to divide the country. The Hindu minorities of Bengal and the Punjab could not rely on the Muslim majority. That is why they wanted the partition of those two provinces. The same psychology is prevalent today. At that time there was not even a wee bit of political education or political consciousness in the country.” (Dangers of Communalism)

This psychology is creating not just a spiral of hatred but also creating a new brand of leaders who forthrightly condemned by Shrii Sarkar saying,

“If there is a dearth of intellectual pabulum and the intellectual standard of the people is not high, they can take “dos” to be “don'ts” and vice versa. Take for example, a communal riot where a little innocent boy is killed, and when the person who encourages the riot becomes the people's leader. Where the intellectual standard of the people is low, people commit blunders prompted by such leaders they become beasts. Those backward countries which have less socio-politico-economic consciousness in the people tend to have more immorality. In such countries the leaders misguide the people in order to collect votes. I call such leaders “political satans” or “political pigs” Such pigs become leaders only when the intellectual standard of the common people is low. In a country with shortages of physical and intellectual pabula, people ultimately become beasts and commit sins and crimes. To murder a person during a riot is both a crime and a sin. (Three Causes of Sin)

Shrii Sarkar emphasized that this occasion of Niilakantha Divas, it was a time for sentient anger against those who create hatred to divide society and those capitalists who profit because of this. In this regard, genuine lovers of human unity would do best to pay heed to the warning of Shrii Sarkar,

“Communalism is unnatural. Again today, the foolish leaders, the political leaders, are encouraging this very sentiment. And I fear that if it is not controlled in the proper time it is the most opportune moment to control it if it is not controlled in the proper time, the country will face further disintegration.”

(Dangers of Communalism)

**Rule of Rationality**

Irrationality is ruling the roost. Look at the kind of religious superstition that even educated people support in India. The West is also facing Christian dogma. The science of Microvita is mentioned as the cure for psychic diseases because it is the hidden science of spiritual meditation. This is truly a life saving science that we need to seriously research. Shrii Sarkar has given us Proutists so many duties in this small article to create new literature, new music, to make detailed Prout plans, to make Neohumanistic plans to save the environment and above all to propagate the ideal of Ananda Parivara to every person on this planet. Let us dedicate ourselves to the mission with all our hearts this year.

Jayantha Murugan, Chennai

Mind Control

I finally get the way we all get scammed by the news. Do you ever listen to the music on the 24 hour news TV channels? It is the same music used in films for when there is some dangerous situation. The music itself keeps us tense and then the bullets of news hit us and it is usually hyped up half-truths. We never get the real news about how ordinary people in the country are living in such misery. We see propaganda news about the politicians but no real news of how ordinary people are living their lives. We never see in-depth stories about the entire corrupt system in which we are caught like flies in the web of capitalist spiders. It is time to sweep out the cobwebs from our brains coming from our TVs.

Basuki Singh, Mumbai

French Republic taken Hostile

Such a revelation. By what right does France interfere in Syria and cause so much bloodshed by supporting Muslim terrorists? There are indeed many suspicions that these terrorist acts benefit the government the most. Because of these terrorists, the government is

given the chance to restrict freedom of the people or declare an Emergency. This is why a terrorist attack is good news for every government. The innocent people being murdered in Syria are the ultimate victims. Just think, France supports Islamic terrorists who create a civil war causing millions of refugees. When the refugees go to France, the same terrorists do a terrorist attack and then the refugees are no longer welcomed. Where are they supposed to go? So long as the French people do not think about this, they deserve to be in a political state of emergency because morally speaking, French civilization has been in a state of emergency for quite some time now.

Eric Valjean, Lyon

Indian Coasts Up For Sale

Everything is for sale today. The government wants to sell the entire country to whoever will buy. We elect the government to be the protectors of the land, wildlife and people of India. No one elected them to be the salesman of the land of India. Is this what democracy is pressing a button every five years so that the government can sell the homeland to the highest bidder? Who gave the government the right to sell the coasts of this land? This government talks so much about nationalism but is selling the coasts of the country to private hands, the action of a patriot or a traitor?

Mani Shroff, Jaipur

Sugar Barons

Everyone knows that Maharashtra is run by sugar barons of the NCP.

What we do not know is how the agricultural policies dictated by them in the previous regime in Centre harmed the soil and ecology of the area? What we do not know is how the state's farmers suffer so much from the economic tyranny of these sugar barons. The question nobody asks is why should we all live as slaves to the whims of the sugar barons who also buy our politicians? The reality is that the Constitution promised us economic justice but the farmers only get the chance to commit suicide. How long will we tolerate the suicides of more and more farmers? The longer we fail to act, the more blood there will be on our hands.

Karuna Pawar, Raigad

Bharat Ratnas

7500 years ago the Aryans began a series of invasions of India. This invasion is in its last stages as the last forests are being torn down and the last adivasis are being robbed, raped and murdered as per the Aryan Sanatana Adharma. Those who escape become Dalit slaves to upper caste Hindus. They live with the reality of Hinduism and Hindu nationalism – nothing but endless stool and urine. And they are made to spend their lives cleaning and diving inside the filth of the Indian nation. If there is something more evil than this please tell me. The legacy of Aryan invasions must be ended and not just in India. The Aryan invasions of North, South America and Africa must be ended. With this global mission let humanity awake.

Kartik Soren, Siliguri

"The great only appear great because we are on our knees. Let us rise." – James Larkin

A CONE OF ROASTED GRAM

On September 29 the year India was freed from colonial rule, in a chawl in one of the poorer quarters of Bombay (now Mumbai) a baby boy was born. Odds then were stacked heavily against him - his father raised in an orphanage in Surat had a lowly paid clerical job. His mother a homemaker barely managed to make both ends meet. The boy grew up with his father teaching him not to accept any obligations from anyone in life and his mother instilled in him the virtues of leading an ethical and moral life.

The boy worked hard at his studies and ended up taking up a job as a grade four employee in a law firm, where his main job was to deliver case briefs to lawyers and would often end up at Flora Fountain, Fort Mumbai near the High Court for work. During those first three years as he didn't have anywhere else to spend his lunch break, which often used to be a small cone of roasted chana (gram), outside a Court Room on the ground floor where he would relax as it was nice and breezy. At the same time the goings on in that courtroom fuelled his interest in law. A lawyer from one of the offices he would deliver briefs, observed his keenness and encouraged him to study law. He promptly did so and enrolled in the Bar and as a junior lawyer gained reputation for his developing legal acumen and was genuinely interested and enjoyed taking up cases involving the poor. In 1982 he fought a case of eviction of 3000 tenements in Ghatkopar a Mumbai suburb and won.

As a budding advocate he would walk down Narayan Dhabolkar Road in Mumbai, past the Rocky Hill flats, where a number of judges lived, and would dream that he would one day become a judge from an advocate and live there. That fire in him made him resolve he would become a judge and nothing else. That came true on October 8, 1991 when he was appointed Additional Judge of the Bombay High Court. He sat in Court Room No. 3 on the ground floor and in fact continued to operate from there even though he climbed the ladder and rose in seniority in the hierarchy of judges. This perplexed other judges who moved up floors as and when they became senior. The reason he wished to stay on was because outside that very room he would sit with a paper cone of roasted gram in hand for lunch. Finally he had to leave that room for good as he had to take over as Chief Justice of the Uttaranchal High Court, Nanital on December 18, 2003.

That young man who used to have a scanty lunch of roasted gram was Sarosh Homi Kapadia who was sworn in as the 38th Chief Justice of India on May 12, 2010 a position he held till September 28, 2012 when he finally hung up his uniform of clak and collar. In a famous and widely quoted letter that he wrote to former Justice VR Krishna Iyer, Kapadia said: "I come from a poor family. I started my career as a class IV employee and the only asset I possess is integrity..."

Homi was a true example of working till dying and dying while working. After retiring from the Bench he would adjudicate cases for arbitration. He was in fine health and worked till the day he breathed his last on January 4, 2015, a man of compassion as evident from one of his famous sayings, "Economic prosperity has to happen but I don't want 300 million to prosper at the cost of 700 million. This is where the role of the judiciary comes in." He was no doubt referring to the rising middle class of India as against the poor.

Arun Prakash





Nuclear Revolution

SHRI PRABHAT RANJAN SARKAR

The existence of exploitation in society can be ascertained through the prevalence of such factors as extreme poverty; social insecurity; injustices against the common people; lack of purchasing capacity to acquire the minimum requirements of life; huge economic and social differences between various classes; the irrational distribution of wealth; etc. The present social, economic and political conditions in India exemplify all these ailments. India is on the verge of revolution

A society may be described as the collection of numerous parallel psychic waves which originate due to the psychic tendency of moving together in unison. The glory of human society lies in the formation of a universal collective structure inspired by exalted ideas.

Dynamicity and staticity are inseparably associated with both individual and collective movement. Society is constantly moving; inertia means death. Social movement is the active effort to demolish a static structure and construct a dynamic structure in its place, and the characteristic of this movement is that it is rhythmic or systaltic, not linear.

All arenas of individual and collective life undergo changes with the changes in time, place and person. In comparison to the speed of change in social, economic, political and cultural life during the last 500 or 600

years, the speed of social change has greatly accelerated in the twentieth century. In the future, changes in society will take place with accelerating speed.

One of the scientific processes of social change is *viplava* or revolution. The Samskṛta word *viplava* is derived from the Vedic root verb *vi* minus *plu* plus *al*. In the wake of every revolution, radical changes occur in individual and social life, and far-reaching changes take place in the collective psychology.

The main factor in revolution is the application of tremendous force to move society forward. PROUT defines revolution as,

Tivrashaktisampātena gativardhanam viplavah.

[Revolution is the application of tremendous force to accelerate the speed of the social cycle.]

Replacing one age by another by crushing exploitation and bringing about a change in the collective psychology within a short period of time through the

application of tremendous force is what is called “revolution”.

If the reverse takes place, and the social cycle moves in the opposite direction by the application of tremendous force, it is called “counter-revolution”. In counter-revolution, society is taken backwards to the previous age. PROUT defines counter-revolution as,

Tivrashaktisampātena vipariitadhārayam prativiplavah.
[Counter-revolution is the application of tremendous force to turn the social cycle in the reverse direction.]

The main task of revolution is to overcome the barriers of staticity and inertia in the collective psychology of one age and establish the next age in the order of the social cycle. Society moves according to the inexorable laws of the social cycle, yet those who are concerned for the collective welfare will always endeavour to

accelerate the speed of social movement by fighting relentlessly against exploitation so that all can move forward together in unison.

When the psychic balance in social life undergoes a revolutionary change, certain factors remain inseparably associated with that change. Some of those factors are the **collective upsurge against exploitation; revolt against the status quo; effective struggle of the benevolent forces against the malevolent forces; and the longing for a new collective psychology among the people.**

Human civilization has now reached a critical stage of transition. Exploitation of one human being by another has assumed alarming proportions. At critical junctures in the past, when exploitation had reached the zenith point, history witnessed the emergence of mighty personalities who were able to overcome the problems in society. Today also, the guidance of mighty personalities with a comprehensive ideology is required to lead humanity away from the edge of disaster towards a glorious future. The emergence of such personalities is an indispensable necessity of history.

The Social Cycle

There are predominantly four types of collective psychology. These psychologies are the *shūdra* [worker], *ksātriya* [warrior; skilled craftsman], *vipra* [priest/intellectual] and *vaeshya* [capitalist]. They have nothing to do with casteism and are completely psychological phenomena. Shudras are those who are influenced by materialistic waves; they cannot overpower materialistic waves by their individual psychic waves. Manual power is their



1848 Revolution in France

only means of social security. Ksatriyas bring the materialistic waves under their control through their physico-psychic waves. Vipras do the same thing through their penetrating psychic waves. For the ksatriyas, physical strength or valour is the principal means of attaining social security, while the vipras rely on their intellects. A perusal of history illustrates that the vipras, by dint of their intellectual acumen, created a sense of reverence and subordination in the minds of the ksatriyas, and were thus able to control their physical strength and prowess. The vaeshya psychology is somewhat different. The vaeshyas do not want to enjoy material objects; rather they get enjoyment at the thought of accumulating them.

Primitive society was guided by shūdra mentality. Gradually society became compact under the influence of ksatriya mentality, and the Ksatriya Era was established in the world. This was an era of heroes and kings. The Ksatriya Age was subsequently replaced by the Vipra Age the age of intellectuals and priests. Next came the age of the vaeshyas. The difference between the former two classes and the

vaeshyas is that the vaeshyas seldom come to power directly. They put the ksatriyas or vipras in power, and control the society, economy and polity from behind the scenes. Generally, the amount of physical and psychic clash is less during the ksatriya and vipra eras compared to the Vaeshya Era, where poverty, deprivation and exploitation are extreme.

The transition from one age to the next may take place through natural change, evolution or revolution. Natural change or evolution can bring about change from the Ksatriya Era to the Vipra Era, and from the Vipra Era to the Vaeshya Era, but to eliminate vaeshya exploitation, the application of tremendous force is absolutely essential.

As a result of vaeshya exploitation, those having ksatriya or vipra mentalities are transformed into the disgruntled slaves of the vaeshyas. They have no alternative but to toil at the behest of the vaeshyas to fill their bellies. Those ksatriyas and vipras who are turned into

shúdras under circumstantial pressure carry a simmering discontent in their hearts. This group is known as the “*viksubdha shúdras*” or the “disgruntled workers”. These disgruntled workers, the exploited vipras and kśatriyas give systematic expression to the frustrations of the masses to end vaeshya exploitation. This is the class with revolutionary distinction.

The revolution which terminates the capitalist era requires the united struggle of the disgruntled workers. Shúdras can never be the actual revolutionaries because they lack sufficient moral stamina, responsibility and fighting spirit. They are vulnerable to many vices and are not well-established in human values, hence they cannot develop the requisite revolutionary character. The *viksubdha shúdras* develop into genuine revolutionaries because they acquire the moral courage and discipline to oppose exploitation.

The revolution against capitalist exploitation is termed “Shúdra Revolution”. Although

the kśatriyas and vipras are turned into *viksubdha shúdras* due to capitalist exploitation, immediately after shúdra revolution, the *viksubdha shúdras* revert to their kśatriya and vipra psychologies. Because of the martial character of shúdra revolution, the leadership of society passes into the hands of the kśatriyas, hence a new Kśatriya Era emerges. Even during the Kśatriya Era, the vipras try to establish their influence through force of intellect and attempt to move society along the path of vipra psychology. The Vipra Era is followed by the Vaeshya Era and then again by Shúdra Revolution. So, the movement of the social cycle and revolution are inseparably related.

The four types of psychology dominate the social cycle in cyclic progression. Towards the end of an era, the collective psychology undergoes marked deterioration. Moral degeneration and social retardation cause psycho-social stagnation. Exploitation becomes rampant. This sort of unhealthy situation signals the end of an era. The different classes try to usurp social power and establish their hegemony by trampling on the rights of others. This conflict has been discernible from the dawn of human

civilization. Through this clash and cohesion, human beings try to find the path of emancipation.

In the modern world, capitalist exploitation is rampant almost everywhere. Capitalism is now rapidly moving into the final stage of degeneration. In the early part of the capitalist era, society experienced certain advantages, but towards the end, society has become the victim of insatiable rapacity, unbearable hardship and heartless deprivation. Those countries suffering under the weight of capitalist exploitation are rapidly moving towards Shúdra Revolution.

Types of Revolution

According to their form and character, it is generally considered that the types of revolution include palatial change and pyramidal revolution. Palatial change and pyramidal revolution are not revolutions in the true sense because they may or may not result in the change of the collective psychology and the forward movement of the social cycle.

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

Nuclear Revolution can only be brought about by sadvipras (spiritual revolutionaries) who reside in the



Tiananmen Square Protests 1989

nucleus of the social cycle. Through their concerted effort, moral and spiritual power and all-round endeavour, they mobilize the exploited sections of society to overthrow the ruling class the exploiters. This very struggle for mass upheaval liberates society from exploitation and ushers in a new era of peace and prosperity.

Sadvipras will control the key points at the nucleus of the social structure. In Nuclear Revolution, there is minimum loss of life and property, and the transformation of society is accomplished within a very short span of time.

Requirements for Nuclear Revolution

There are several requirements for the success of Nuclear Revolution the presence of exploitation in any form, revolutionary organization, positive philosophy, revolutionary cadres, infallible leadership and revolutionary strategy. All these requirements are necessary.

The presence of exploitation.

There are various types of exploitation in society. The form and character of exploitation changes as per change in time, place and person. In every era of the social cycle, there are various kinds of exploitation. For example, in the economic sphere there is feudal exploitation, colonial exploitation, capitalist exploitation, imperialist exploitation and fascist exploitation. Exploitation may also manifest in such spheres as the physical, psychic, economic, political and cultural spheres. In the past the slave system was prevalent in the Greek and Roman Empires. The rulers sucked the blood of the vanquished to bolster their own interests.

In psychic exploitation, the masses are misled with the help of pseudo-philosophies which encourage dogma and narrow-mindedness. Democratic socialism and the theory of peaceful coexistence are examples of the hypocrite's psychology. In economic exploitation, vested interests deprive people of their minimum requirements. Money lending, charging exorbitant interest rates, compelling poor farmers to sell their produce through distress sales, etc., are examples of economic exploitation. Regardless of the type of exploitation used by the exploiters, when society is moving towards revolution, the role of the exploiters is exposed. The exploiters are unable to disguise their exploitation any longer.

The existence of exploitation in society can be ascertained through the prevalence of such factors as extreme poverty; social insecurity; injustices against the common people; lack of purchasing capacity to acquire the minimum requirements of life; huge economic and social differences between various classes; the irrational distribution of wealth; etc. The present social, economic and political conditions in India exemplify all these ailments. India is on the verge of revolution.

Revolutionary organization.

Revolution and war are almost the same. Revolution is a type of war. The difference between the two is that in war force is applied on behalf of a person or state, but in revolution, force is applied by a group of people to establish a society free from exploitation. A revolutionary organization is essential for revolutionary war. During the psychic preparation for revolution, the disgruntled sections of society will have to build a revolutionary organization which will create a congenial environment for revolution.

A diverse, multifarious organization is required to conduct revolution. The responsibility of the organization is like that of a government. The revolutionary organization must be operational from the highest level of the state down to the village level. Local activists or coordinators are connected to every level of the structure. All the activities of the revolution are directed by the highest body.

If a revolution is started without building a proper structure, or if loopholes are left in the formation of the structure, the results will be disastrous. In the struggle for Indian independence, for example, the revolutionary leaders failed to build a structure down to village level, and the British seized upon this organizational weakness. Such loopholes cause unpardonable losses. This occurred in recent Indian history.

Positive philosophy.

The revolutionary organization must follow a positive philosophy. A progressive, comprehensive ideology is the invincible weapon of the revolutionary organization. It counteracts negative ideas in society and generates a powerful, positive psychic flow in the collective psychology. People become revolutionary-minded, yet vested interests determinedly try to resist positive change, hence polarization occurs in the collective psychology. The duty of the revolutionary leaders is to create polarization through the propagation of a positive philosophy.

The philosophy of the revolutionary organization should be free from all kinds of narrow defects and dogma. If there are any defects in the

"The nucleus of creation is Cosmic Consciousness. It is also the goal of revolutionaries, and whatever they do by way of revolution with this goal in mind leads them to the culminating point of their life's march. Revolution must have an ideological goal. In essence, revolution means controlling all the three nuclei of the universe – physical, psychic and spiritual."

– Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

philosophy or if it is not comprehensive, there is the danger that the leadership of society will go out of the control of the revolutionaries. This will be extremely harmful for the progressive development of the society.

In addition, the philosophy must be based on practice, not on theory. If there are any defects in the practical implementation of the philosophy then can be rectified, but if there are fundamental defects in the philosophy itself, the philosophy can never be implemented, nor can it be rectified.

The theories of Marx and Gandhi are examples of defective philosophies. The fundamental principles of Marxism are unpsychological, irrational and anti-human. Marxists say that revolution is the only solution to capitalist exploitation. This is a positive idea. But the concepts of dialectical materialism, the materialist conception of history, the withering away of the state, proletariat dictatorship, classless society, etc., are defective ideas which can never be implemented. That is why the post-revolutionary stage in every communist country has suffered from turmoil and oppression. There is not a single country in the world which is established according to Marxist ideals.

Gandhism is also defective.

Instead of guaranteeing liberation from exploitation, it favours the interests of the exploiters, hence it is a negative philosophy. Liberation from exploitation is impossible when the exploiters themselves find shelter in the philosophy. The co-existence of the exploiters and the exploited can never lead to a society free from exploitation. No revolutionary organization can accept Gandhism as an ideal philosophy. If any organization does, then it will no longer be a revolutionary organization, and it will break apart within a short time. This is an historical inevitability. Thus, the revolutionary organization must adopt a positive philosophy which is without defects.

Revolutionary cadres.

Before the revolutionary organization gives the clarion call for revolution, there must be intensive preparation. In spite of the presence of all the conditions for revolution, revolution may not take place unless the exploited masses are psychologically prepared for revolution. If the people do not support revolution, the clarion call for revolution will not be heeded. Ideologically educated revolutionary workers will have to channelize the psychology of the common mass towards revolution and inspire them to undertake revolutionary struggle! Such workers must adopt a rational approach inspired by the positive philosophy, have a well-developed socio-economic-political consciousness,

and be dedicated to uplifting the standard of the common people. The duty of these workers is to inspire the frustrated masses along the path of revolution. Through their dedication and dynamism, they will be able to bring the collective psychology in their favour. The first and foremost duty of the revolutionary organization is to create dedicated workers.

Infalible leadership.

The success of the revolution depends on the leadership. Loss of life and property will be minimized to the extent to which the leadership is free from defects. Ideal leadership is the wealth of the society as well as of the revolution. It will not only lead to a successful revolution, but will also fulfill the hopes and aspirations of the people in the post-revolutionary phase of society.

In many countries a well-knit and prosperous society could not be built in the post-revolutionary phase due to the defective leadership. Concepts such as Plato's philosopher king, Confucius' sage, Nietzsche's superman, Marx's proletariat dictatorship, etc., were propounded to develop ideal leadership, but all these concepts have failed. There is a vast difference between a theory of leadership and the practical, human qualities of a leader. Due to intelligence, acumen, social awareness, oratory skill and some other qualities, a few leaders were successful in the instigating revolution, but later on they became the objects of slander because they were unable to guide society along the path of real progress. They were unable to solve the pressing problems confronting the people or eradicate exploitation.

Sadvipra leadership is the

ideal form of leadership. Such leaders will be physically fit, mentally developed and spiritually elevated. With their help and guidance, revolution will be materialized.

Revolutionary strategy.

The forces opposed revolution possess immense military power. In spite of it, the revolutionaries achieve victory. This victory is due not only to a well-knit organization, progressive ideology and exemplary leadership, but also to revolutionary strategy.

Leadership is not imposed from above, rather it establishes itself through dedication, sincerity, ideological zeal, fighting spirit and all-round capacity. Leaders gradually acquire such capabilities step by step.

A common base of integrity and unity amongst the exploited members of society will have to be established. This is essential because at the time of revolution there will be an all-out fight against antisocial activities and corruption. The revolutionaries will have to fight against three forces outside exploiters, internal exploiters and other inner evil forces. All these three forces are powerful. Yet the moral, psychic and spiritual strength of the revolutionaries will be the cause of their victory, because physical weapons are not the only source of power. Moral and spiritual power is infinitely stronger than physical force.

Although the primary duty of the revolutionaries is to drive out the exploiters, they also have to ensure that these exploiters do not get new opportunities to capture power or undermine society in the future. The greatest achievement of a revolution is to eradicate exploitation and bring



about a progressive change in the collective psychology through the minimum loss of life and property.

The Role of Sentiments

Revolution always takes place around a sentiment. If there is no strong common sentiment, a revolution cannot take place. Sentiment is always stronger than logic.

Communism propagates sentiments like 'workers of the world unite'. Initially, people were attracted to such sentiments, but after some time they discovered that they were hollow, consequently intellectuals became dissatisfied with them. Communism is now unable to fight against the local sentiments that are coming up in different parts of the world because these sentiments are stronger than communist sentiments.

PROUT is based on a universal sentiment which is applicable for the whole cosmological order, and it is systematically moving towards the implementation of this sentiment. Who will make the local people conscious of their local sentiments keeping universalism in mind? Only PROUT can do this. Communists have no such idea. Only PROUT can tackle all local sentiments and lead everyone in the world to universalism by gradual stages.

Revolutionaries must be well-versed in arousing the sentiments of the people and channelizing the sentimental legacy of the society towards universalism. During the

preparation for revolution, unstinting effort must go into arousing the sentimental legacy of the people, because sentiments inspire popular support for the cause of revolution, and infuse the revolutionary workers with tremendous power and conviction.

According to PROUT, there are two types of sentiments positive sentiments and negative sentiments. Positive sentiments are synthetic in nature. They unite society and elevate humanity, enhance collective interests and encourage progressive development. Negative sentiments are narrow in scope and divide society.

Some important positive sentiments include anti-exploitation sentiment, revolutionary sentiment, moral sentiment, cultural sentiment, universal sentiment and spiritual sentiment. Some negative sentiments include communalism, patriotism, nationalism, provincialism, lingualism and racism.

Negative sentiments should never be used to divide people into castes and communities to create artificial fissiparous tendencies in society. Rather, they should always be used to bring unity amongst people. Hitler used racism in an effort to unite the German people and he succeeded in the short-term, but because he used negative sentiments only and had no positive sentiments, his approach resulted in a world war and the near destruction of Germany. The path of negativity is extremely dangerous and harmful for society. Positive sentiments are the real weapons to build society. This must never be forgotten under any circumstances.

Are we even ready to talk about superstition?

Rolla Das and Suparna Banerjee comment on the rampant obscurantism and complete lack of informed public debate around the existing and proposed legislation in various states against social evils practised in the guise of religion and faith.

Not too long ago, in April 2015, *The Hindustan Times* reported the discovery of “headless torsos of two Dalit labourers Nanjaiah (60) and Krishnaiah (47)” at a banana plantation off National Highway 209. Attempts to find out whether the perpetrators responsible for the death of Nanjaiah and Krishnaiah have been identified do not yield ready or easy information. But the same report did mention that while the news of the beheading didn't garner much attention in the newspapers, Sanghasena, the district President of the Samata Sainik Dal, that had been leading the team of investigators, was of the opinion that the beheading were clear cases of witchcraft.

News items such as this, which are examples of the continuing, rampant obscurantism concerning superstition and related practices, are often relegated to the inner pages of newspapers in some small, obscure corner. But they call for an urgent exploration of the status of anti-superstition legislations across India.

Public Opinion and Legislation

Legislations are not exclusive answers to prevailing social injustice, but in the last few years, public discourse-driven interventions in legislation have demonstrated several positive changes, for example in the case of the Lokpal Bill, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013 and the repeal of Article 66A of the Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008. These and other cases have shown that public opinion, if consolidated and sustained, can create interventions in the state machinery and change laws which curb individual rights.

However, demands for legislation to protect people from obscurantist exploits have not generated much public engagement, nor has the state taken any effective steps to curb the occult practitioners from claiming anymore innocent lives. The status of the superstition bills in India bear this fact out.

Comparative Analysis of the Anti-superstition Bills in India

There are existing national laws such as the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954 of the

Parliament of India which prohibits people from advertising drugs and remedies that claim to have magical properties and considers advertising products claiming to do so as a cognizable offence. State level legislations are also present in Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh to prohibit witch-hunting. In Karnataka, there are acts such as the Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act, 1982 and the Karnataka Koragas (Prohibition of Ajalu Practice Act, 2000).

Maharashtra, however, is the first state to have passed a comprehensive legislation to protect people from being exploited in the name of superstition. Doctor and rationalist Narendra Dabholkar who founded the Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmoolan Samiti (MANS) in 1989, engaged in a decade long struggle challenging several superstitious practices, black magic and exorcism.

Originally drafted in 2003 by Dabholkar in association with MANS, the bill was not passed until 2013. It was only after Dabholkar's murder on 20 August 2013 that the

government succumbed to sustained pressure from MANS and other civil society organisations and subsequently promulgated the Maharashtra Anti-Superstition and Black Magic Ordinance.

The bill witnessed severe criticism from the Hindu Nationalist parties, such as the Shiv Sena and Bharatiya Janata Party, on grounds of being anti-Hindu. Extremist organisations such as the Hindu Jagran Samiti, Abhinav Bharat and Sanatan Sanstha also vehemently opposed the bill and were explicitly abusive towards Dabholkar.

While many of the aspects of the bill were amended by the Social Welfare Ministry of the Maharashtra Government before it was actually passed, it still remains an important event as it allowed the renewal of discussion on the adoption of a universal anti-superstition bill or anti-superstition bills in various states.

Following the lead of Maharashtra, Karnataka also proposed a bill in 2013 the Karnataka Prevention of Superstitious Practices Bill, 2013. The Centre for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy at the National Law School of India University, Bangalore was entrusted with the responsibility of drafting the Bill and it had initiated discussions among academics on the bill before submitting it to the government.

The Bill seeks to provide punishment for any person who promotes, propagates or performs any superstitious practice, entailing imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than one year but may extend to five years. It also includes provisions for a fine which shall not be less than 10,000 rupees but which may extend to 50,000 rupees. Additionally, the bill includes a provision for death penalty or life imprisonment for performing human sacrifice.

However, even after repeated suggestions, the bill has not been adopted. As in Maharashtra, in Karnataka too, Hindu groups have

criticised and opposed the bill. In spite of official attempts from several quarters, such as the request by the current chief minister of Karnataka, K Siddaramaiah to pass the bill in the assembly or the call of the Vice president, Mr. Hamid Ansari to make the anti-superstition law a national law, the engagement from people representing different layers of the society has been minimal.

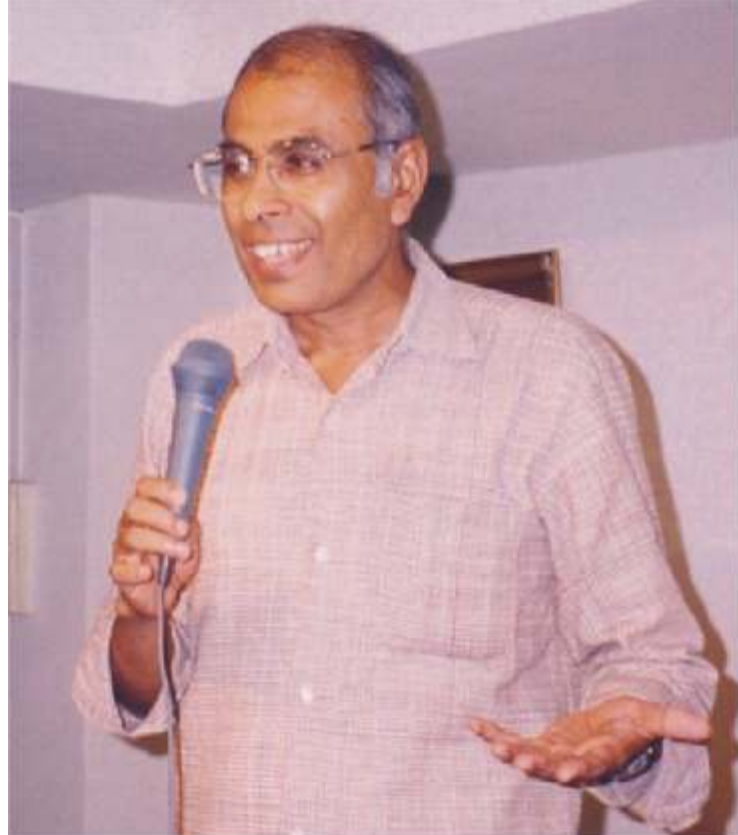
If passed, Karnataka will become only the second state, after Maharashtra, to bring in a law criminalising

such superstitious practices. In Assam, chief minister Tarun Gogoi has called for the drafting of a law that prohibits exploitative practices, but no further development has been reported since. Kokrajhar and Jorhat districts still report high number of deaths due to superstitious practices.

According to a report in The Economic Times, “in the last decade alone, Assam has witnessed nearly 100 killings as a result of various social evils practiced by people inspired by superstition. According to police records, 21 cases of witch-hunting were registered in 2006, followed by seven cases in 2007, 10 cases in 2008, four cases in 2009, 11 cases in 2010, 29 cases in 2011 and 14 cases in 2012 across Assam.”

In yet another state, Tamil Nadu, shortly after the death of Dabholkar, DMK chief M Karunanidhi noted that the Centre and state governments should aim to adopt an anti-superstition law and include scientific temperament in school and college syllabi. However, here too, there has been very little concrete progress in that direction.

States such as Bihar (Prevention



Narendra Dabholkar, founder of the Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmoolan Samiti (MANS) whose murder in Aug 2013 forced the Maharashtra Govt. to promulgate the Maharashtra Anti-Superstition and Black Magic Ordinance

of Witch (Daayan) Practices Act, 1999), Jharkhand (Anti-Witchcraft Act, 2001) and Chhattisgarh (Tonahi Pratadna Nivaran Act, 2005) have laws to curb witchcraft, but Poli Katak, a Delhi-based advocate opines that “the sentences prescribed and the paltry fines recommended in the state laws have so far proved ineffective in curbing this social menace” in these states.

The Rajasthan government has also taken the initiative to draft the Rajasthan Women (Prevention & Protection from Atrocities) Bill, 2011. The bill mentions that whoever maligns or accuses a woman of being a “Dayan or Dakan or Dakin, Chudail or Bhootni or Bhootdi or Chilavan or Opri or Randkadi” (all terms denoting a woman who practises witchery) will be punished with a prison term extending up to three years, along with a fine that can go up to Rs 5000.

The draft bill also includes proposals for stringent punishment if anyone uses “criminal force against a woman and/or instigates or provokes others in doing so with an intent to harm and/or to displace her

from the house, place or the property, lawfully occupied or owned by her..." in the name of stopping "witchcraft" or "possession". The punishments also include prison terms ranging up to 10 years and fines ranging up to Rs. 50000 for offences involving intimidation or torture based on superstitious discrimination.

However, the discrepancies in punishment, vague definitions of what causes harm that can be booked under the anti-superstition laws, the lack of inclusion of other occult practices apart from witchcraft within the ambit of the anti-superstition laws and the lack of concern for guaranteeing victim protection have been some of the primary issues limiting the effectiveness of existing laws.

This has urged many activists, including the President of the Federation of Indian Rationalist Associations, Narendra Nayak, to rally for a uniform anti-superstition and blind beliefs' act so that laws can be drafted more stringently, leaving no loopholes as evident in the laws in Bihar, Jharkhand and Chattisgarh.

However, more pressing is the need to question the absence of a rational collective, fighting to ensure that the basic human rights of citizens of the nation are not violated.

Weak Attempts to Fight the Evil

There is a fine line between

superstition and religion and treading that fine line is a challenging task. Godmen, heads of religious organisations and even ministers have exploited this fine line for their own vested interests. They have intentionally created an aura of "fright" around issues regarding religion, making it difficult for the public to not only understand religion sans superstition, but even making sure that critical discussions of anything remotely concerned with religion are stalled.

An important stakeholder is the larger scientific community, but in most cases, its members maintain an indifferent and apolitical stance towards issues of social relevance, adopting an 'elitist' position while distancing themselves from the general public. It has been no different in the case of the anti-superstition legislation.

The scientific community could have been much more active in promoting science programmes for citizens, in disseminating knowledge and information, or using their academic training and privileges to question the stunts of godmen who aim to establish a strange correlation between events of significantly different categories.

In the absence of such efforts or engagement, groups with vested interests have channelised or stalled decisions and judgements to suit their respective agendas.

Misguided Public Opinion

Apart from the deliberate and convenient blurring of the distinction between superstition and religion, there has also been an intentional misrepresentation of the bill and its purview. This has shown how public opinion is now increasingly driven by a handful of people, and a proactive agenda-driven propaganda based on false information spread by different lobbies: the politicians, godmen and religious quacks. This has been further facilitated by the lack of active involvement from the larger scientific communities.

Many have also argued that the anti-superstition bill is in conflict with their individual beliefs and faiths. One needs to look at the actual drafting of the bill to understand that the bill does not, in any way, restrict or affect the religious beliefs, practices or faiths of individuals. The law intervenes only when, in the name of religion, individual beliefs are enforced or institutionalised and people are harmed, killed or forced to believe that certain practices are pious and hence mandatory to follow.

The bill aims to ensure that citizens are not exploited due to superstition and where it does happen, to provide people with an avenue, a mechanism, a process to hold people or organisations accountable for the act. Given the lack of access to authentic information about the draft law and transparent, informed public debate on the same, it has been impossible to get this across to a wider cross section of the people.

A Possible Resurgence of Public Opinion?

On the brighter side, there has been growing aspiration among one section of the population, including sections of scientists and researchers, to seek legislative and judicial interventions to uphold the spirit of scientific temper and to protect people from occult practitioners. Organisations such as MANS, Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti, working on science



A victim of witch-hunting in Assam.

popularisation and inculcating scientific temper among various sections of the society, and a few scholars from the National Law School of India University are engaged in a long, sustained movement to spread awareness and organise public participation on this issue, both in and outside academic institutions.

After the recently concluded XVth All India People's Science Congress, jointly organised by Karnataka Rajya Vijnana Parishat and Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti, Karnataka, the All India People's Science Network passed a resolution and called for the consolidation of the progressive and democratic forces in all States and Union Territories in India to fight against obscurantism and exploitation.

Public Opinion is Crucial

In all of this, it is important to recognise that the delay in engaging with the issue of superstition and in passing legislation to stop its malicious effects has dangerous implications for the public. It benefits no one except the lobbies with selfish interests and their associates in the political fraternity, Godmen and religious quacks have routinely used tricks to say they are saving the community from witches, helping people who cannot bear a child, or providing remedies for incurable ailments. The people who engage in fraudulent superstitious activities or related propaganda usually get away with a clean chit by using religion as an alibi.

Narhari Maharaj Chaudhari, the secretary of Maharashtra State Warkari Mahamandal had stated that the Maharashtra Anti Superstition



Panel discussion on Anti-Superstition Bill during the 15th All India People's Science Congress held in May 2015, Bangalore

Bill is redundant as human sacrifice falls under the purview of the Indian Penal code. It is true that there are laws under the IPC which criminalise sexual abuse, harassment and human sacrifice; but then, what stops the concerned authorities from taking necessary steps when killings and sexual abuse are done in the name of superstition? Are abuse and murder fine as long as they can be carried out under the pretext of religious superstition?

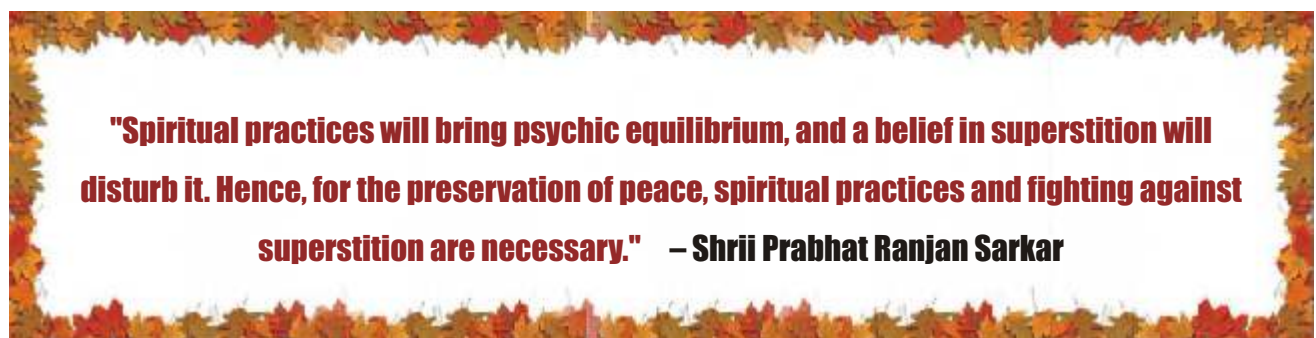
The need of the hour is for the state to recognise the intent of the crime and if the intent is in violation of the directive principles of the constitution. It is also high time that we, as citizens, start discussing such issues and contribute in whatever little way we can to create the necessary awareness.

A small, significant intervention from civil society can help a child appreciate that a black cat is merely an animal and not an indicator of bad omen! A woman battling discomfort

and pain during menstruation can receive more help and care instead of being kept in solitary confinement; an aged, elderly woman can be welcomed into the community instead of being excommunicated or lynched; people concerned about not being able to conceive a child can visit a doctor for alternative conception strategies instead of being sexually exploited.

Battling superstition needs, first and foremost, the proactive participation of all society, the scientific community and elected representatives towards ensuring safe lives and dignity for all citizens of India.

Rolla is a research scholar, pursuing her doctoral work in linguistics and communication at National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore. Suparna is a Junior Research Fellow at International Strategic and Security Studies Programme, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore.



As Rich Get Richer Poor Get Prison

To conclude, the government must come clear and admit that its real intention is not ending naxalism but open up the mineral-rich Adivasi land to mining companies."

* Stan Swamy

Over the past few years local newspapers have been reporting almost on a daily basis one or two or more suspected naxals or 'sympathisers' of naxals being arrested. Often their photos (mostly with faces covered) together with pistols, some ammunition, 'maoist-literature' are also being shown. The local print-media are just publishing the police version without verifying facts on their own. In February 2012 to everyone's shock a prominent English daily reported: "There are now about 6000 Adivasis in jail." The charge against the majority of them is that "maoist literature" was found in their possession and that they are "helpers of Maoists".

We realized that even if that was true, they cannot be arrested as per the Supreme Court verdicts: (1) "Mere membership of a banned organisation will not make a person a criminal ..." (Supreme Court on February 3, 2011 (Criminal Appeal No(s) 889 OF 2007). (2) "Mere possession of maoist literature does

not make a person a maoist" (Supreme Court, while granting bail to Dr Binayak Sen on April 15, 2011).

The members of Bagaicha, a centre for training and research, thought it necessary to find out the veracity of police claims. A scientific study was worked out and we sought permission from jail authorities to visit the different jails in Jharkhand and interview the under-trial prisoners. Our request was flatly refused. The next best thing was to send an RTI petition to the superintendents of the 26 jails in Jharkhand seeking specific information as per an enclosed questionnaire. Only 12 of them responded, mostly with inadequate information. Then we felt it necessary to visit as many undertrials presently out on bail in their own villages.

Under the guidance of a well-qualified and competent researcher we formed three teams and visited 18 of the 24 districts of Jharkhand over a period of three months. Our

teams met with 102 undertrials in their own homes/villages, met with their family members as well as some village folk. The following are our findings: 1) 98% of those arrested as naxals had nothing to do with naxalism: Only two out of 102 (about 2%) undertrials accused and arrested as naxals have accepted they had any relation with any of naxal-groups. The rest say they have been falsely accused and arrested for daring to speak assertively against violation of their constitutional and human rights, such as right to possess and protect their land and livelihood resources.

This is indeed a very serious situation where the constitutional right to dissent is being treated as an offence despite the SC judgments on the matter. A grave injustice is being committed against the poorest of the poor adivasi people.

Adult Life Ruined, Families Reduced to Destitution

Of the under trials we met, 68% are young and middle-age group and 78% of them are married. Income to

the family, whether through agriculture (63%) or casual labour (17%), comes by their labour. This is also the period when their children are small and schoolgoing age and need the care and affection of their father. But alas their sole breadwinner is in jail or has to be attending to the trial court hearings. When there is no earning, with never ending trials in court, sometimes out of their own district, the only way out is to sell the little assets they have such as cattle and even their land or borrow money from local money-lenders at very high rates of interest. All this for no fault of theirs, but because the police have made them 'naxals'. A human tragedy indeed.

Why this cruelty on the weakest sections of society, the SCs and STs? These two groups make 69% of the undertrials in our sample study. With low literacy rates and high poverty rates, the SCs and STs in Jharkhand are economically weak and socially on the margins of society. Their life runs on a day-to-day basis. All government development plans including the special plans have not brought any betterment to them. Even the funds allotted specifically for these plans have been diverted to general infrastructural projects.

Their insecure socio-economic condition has made them vulnerable at every level to become easy prey to exploitation and state repression. So false cases can be conveniently lodged on them to arrest them and subject them to prolonged legal procedures, thus destroying their personal, family and communitarian life.

It is crucial to note that 97% of undertrial-families have an income less than Rs 5,000 per month thus falling in the BPL. Most of them are not yet the beneficiaries of the Right to Food Act the implementation of which the state government has been dilly-dallying for over a year. Their old ration cards have been declared invalid but new cards have not yet been given to most.

A visit to interior tribal villages in Jharkhand reveals the heart-

State	Inmate Population	State Population (in million)	% of Inmate population to state population	Available Capacity in Prisons
1. Uttar Pradesh	82,383	199.6	0.04	47,048
2. Madhya Pradesh	32,916	72.6	0.04	25,685
3. Bihar	28,032	103.8	0.03	33,774
4. Maharashtra	24,082	112.4	0.02	24,656
5. West Bengal	19,508	91.3	0.02	20,672
6. Rajasthan	18,104	68.6	0.03	18,016
7. Punjab	17,821	27.7	0.06	11,951
8. Jharkhand	16,586	32.9	0.05	12,948
9. Haryana	15,033	25.4	0.06	16,049
10. Chhattisgarh	13,918	25.5	0.05	5,430

Source: NCRB & Planning Commission

rending situation of people living without their basic needs met and facing complete apathy from the local administration. But when it comes to getting at so-called naxals the police and para-military forces are at their most efficient performance in surrounding villages, breaking into houses, destroying vessels, molesting women, throwing out food grains etc. Any and every male member regardless of their age becomes a suspect and thrashing them mercilessly and marching them to the police station, keeping them herded like cattle for long periods without food or water, and finally releasing some and jailing others is the normal practice. All this is done in the name of containing naxalism.

Were these naxal-suspects caught after a hot pusuit by the police? That is the impression given by the media. The fact is a total of 87% were arrested in normal circumstances; 57% were arrested from their homes when they were resting or having their meal or spending time with their family, and 30% from nearby towns or on travel. Certainly they were not running away from the police.

To conclude, the government must come clear and admit that its real intention is not ending naxalism

but to open up the mineral-rich Adivasi land to mining companies. The so-called 'Red Corridor' is also the Mineral Corridor. More young men are arrested in these corridors compared to other areas where mineral storage is less. State/police repression is more intense in the villages which are like open jails with people's right to freedom of assembly, speech, movement being restricted. Lot of young men are migrating to far off states like Kerala as casual labour and sending some money home.

Trafficking of adivasi girls to metropolitan cities as domestic help is going on unabated. However, people are struggling to keep their *jal* (water), *jangal* (forest), *jamin* (land) through local as well as broader people's resistance movements. Consequently few corporate houses are able to make inroads in Jharkhand. To the extent corporate pressure on the govt is increasing, State repression on the poorest of the poor Adivasi People is also on the rise in the guise of containing naxalism. We urgent need to call a spade a spade and say frankly that adivasis are being robbed, jailed and murdered by the Indian people who remain unconcerned by their suffering.

Local and Complementary Currency



A proper community, we should remember also, is a commonwealth: a place, a resource, an economy. It answers the needs, practical as well as social and spiritual, of its members-among them the need to need one another. The answer to the present alignment of political power with wealth is the restoration of the identity of community and economy. - Wendell Berry



* Charles Eisenstein

A sacred way of life connects us to the people and places around us. That means that a sacred economy must be in large part a local economy, in which we have multidimensional, personal relationships with the land and people who meet our needs, and whose needs we meet in turn. Otherwise we suffer a divide between the social and the material, in which our social relationships lack substance, and in which our economic relationships are impersonal. It is inevitable, when we purchase generic services from distant strangers and standardized products from distant lands, that we feel a loss of connection, an alienation, and a sense that we, like the things we buy, are replaceable. To the extent that what we provide is standard and impersonal, we are replaceable.

One of the effects of a homogeneous national or global currency is the homogenization of culture. As the money realm expands to include more and more of material and social life, our materials and relationships become standardized commodities, the same

everywhere that money can reach. Nowhere is this more evident than in the United States, the “landscape of the exit ramp,” where the same stores, same restaurants, and same architecture dominate every locale. And everywhere we are the same employees and consumers, living in thrall to distant economic powers. Local distinctiveness, autonomy, and economic opportunity disappear. Business profits are sucked away to distant corporate headquarters and ultimately to Wall Street. Instead of vibrant, economically diverse communities with their own local character, we have a monoculture where every place is the same.

The money system described here removes many of the barriers to local economic sovereignty and weakens the pressure toward globalization. Here are three ways:

1. Much global trade is only economic because of hidden social and ecological subsidies, which would be eliminated by the internalization of costs.
2. Commons-backed currency relocalizes economic power since many of the commons are local or

bioregional in nature.

3. Negative-interest money removes the pressure to maintain growth through the conversion of the unique, local relationships and natural wealth of other lands into commodities. Ultimately, local difference stands in the way of commoditization and therefore of growth.

However, because the habits and infrastructure of local economy have largely disappeared, additional measures are necessary to rebuild community-based, place-based economies. This article discusses one of these measures: the localization of money itself.

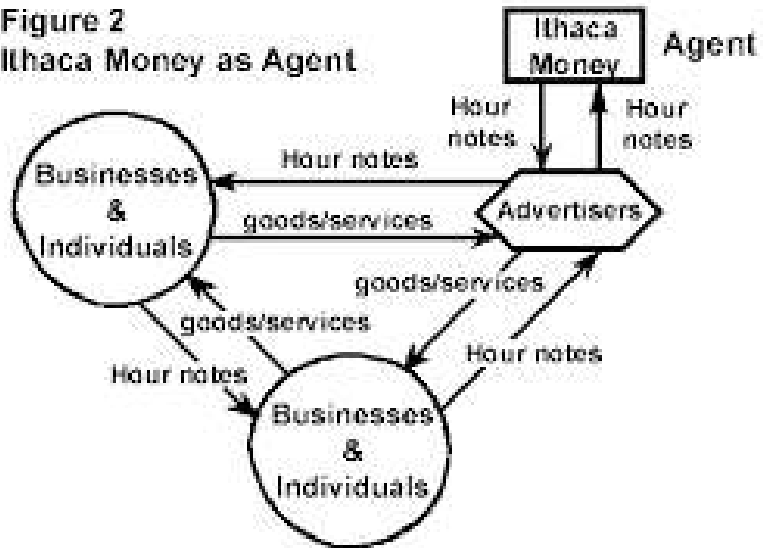
I am not advocating the abandonment of global trade. While many things that should be local, such as food, have become global, there are many realms of collective human creativity that by their nature require a global coordination of labor. Moreover, economists' doctrines of efficiency of scale and comparative advantage (that some places and cultures are better suited to certain kinds of production) are not entirely without basis.

While the changes described

thus far make globalization less economic, my affinity for local economy is not primarily motivated by economic logic: the maximization of some measurable quantum of well-being. It comes rather from a longing for community. The threads of community are of two types: gift and story. In short, a strong community weaves together social and economic ties. The people we depend on, and who depend on us, are the same people whom we know and who know us. It is just that simple. The same goes for the broader community of all beings: the land and its ecosystems. Lacking community, we suffer a painful deficit of being, for it is these multidimensional ties that define who we are and expand us beyond the miserable, lonely, separate ego, the “bubble of psychology in a prison of flesh.” We yearn to restore our lost connections, our lost being.

Local economy reverses the millennia-long trend toward the homogenization of culture and connects us to the people and places we see every day. Not only does it entail less energy consumption, it also makes the social and ecological consequences of economic decisions harder to ignore. Today, indeed, it is quite easy to pretend that our economic decisions have no consequences. The things we use with little thought are part and parcel of birth defects in Chinese cities, strip-mining of West Virginia mountains, and the desertification of previously lush regions. But these effects are distant, reaching us only as pixels on a TV screen. Quite naturally, we live as if they weren't happening. If the people who grow your food and make your stuff live in Haiti or China or Pakistan, then their well-being or suffering is invisible. If they live nearby, you can still exploit them perhaps, but you can't easily avoid knowing it. Local economy faces us with the consequences of our actions, tightening the circle of karma and fostering a sense of self that includes others. Local economy is therefore

Figure 2
Ilhaca Money as Agent



aligned with the deep spiritual shift of our time.

The Catch-22 of Local Currency

Local currency is often proposed as a way to revitalize local economies, insulate them from global market forces, and re-create community. There are at present thousands of them around the world, unofficial currencies issued by groups of ordinary citizens. In theory, local currency offers several economic benefits:

1. It encourages people to shop at local businesses since only they are willing to accept and use local currency.
2. It increases the local money supply, which increases demand and stimulates local production and employment.
3. It keeps money within the community since it cannot be extracted to distant corporations.
4. It allows individuals and businesses to bypass conventional credit channels and thus offers an alternative source of capital for which the interest (if any) will circulate back to the community.
5. It facilitates the circulation of goods and services among people who may not have sufficient access to national currency but who may have time and skills to offer.

Say you want to buy fried potatoes and have local currency.

You might buy it at a locally owned restaurant rather than McDonald's, even if the price is higher, because McDonald's won't accept the local currency. What does the local restaurant do with the local currency then? Well, it can't buy food from the national distribution chain with it, but maybe it could buy food from a local farmer, or pay part of employees' wages with it. And what would the farmer or the employees do with it? Buy things from other local suppliers, including people who eat at the hamburger joint. This is how local currencies strengthen local economies.

Unfortunately, the practical results of local currency initiatives have been disappointing. A common pattern is that the currency is launched with much enthusiasm and continues to circulate as long as the founders promote it. But eventually they get burned out, the novelty factor wears off, and people stop using it. According to one study, as of 2005 some 80 percent of all local currencies launched since 1991 were defunct. Another common pattern is that local money accumulates in the hands of the few local retailers that are willing to accept it and who cannot find ways to spend it. Finally, even where local currencies have been relatively successful, they comprise an insignificant portion of total economic activity. If we are to realize the theoretical advantages of

local currencies, it is imperative that we acknowledge that they aren't working today and figure out why. After all, they did work quite well in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. In the nineteenth, paper money consisted of "bank notes" issued by local banks and accepted only in the economic region where the banks were located. As recently as the 1930s, local currencies were so successful that central governments actively suppressed them. What has happened since then to make them (with a few notable exceptions) the plaything of social idealists?

Several factors are at work. The first is that the economy has become so delocalized that it is hard to keep local currency circulating. In the words of one shopkeeper in Germany, speaking of one of the more successful local currencies, the Chiemgauer, "We do accept it, but we don't know what to do with it." His acceptance was reluctant-understandable when few of his suppliers are local. Local currencies are viable only to the extent that producers are making goods and services that are consumed locally by people who themselves produce locally consumed goods and services. In the 1930s, economies were still highly local. People had goods and services to exchange but no money to use as a medium due to

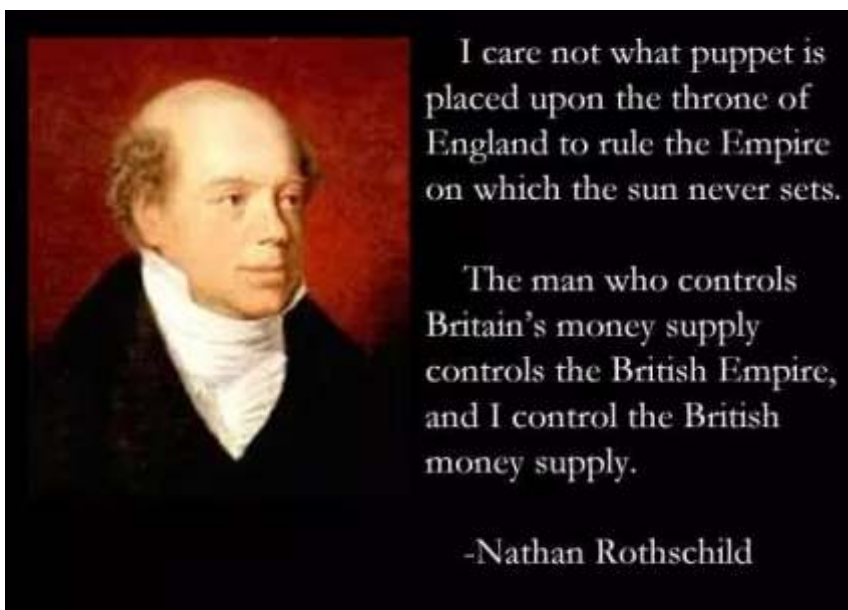
bank failures and hoarding. Today, the situation is quite different. Most people provide services that only make sense in a vast, often global, coordination of labor. Local currency cannot facilitate a supply and production chain that involves millions of people in thousands of places.

However, while some products, such as electronics, are inherently global in the nature of their manufacture, many products could be produced locally but are nonetheless part of global production systems. This implies a considerable untapped potential for local currencies. Unfortunately, much of the infrastructure of local production and distribution has disappeared. Local currencies can be part of the rebuilding of that infrastructure, but by themselves they are not enough. If nothing else changes, they are consigned to a very marginal, usually subcritical role. As things stand, local money is not very useful to us because we import nearly everything we use from outside our region.

In "developing" countries that still have strong local economic infrastructure, local currencies help to preserve that infrastructure and insulate them from global financial predation. But in highly developed economies dominated by a national or supranational currency, anyone

seeking to establish a local currency faces something of a catch-22. Local currencies only work if there is a local system of locally circulating production for which it can mediate exchange. Yet for such a system to grow and withstand the pressures of the global commodity economy, it needs a protected local currency. Import replacement cannot happen if local producers must compete with unrestricted, cheap imports. That is why such an economy can only manifest as an intentional choice motivated by a new Story of the People that generates shared vision, values, and goals. In other words, it will happen only through some form of democracy, popular action, and a government that responds to the will of its people rather than the will of international banks, investors, and the bond market. These forces are always ready to offer again the old story of the people: competition, growth, separation, conquest, and ascent.

Several historical examples bear this point out. Compare the disastrous results in countries that have "opened their markets" to "free trade" in recent years with the earlier success of Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan, who intentionally fostered local industries with import replacement, tariffs, and industrial planning, while limiting the convertibility of their currencies. I am most familiar with the case of Taiwan, having translated in the 1990s a multivolume history of the development of its small and medium enterprises. In the 1950s and 60s, Taiwan placed stringent conditions on foreign investment. Foreign-invested factories were required to purchase a high percentage of components locally, encouraging the development of domestic industry. In Japan, South Korea, and Singapore as well, formal and informal mechanisms gave domestic enterprises a privileged status. At the same time, they imposed currency controls and restrictions on the repatriation of profits. Foreign investors could freely convert their currencies into



won, Taiwan dollars, and so on, but they couldn't convert it back again as freely. Today, these countries have a large middle class, world-class industrial plants, and tremendous overall wealth, despite starting in great poverty after World War II.

Compare their policies with those of Mexico, which allowed foreign manufacturers to set up factories in the Maquiladora zone, with no taxes, no limits on the expatriation of profits, and no requirement to source components in Mexico. Mexico and the many other countries offering such "free-trade zones" merely provided low-cost labor and freedom from environmental restrictions, essentially selling off their natural and social capital without gaining much know-how or infrastructure in return. Instead of enriching their economies, they bled them. Then the factories moved to take advantage of even cheaper labor elsewhere. First GATT, then NAFTA and the WTO and EMU destroyed in one country after another the protections that kept local economies from becoming helpless colonies of commodity export and consumption. The only beneficiaries were the elites, who are relatively independent of the local economy. Unlike the masses, they can import what they need and move away if conditions become too terrible.

Monetary autonomy is a crucial part of political sovereignty. Ultimately, political sovereignty means very little if outside corporations can strip-mine that society's natural and social capital—its resources, skills, and labor—and export them to global markets. At the present writing, Brazil, Thailand, and other countries are taking measures to protect their economies from the flood of cheap U.S. dollars that has resulted from the Fed's quantitative easing program. Left unchecked, these dollars would allow foreigners to buy up domestic equities, mines, factories, utilities, and so on. These countries recognize that meaningful sovereignty is economic sovereignty.

What is true for nations is also true for smaller regions. However, compared to tweaking interest rates to below the zero lower bound, the proposal that local and regional governments issue their own currency may seem naively impractical. Actually, it is a very accessible solution that is constantly being suppressed. Although it is illegal for states to issue currency in the United States and many other countries, people find ways around laws when the necessity arises.

The case of Argentina's financial crisis of 2001-2002 is most illuminating. When provincial governments completely ran out of money to pay employees and contractors, they paid them in low-denomination bearer bonds instead (one-peso bonds, five-peso bonds ...). Local businesses and citizens readily accepted these bonds, even though nobody really expected they would ever be redeemable for hard currency, because they could be used to pay provincial taxes and fees. Acceptance for payment of taxes enhanced the social perception of value, and as with all money, value and the perception of value are identical.

The currencies, which were all denominated in a common unit of account, circulated far beyond their region of issue. They revived economic activity, which had ground to a halt since, after all, people still had the capacity to produce goods and services that other people needed, lacking only the means to make exchanges. This was only possible because Argentina is fundamentally a rich country that had not been completely converted into export commodity production. At the same time, Argentina's government repudiated its foreign debt, temporarily cutting it off from imports and increasing the need for local self-reliance. At that point the IMF stepped in with emergency loans to induce the country to keep its debts on the books.

As of now, we are still living, if no longer in normal times, at least in the inertia of the habits of those

times. Accordingly, local currencies still face an uphill battle, languishing without government support. Even worse, governments present them with crippling handicaps through tax laws. Citizen-created currencies are unacceptable for payment of taxes, yet transactions made in these currencies are subject to income and sales taxes. That means that even if you used local currency exclusively, you would have to pay taxes in U.S. dollars—even though you earned none! Taxing people in a currency they don't use is tyrannical - it was a cause of the American Revolution and a key instrument of colonialism.

In places where local currencies have been effective, either they have received government support, or they have emerged in war zones and other extreme circumstances. In Argentina in 2001-2002 and the United States and Europe during the Depression, local governments actually issued currency themselves. Moreover, in those places and times, there was still a lot of local production, subsistence farming, local distribution and supply networks, and local social capital in general. Local currencies had a real chance there and, unsurprisingly, provoked the hostility of the central authorities. In the case of Argentina, the IMF demanded their abolition as a prerequisite for aid.

Nonetheless, the efforts of local currency activists over the last twenty years have not been in vain. They have created a model - many models, in fact - to be applied when the next crisis erupts and the unthinkable becomes common sense. They are creating a new logic, a new template, working out the kinks, gaining experience that will become essential very soon. So let us examine some of the types of complementary currency being explored today that may have a role in the coming sacred economy.

Experiments in Local Money Proxy Currencies

The first kind of local currency I'll consider is the dollar (or euro) proxy currency such as the Chiemgauer or

the BerkShare. You can buy a hundred BerkShares for \$95 and buy merchandise at the usual dollar price; the merchant then redeems a hundred BerkShares for \$95 at participating banks. Because of this easy convertibility, merchants readily accept them, as the 5-percent discount is well worth the extra business volume. However, the same easy convertibility limits the currency's effect on the local economy. In principle, merchants receiving BerkShares have a 5-percent incentive to source merchandise locally, but in the absence of local economic infrastructure, they usually won't bother.

Proxy currencies do little to revitalize local economies or to expand the local money supply. They provide a token of desire to buy local but a very small economic incentive to do so. Since BerkShares originate as dollars and are convertible into them, anyone with access to the latter. The international equivalent is found in countries that adopt a currency board. We call these dollarized economies because they have effectively surrendered any monetary independence. Proxy currencies like BerkShares are useful as a consciousness-raising tool to introduce people to the idea of complementary currencies, but by themselves they are ineffectual in promoting vibrant local economies.

Complementary Fiat Currencies

More promising are fiat currencies, such as Ithaca Hours, that actually increase the local money supply. Many Depression-era scrips also fall into this category. Essentially, someone simply prints up the money and declares it to have value (e.g., an Ithaca Hour is declared equal to ten U.S. dollars). For it to be money, there must be a community agreement that it has value. In the case of Hours, a group of businesses, inspired by the currency's founder Paul Glover, simply declared that they would accept the currency, in effect backing it with their goods

HELLO THERE,
MY NAME IS JACOB ROTHSCHILD.

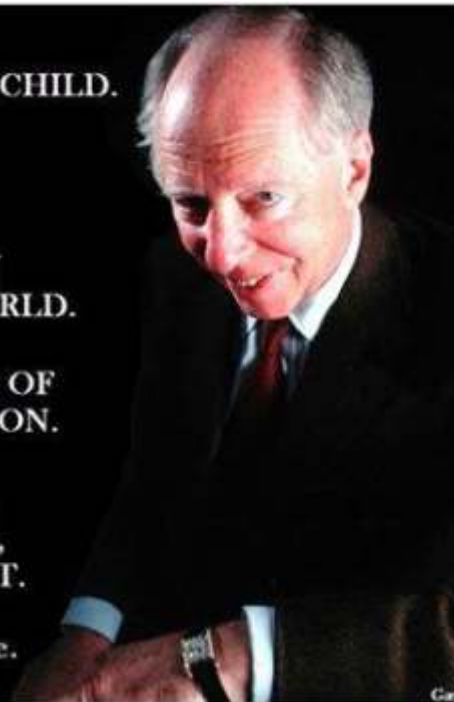
MY FAMILY IS WORTH
500 TRILLION DOLLARS.

WE OWN NEARLY EVERY
CENTRAL BANK IN THE WORLD.

WE FINANCED BOTH SIDES OF
EVERY WAR SINCE NAPOLEON.

WE OWN YOUR NEWS,
THE MEDIA, YOUR OIL,
AND YOUR GOVERNMENT.

You have probably never heard of me.



and services. During the Depression, scrip was often issued by a mainstay local business that could redeem it for merchandise, coal, or some other commodity. In other cases, a city government issued its own currency, backed by acceptability for payment of local taxes and fees.

The effect of fiat currencies is much more potent than that of proxy currencies because fiat currencies have the potential of putting money in the hands of those who would otherwise not have it. It is only inflationary if those accessing the money offer no goods or services in return. In extreme economic times, it is often the case that there are plenty of people willing to work and plenty of needs to met; only the money to mediate these transactions is missing. So it was during the Great Depression, and so it is becoming today. Municipalities all over the world are facing severe budget cuts due to lack of tax revenue, forcing important maintenance and repair tasks to languish and even laying off police and firefighters; meanwhile, many of their residents who could do those tasks sit unemployed and idle. Though legal hurdles presently stand in the way, cities can and probably will issue vouchers, acceptable in payment of city taxes,

in lieu of U.S. dollars to hire people to do necessary work. Why not? Many of the taxes are in arrears anyway. When local government is the issuer, scrip much more easily takes on the "story of value" that makes it into money.

Such currencies are often called complementary because they are separate from, and complementary to, the standard medium of exchange. While they are usually denominated in dollar (or euro, pound, etc.) units, there is no currency board that keeps reserves of dollars to maintain the exchange rate. They are thus similar to a standard sovereign currency with a floating exchange rate.

In the absence of local government support, because complementary fiat currencies are not easily convertible into dollars, businesses are generally much less willing to accept them than they are proxy currencies. That is because in the current economic system, there is little infrastructure to source goods locally. Locally owned businesses are plugged into the same global supply chains as everyone else. Regrowing the infrastructure of local production and distribution will take time, as well as a change in macroeconomic

conditions driven by the internalization of costs, the end of growth pressure, and a social and political decision to relocalize. Non-economic factors can influence the social agreement of money. The idealism of a few that sustains local currency today will become the consensus of the many.

Time Banking

There is one resource that is always locally available and always needed to sustain and enrich life. That resource is human beings: their labor, energy, and time. Earlier I said that local currencies are viable only to the extent that producers are making goods and services that are consumed locally by people who, themselves, produce locally consumed goods and services. Well, we are always “producers” of our time (by the mere act of living), and there are many ways to give this time for the benefit of others. This is why I believe that time-based currencies (often called “time banks”) offer great promise without needing huge changes in economic infrastructure.

When someone performs a service through a time bank, it credits his or her account by one time dollar for each hour spent and debits the recipient's account by the same. Usually, there is some kind of electronic bulletin board with postings of offerings and needs. People who could otherwise not afford the services of a handyman, massage therapist, babysitter, and so on gain access to help from a person who might otherwise be unemployed. Time banks tend to flourish in places where people have a lot of time and not much money. It is especially appealing in realms requiring little specialization, in which the time of any person is in fact equally valuable. A prime example is the famous *fureai kippu* currency in Japan, which credits people for time spent caring for the elderly. Time banking is also used extensively by service organizations in America and Britain. It can also apply to physical goods, typically by way of a dollar cost for materials and a time dollar cost for time.

In our atomized society, the traditional ways of knowing who has what to offer have broken down, and commercial means of disseminating this information (such as advertising) are accessible only with money. Time banks connect individuals who would otherwise be oblivious to the needs and gifts each can offer. As one time bank user puts it,

Everyone has a skill—some might surprise you. An elderly shut-in who doesn't drive can make beautiful wedding cakes. A woman in a wheelchair who needs her house painted used to train police dogs and now provides puppy training. The retired school-teacher who needs her leaves raked has a kiln and is teaching ceramics. A common question when we meet each other is, “What do you do?” “What do you need?” or “What can I do for you?”

Beyond the meeting of immediate needs, you can see from this description the power of time banks to restore community. They generate the kind of economic and social resiliency that sustains life in times of turmoil. As money unravels, it is important to have alternative structures for the meeting of human needs.

The fundamental idea behind time banks is deeply egalitarian, both because everyone's time is valued equally and because everyone starts out with the same amount of it. If there is one thing that we can be said to truly own, it is our time. Unlike any other possession, as long as we are alive, our time is inseparable from our selves. Our choice of how to spend time is our choice of how to live life. And no matter how wealthy one is in terms of money, it is impossible to buy more time. Money might buy you life-saving surgery or otherwise enhance longevity, but it won't guarantee long life; nor can it purchase more than twenty-four hours of experience in each day. In this we are all equal; a money system that recognizes this equality is intuitively appealing.

When time-based currency

replaces monetary transactions, it is a great equalizing force in society. The danger is that time currency can also end up transferring formerly gift-based activity into the realm of the quantified. The future, perhaps, belongs to nonmonetary, non-quantified ways of connecting gifts and needs. Still, at least for a long time to come, time banks have an important role to play in healing our fragmented local communities.

Reclaiming the Credit Commons

Another way to foster local economic and monetary autonomy is through the credit system. When an economic community applies formal or informal mechanisms to limit the acquisition of credit and, consequently, the allocation of money, the local economy can maintain its independence just as if it had instituted currency controls. To illustrate this point, consider an innovation commonly mentioned in discussions of complementary currency: mutual-credit systems, including commercial barter rings, credit-clearing cooperatives, and local exchange trading systems (LETS). When a transaction takes place in a mutual-credit system, the account of the buyer is debited and the account of the seller is credited by the agreed-upon sales price—whether or not the buyer has a positive account balance. For example, say I mow your lawn for an agreed price of twenty credits. If we both started at zero, now I have a balance of +20 and you have a balance of -20. Next, I buy bread from Thelma for ten credits. Now my account is down to +10 and hers is also +10.

This kind of system has many applications. The above scenario exemplifies a small-scale, locally based credit system often called LETS. Since its inception in 1983 by Michael Linton, hundreds of LETS systems have taken root around the world. Mutual credit is equally useful on the commercial level. Any network of businesses that fulfill the basic requirement that each produce something that one of the others

needs can form a commercial barter exchange or credit-clearing cooperative. Rather than issue commercial paper or seek short-term loans from banks, participating businesses create their own credit.

In commercial barter exchanges, firms sell excess inventory and unused capacity for which there is no immediate cash market to others in the exchange for trade credits. The buyer conserves cash, and the seller builds up credits to use in future transactions. No idealist commitment to complementary currencies is necessary to motivate businesses to join; in fact, most exchanges levy a hefty fee for membership. Some six hundred commercial barter exchanges operate around the world today, involving some half a million firms.

A more recent innovation is mutual factoring, conceived by Martin “Hasan” Bramwell. Typically, businesses receive orders far in advance of receiving payment for those orders. To obtain the cash necessary to fulfill the order, they would ordinarily have to sell the account receivable at a discount to a third party (called a “factor”), such as a bank. Mutual factoring bypasses the banks and allows accounts receivable to be used as a liquid medium of exchange among participating businesses.

The most famous commercial mutual-credit system is undoubtedly the Swiss WIR, in operation since 1934, which boasts tens of thousands of members and trade volume of over a billion Swiss francs. As of 2005, its volume dwarfed that of all the rest of the world's commercial barter rings combined. According to economist James Stodder, both the WIR and other commercial barter exchanges exert a contracyclical effect, showing greater exchange activity during economic downturns, a fact he attributes to their ability to create credit. This demonstrates the ability of complementary currency and credit systems to shield participants from macroeconomic fluctuations

and sustain local economies.

In any mutual-credit system, members have access to credit without the involvement of a bank. Instead of paying money to use money, as in an interest-based credit system, credit is a free social good available to all who have earned the trust of the community. Essentially, today's credit system is an example of the privatization of the commons, in this case the “credit commons” - a community's general judgment of the creditworthiness of each of its members. Mutual-credit systems reclaim this commons by issuing credit cooperatively rather than for private profit.

Mutual credit is not so much a type of currency as a means of issuing that currency. In the dominant system, it is primarily banks that grant access to money by extending credit. In a mutual-credit system, this power goes to the users themselves.

The development of mutual-credit systems is extremely significant, for credit essentially represents a society's choice of who gets access to money and how much of it. Mutual credit replaces the traditional functions of banks. People with a negative credit balance are under social pressure, and the pressure of their own conscience, to offer goods and services that will bring their account back into positive territory. But I'm sure you can see a potential problem with this system when applied on a large scale. What is to prevent one of the participants from running up a higher and higher negative balance, in essence receiving goods for nothing? The system needs a way to prevent this and eliminate participants who abuse it.

Without negative-balance limits, a mutual-credit currency can be created in unlimited amounts simply by the will to make a transaction. This might seem like a good thing, but it won't work if that currency is used to exchange scarce goods. Ultimately, money represents a social agreement on how to allocate labor and materials. Not

everyone can have access to enough credit, say, to construct a multibillion-dollar semiconductor plant or buy the world's largest diamond.

More sophisticated mutual-credit systems have flexible credit limits based on responsible participation. Global Exchange Trading System (GETS; a proprietary credit-clearing system) and Community Exchange System (CES) use complicated formulas in which credit limits rise with time according to how much or how well one has participated in the system. Those who have fulfilled their negative-balance obligations in the past get a larger credit limit. This formula functions just like a conventional credit rating.

The real world, however, does not always conform to a formula. Different kinds of businesses have different credit needs, and sometimes exceptional circumstances arise that merit a temporary increase in credit. Some mechanism is needed to set these limits and to grant or reject requests for credit. This might require research, familiarity with industries and markets, and knowledge of the borrower's reputation and circumstances. It could also encompass the social and ecological effects of the investment. Whatever entity performs this function, be it a traditional bank, cooperative, or P2P community, must have a good general understanding of business and must be willing to assume responsibility for its evaluations.

Peer-to-peer Banking

Peer-to-peer banking is an online system that allows individual members to complete financial transactions with one another by using an auction style process that lets members offer loans for a specific amount and at a specific rate. Buyers have the option to look for an amount and rate of interest that meets their needs. All members are categorized by their risk level. Members can browse for other people based on various demographic information.

New forms of P2P banking run up against the same general problem of determining creditworthiness over the anonymous gulf of cyberspace. One could imagine a system in which a database connects you, who have \$5,000 you want to lend for six months, to a distant person who wants to borrow it for six months. You don't know her. How do you know she is creditworthy? Perhaps some user rating system à la eBay could provide a partial solution, but such systems are easily gamed. What you really need is a trustworthy institution that knows her better than you do to assure you of her creditworthiness. You lend your money to that institution, and that institution lends it to her. Sound familiar? It's called a bank.

Banking, like money, has a sacred dimension: a banker is someone who finds beautiful uses for money. If I have more money than I can use, I can say, "Here, Ms. Banker, please find someone who can use this money well until I need it back." Decaying currency aligns this conception of banking with self-interest. It will continue to be a necessary function even when "better" no longer means "to increase my personal wealth."

Whether it is through social consensus, formulas, or the decisions of specialists, there must be some way to allocate credit. Banking functions, whether implicit or explicit, will always exist. Today, a banking cartel has monopolized these functions, profiting not only from its expertise in allocating credit toward its most remunerative use but also from its monopoly control over the former credit commons. Ultimately, a new banking system might arise from the ground up, starting with small mutual-credit cooperatives that form exchange agreements with each other. Convertibility among different mutual-credit systems is a hot topic in the field, with prototypes being developed by CES and the Metacurrency Initiative. The challenge is to strike a balance between convertibility, in order to

***This is a promissory note
of a private corporation***



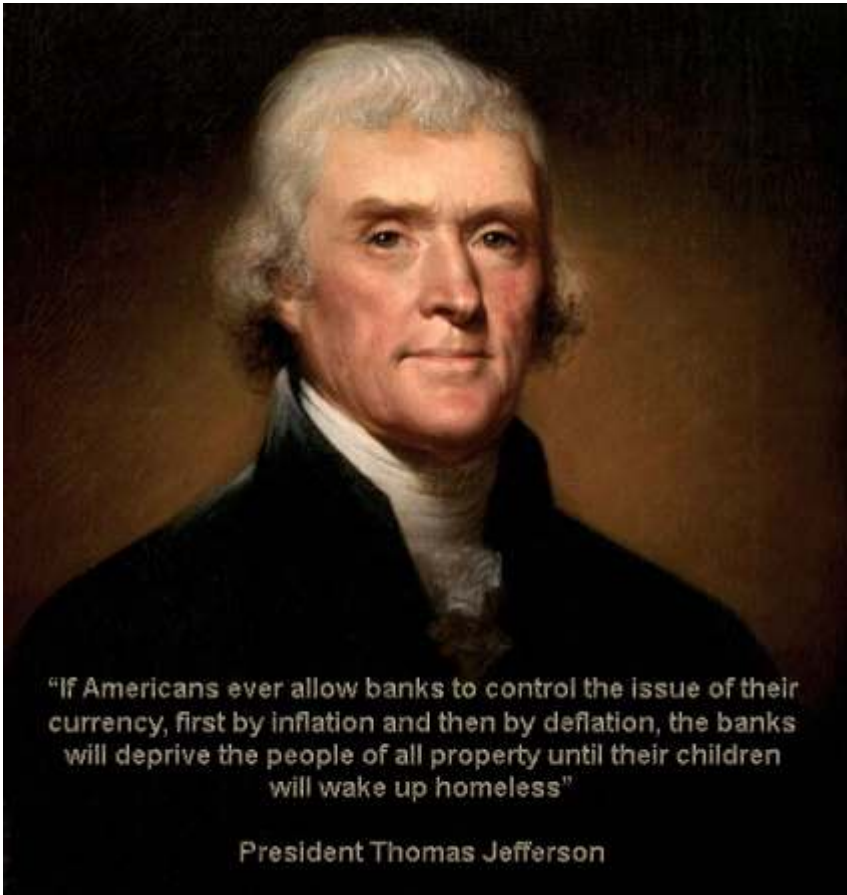
It is not backed by anything of value. The entire economy is based around the shuffling of IOU notes, which only exists because of our belief that it is real. It is because we have allowed a private corporation to take over the money supply that the national debt exists, a debt that can never be repaid.

allow long-distance trade, and insulation of the members' internal economy from outside predation or financial shocks. These are essentially the same issues that face small sovereign currencies today.

Mutual-credit systems reclaim the functions of banking for a local community, a business community, or a cooperative entity. They foster and protect the internal economy of their members, insulating it from external shocks and financial predation in the same way that local currencies do. Indeed, local currencies will never be able to expand beyond marginal status unless they have a credit mechanism that protects them from the speculative runs that numerous national currencies have suffered in the last twenty years. Local and regional credit-clearing organizations can exercise capital control functions similar to those that wiser nations imposed when developing their economies through import substitution. The most famous mutual-credit system, Switzerland's WIR, provides a rather extreme model for this principle: once you buy into it, you are not permitted to cash out. On a local level, this would force foreign

investors to source components locally. Less extreme but similar measures were applied by Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, and South Korea in the 1950s and 1960s, when they restricted foreign companies' repatriation of profits.

One of the "imports" that local and regional governments can replace is credit itself. The above-mentioned Asian countries did this too, keeping the banking industry off-limits to foreign banks through government policy and informal cultural barriers. On a regional or local level, and even without a local currency, governments can replace exogenous credit by operating their own public banks. If we are to pay for credit, then shouldn't that payment stay in the local economy? Today, state and local governments deposit tax proceeds with multinational banks that lend it wherever they can profit the most; indeed, in an era of banking consolidation they have little choice, as local banks have merged into larger ones. State-owned banks, exemplified by the Bank of North Dakota, can lend locally, finance local projects without having to issue high-interest debt on the bond market, exercise a contra-cyclical



effect by lending during credit crunches, and keep banking profits local instead of exporting them to Wall Street. Publicly owned banks needn't be driven by profit, and any profits they do make can be returned to their owners, the people, thus restoring the credit commons. These advantages pertain even in the present monetary system.

On the national level, public banking is little different from the power to issue currency, a power that the United States (and most other countries) has abdicated and given to a private institution, the

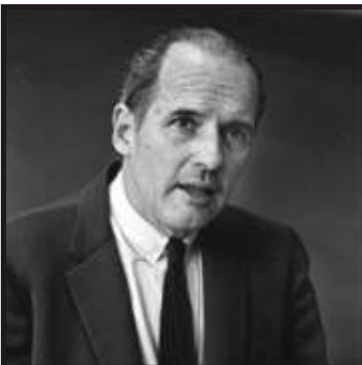
Federal Reserve. But in theory, it could set up its own bank and lend money to itself, essentially printing money at zero or negative interest. Or it could bypass the banking system and create money directly, as authorized by the Constitution and enacted during the Civil War. Ultimately, political divisions may shift into greater conformity with biological and cultural regions. Regional governments will have more autonomy than they do today when they have the power to issue their own money.

The decision of how to allocate

capital on a large scale is more than an economic decision; it is a social and political decision. In the private sector, though, bank profit determines the allocation of capital, which is the allocation of human labor, creativity, and the riches of the earth. What shall we, humanity, do on earth? This collective choice is a commons that has been privatized and shall be restored to us all in a sacred economy. That does not mean removing investment decisions from the private sector, but rather changing the nature of credit so that money goes to those who serve the social and ecological good.

The reclamation of the credit commons will take many forms: P2P lending, mutual-credit systems, credit unions and other cooperative banks, publicly owned banks, and innovative new kinds of banks such as Sweden's J.A.K. Bank. In different ways, these systems return the power of money and credit to the people, whether mediated through grass-roots P2P structures as in mutual-credit systems, or through politically constituted institutions such as public banks. And since political sovereignty is worth little in the absence of monetary sovereignty, reasserting local, regional, and (in the case of small countries) national control over credit is an important path toward the relocalization of economy, culture, and life.

Excerpted from Sacred Economics: Money, Gift, and Society in the Age of Transition, available from EVOLVER EDITIONS/North Atlantic Books.



"The powers of financial capitalism had another far-reaching aim, nothing less than to create a world system of financial control in private hands able to dominate the political system of each country and the economy of the world as a whole.

This system was to be controlled in a feudalist fashion by the central banks of the world acting in concert by secret agreements arrived at in frequent private meetings and conferences." – Professor Carroll Quigley

Can Donald Trump "Make America Great Again?"

If the 20th Century was, as many historians call it, an "American Century" can we really expect this continue indefinitely?

★ Acharya Vedaprajinananda Avadhuta

The surprise candidate of the presidential primary race is Donald Trump. He is now the front runner in public opinion polls among Republicans and as I travel around I hear ordinary people saying good things about him. Despite his public appeal he is widely denounced by commentators on the left and on the right. One political pundit, though not in favor of Trump, said that the reason for his success is that his campaign slogan "Make America Great Again" speaks to what common people are feeling.

Let's look at the slogan and see whether Trump can actually deliver on his promise. Trump's general idea is that America was once a great superpower but is now in a state of decline due to "stupid" politicians. Before we ask whether America is truly in decline and what is the cause of that decline, it is important to decide whether America was once "Great."

The common history narratives taught in American schools and firmly nestled in the American mind pays little attention to the ethnic cleansing of the Native American people which made the expansion of the US possible. The role that the slave economy played in building the strength of the South and the rest of the nation is also forgotten against the larger idea that energetic, hardworking Americans built the greatest economy ever seen. The military interventions of the US

abroad to "make the world safe for democracy" are portrayed as selfless efforts to help less fortunate people enjoy the benefits of freedom. Others see these same interventions as an example of political and economic imperialism. Without deciding on all these points it is safe to say that the past greatness of America is open for debate.

In my opinion, if there is one thing that did make America great it was the opportunity that it offered to people of many different nationalities to flee from poverty and persecution and start a new life in the New World. Millions of people immigrated to the US, learned how to speak English and were accepted as "Americans." Many of these people had their backs to the wall in their native lands and the opportunity that America presented was nothing short of miraculous.

Now what about Donald Trump? He says that the current leaders and politicians are "stupid" and that he alone can restore America's preeminence in the world. So far he has not really presented economic and diplomatic programs which could reverse current trends. And it could also be asked whether anyone could. After all history shows that empires rise and then they fall. If the 20th Century was, as many historians call it, an "American Century" can we really expect this continue indefinitely?

Where Trump has been specific and emphatic is his stance against immigrants. He wants to build a wall on the border with Mexico and deport 11 million immigrants. He wants to repeal the 14th amendment to the US Constitution which grants citizenship to anyone born in the US. In a loud and brash manner he is hitting at the one thing that really once made the US an exceptionally good country. I don't think that a country which is symbolized by a Statue of Liberty, welcoming the world's "tired and poor," can be restored to greatness by building a wall proclaiming, "Go back to where you came from."

Donald Trump's proposed immigration policies will not make America great nor will the economic programs of a billionaire who represents the top one per cent of wealth holders bring the American Dream to the millions of people who are now struggling to make ends meet in what used to be the richest country on this planet. Despite these contradictions Trump attracts thousands of people to his campaign rallies, and he just will not fade away as many people predicted. How can a billionaire be the champion of the poor? Why would those at the bottom of the economic ladder look up to an aristocrat? The answer to these questions lies in the particularities of the American psyche which I will explore in part two of this article.

Lives Starting With Horror

A baby is born into a war zone every two seconds. 1 in 8 of the babies in the world are born into violence and chaos, UNICEF explains in a new report.

★ **BEN NORTON**

In 2015, more than 16 million babies were born into conflict areas or into dangerous journeys to flee those war zones, primarily in the countries Syria, Iraq, Yemen, South Sudan, Afghanistan, and the Central African Republic.

One in eight children born today will enter the world in a war-torn land.

“Can there be a worse start in life?” UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake asked.

“Every two seconds, a newborn takes its first breath in the midst of conflict, often in terrifying circumstances and without access to medical care,” Lake added. “Too many children are now starting their lives in extreme circumstances from conflict to natural disasters, poverty, disease or malnutrition.”

The world is witnessing the worst refugee crisis since World War II.

Western countries, particularly the U.S., and their allies have fueled most of these wars. The U.S.-led war in Iraq destabilized the Middle East, leading to the rise of further violent sectarianism and extremism. Roughly 3.6 million Iraqis are displaced, according to the U.N.



High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Approximately 2.6 million Afghans are refugees as well, while the U.S. war in Afghanistan stretches into its 15th year.

Nearly 4.4 million Syrian refugees are registered with the UNHCR, and over half of the entire country has been displaced, amid an almost five-year-long civil war that has left hundreds of thousands of people dead and has been fueled by

more than 20 countries.

The ongoing war in Yemen, which is approaching its ninth month, has displaced more than 330,000 people and turned a quarter of a million more into refugees. The U.S. is arming and supporting the Saudi-led coalition that is responsible for around two-thirds of civilian casualties, according to the U.N., and has been accused of war crimes by leading human rights organizations.

“To the extent that you keep money idle and valueless, you become responsible for the injustices done to ragged, hungry people. You will have to give value to your accumulated money by utilizing it to provide opportunities for others.”

– Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

Reversing Fate Through Love for Land, Forests and Water



“A good crop will last till June-July while a bad crop lasts till March-April. How can we survive? If only we had gold, bullock or land. But, we have nothing so we can't get even a loan. Once I had gone to the bank for a loan. The officer asked me if I owned land, you can get a loan only if you have land, otherwise not! This is what I was told at the bank. What can poor people like us do? Only continue living in dire poverty...what else?”



✱ **Abhijit Mohanty**

Such desperate questions from Bagajani, a farmer of Upargadla village mirror the plight of many tribal communities across Dasmantpur Block of Koraput district in southern Odisha. Ironically, the hilly terrain here gives rise to several perennial and seasonal streams that allow for a rich diversity of crops, and vegetation. Add to this, the bountiful rainfall that blesses the region, and yet, poverty and hunger afflicted the tribal communities of the block for major parts of the year.

This is because the fragile ecosystem on the undulating upland terrain has been destroyed by unchecked felling of trees, denudation of the forests and rampant shifting cultivation. Years of exploitation have affected the wellbeing of the communities severely in most tribal districts in Southern Odisha, leading to chronic malnutrition and ill health, symptomized by annual epidemics and high rates of distress migration.

Things were not always this bleak, says Laxman Jani, a 64 year-

old farmer of Dakamara village: “When there were trees on the hills, the crops were good. But now it is barren. Rains have washed away the top fertile soil. So we don't get a good yield anymore.”

Sundei Saunta, President of Dasmantpur Mahila Sangha, shares how they have to cultivate in some of the most denuded and rocky lands.

The lack of irrigation facility makes the situation worse and they have to depend on the vagaries of monsoon each year.

Saunta says, “Adivasi people like us plough our lands to sow millet. Millet is intercropped with turmeric. Both grow simultaneously and we weed them. Millet is harvested in the first year itself.



Land development in Dakaramara village.

Then we cover the field with straw and fence it to keep animals away. The turmeric has to be left in the field for the next two years. On the third year it is ready and we dig it out, after which it takes one to two months to dry. Finally, we fill the dried turmeric in sacks and bring it home. It takes a lot of time but that is how we have to do it. After all this time, one quintal of turmeric sells for Rs 3000. That is all we earn. Is that enough? Adivasi-Paraja people have to work very hard even to get such a paltry amount.”

A Ray of Hope

Things however may be looking up for the tribal agriculturists in the region, thanks to the efforts of the Ama Sangathan (AMS) a federation of tribal women, constituting 1200 members and the tribal people of Dasmantpur. With the aid and guidance of AMS, many communities in this region have pushed the limits of human endeavour and overcome the crippling poverty of their lives.

In Dakamara village for example, AMS held a meeting to explain the benefits of earth and stone bunding. “They told us that bunding would check rapid soil erosion and recharge rain water as well as increase the productivity of the land. This would give us good crops,” says Laxman Jani. The villagers followed the advice and with technical support from the organisation, took to land development through levelling,

earth and stone bunding. Neighbouring villages also followed the example.

Orchards in the Upland

Once land development was done, villagers enquired about the best farming model to follow, which would not only provide them food security round the year but also equip them with the resilience to combat the harsh environmental circumstances. After deliberation and discussion with AMS, the Dakamara villagers decided to cultivate orchard plants along with intercropping of traditional millets on the common land.

Where trees had been cut and rains had washed the top soil away, cashew and mango saplings were planted. This was intercropped with varieties of minor millets like ragi, foxtail, proso and finger millet. The produce from these is generally used for household consumption, as these are some of the staple foods for Adivasi.

Sundri Jani from the village says, “They told us that if we don't plant trees on the higher slopes, our lands will have no yield. So, we raised orchards on the common land of Government and fenced each sapling with stones.”

The women work collectively on these orchards on behalf of the Mahila Mandal (MM) of the village. Sundri is visibly pleased with the results as she says, “The trees have started yielding fruit and in the last year alone, we earned Rs. 48000 by

selling cashew nuts and Rs. 31400 from selling mango. Out of these earnings, we distributed Rs.51400 among 32 members of the Mahila Mandal and deposited Rs 10000 in our MM bank account as savings. Thus the earnings per head from the common land was Rs.2168.75.”

The women are also growing garlic and tuber together. The garlic has been harvested and the tuber will soon be ready. Thereafter, they plan to sow maize, intercropped with beans and okra. In this way, they can harvest three to four crops at a time.

Rejuvenating Land through Social Forestry

Yet another successful experiment led by AMS in the region is 'social forestry' – usually promoted in community land to meet the community needs for firewood, fodder, small timber. This also helps to conserve soil and water in the region.

A particularly successful model of this can be seen in Tentuliguda village, where trees such as acacia, karanja, borda, jackfruit and many citrus fruits were planted with the support of Forest Department in 10 acres of barren land under the Social Forestry Programme.

The project was designed in discussion with women and community leaders so that it could help meet community needs, stimulate local interest and bring about greater involvement than programmes with a top-down approach typically do. But the task was not as simple as it sounds.

Andharu Bhoi a community leader of the village narrates the long struggle to protect the forests from poachers. According to Bhoi, villagers from Katapiti logged the entire forest adjoining their village. On the other side, the people of Punishell also felled a lot of trees.

“We feared that the entire forest would be destroyed within no time. So we held meetings to protect the forest for our future generations. We decided that one person from each of the 50 families would guard the forest every day. But the loggers



Forestry in Tentuliguda village

were armed with axes and choppers. They did not listen to us and continued felling the trees,” says Bhoi.

He goes on to narrate an incident, which though disturbing stopped the attacks on the forests: “One day our villagers caught a logger. They brought him to the village, stripped him completely and tied him up with ropes. After that, no one ever tried to cut any trees. Now we are getting firewood, medicinal herbs and a range of fruits and roots from the Social Forestry Programme.”

Apart from meeting basic needs, the initiative has also gone a long way in educating the community about the need to protect and conserve natural forests.

Innovation in Irrigation

“During dry periods, there was nothing to eat. No vegetables, absolutely nothing. As we had no irrigation system, we could cultivate our lands only once a year. During the rainy season, there was no clean water to cook.” These all were common complaints of villagers from Tentuliguda. Faced with these challenges, AMS held a meeting in the village to discuss the problem of water scarcity. The villagers came up with suggestions on solutions to the problem.

Sobhini Muduli from the village says, “We thought about diverting water from the water source on the hill to our field. All 40-50 people of Tentuliguda worked for 15 days to dig the 3.5 km-long canal.



Innovative way of irrigation in Tentuliguda village

All of us worked for free. But, bringing the water to the village was very difficult, since the canal had to be made over low land that was 25 feet wide.”

The villagers applied to the government for help. The engineers inspected the area and said it would cost the government Rs.10 to 20 lakh to actually bring the water to the fields. Eventually, they rejected the application.

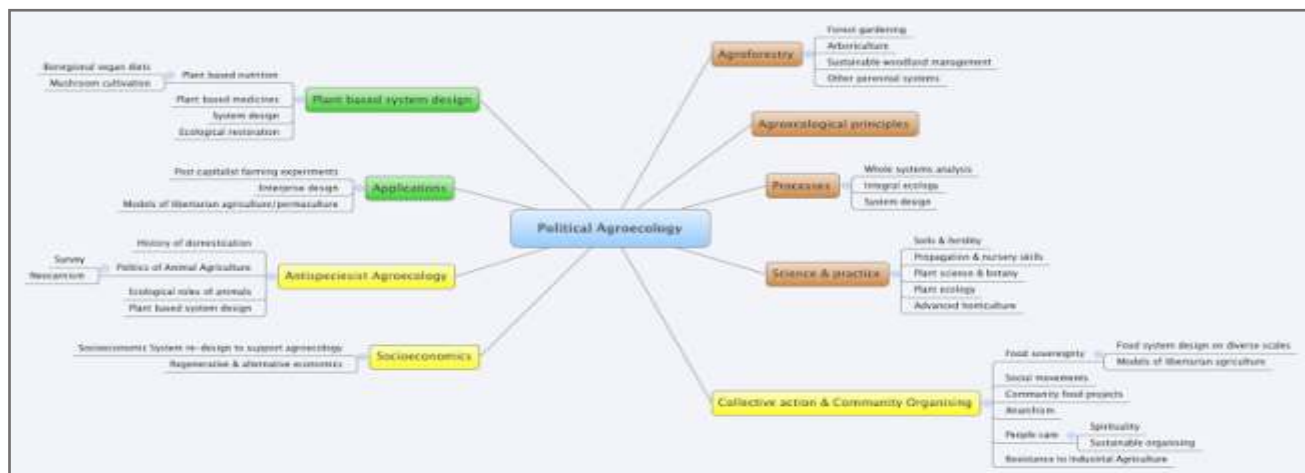
“When we told them about this issue, AMS staff said that they would give us a pipe. But we would have to take care of the rest. We cut 10 eucalyptus trees from the eucalyptus plantations next to the village pond. Each one was 25 to 30 feet tall. We used them as pillars to support the pipe. That is how the pipe crossed the lowland,” recalls Muduli. “Our landless brothers also joined us. In return, we gave them some irrigated land for share cropping.”

The committed efforts of the villagers and the indigenous

technology used to divert water from the hilly areas to the agricultural land caught the attention of the Government as well. Eventually, a diversion canal was constructed with the support of the block administration.

Today, the people of Dasmantpur dare to dream of a future a future where their beautiful mountains will yield food, fruit and shade and not turn into agents of destruction, burying their crops and homes with rock and soil following rains. Guided by AMS throughout the journey, the tribal community has pulled itself out of a morass of poverty, dejection and misery. The positive energy created has rejuvenated the land as well as the people.

The author is Fundraising Manager at Agramee, Odisha. He also works in the areas of literacy, rights-based advocacy, social research and writes article on tribal development issues. AMS is a sister organisation of Agramee



The Exxons of Agriculture – Fertilizer Companies

The shift from chemical fertilisers to agro-ecological practices would allow farmers to rebuild organic matter in the world's soils, and thus capture a possible two-thirds of the current excess CO₂ in the atmosphere within 50 years.

It goes without saying that oil and coal companies should not have a seat at the policy table for decisions on climate change. Their profits depend on business-as-usual and they'll do everything in their power to undermine meaningful action.

But what about fertiliser companies? They are essentially the oil companies of the food world: the products they get farmers to pump into the soil are the largest source of emissions from farming. They, too, have their fortunes wrapped in agribusiness-as-usual and the expanded development of cheap sources of energy, like shale gas.

Exxon and BP must envy the ease their fertiliser counterparts have had in infiltrating the climate change policy arena. World leaders are about to converge for the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris in December, but there was only one major intergovernmental initiative that has emerged to deal with climate change and agriculture -- and it is controlled by the world's largest fertiliser companies.

The Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture, launched last year at the United Nations (UN) Summit on Climate

Change in New York, is the culmination of several years of efforts by the fertiliser lobby to block meaningful action on agriculture and climate change. Of the Alliance's 29 non-governmental founding members, there are three fertiliser industry lobby groups, two of the world's largest fertiliser companies (Yara of Norway and Mosaic of the US), and a handful of organisations working directly with fertiliser companies on climate change programmes. Today, 60% of the private sector members of the Alliance still come from the fertiliser industry.

Corporate Smart Agriculture

One possible explanation for the fertiliser industry's successful policy coup is that its role in climate change is poorly understood and severely underestimated. People associate Shell, not Yara, with fracking. But it is Yara that coordinates the corporate lobby for shale gas development in Europe, and it is Yara and other fertiliser companies that suck up most of the natural gas produced by the fracking boom in the US.

Fertilisers, especially nitrogen fertilisers, require an enormous amount of energy to produce. Estimates are that fertiliser



Zombie Gas Mask

production accounts for 1-2% of total global energy consumption and produces about the same share of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This production gets bigger every year. Supplies of nitrogen fertiliser, which is produced almost entirely from natural gas, are expected to grow nearly 4% per year over the next decade. And this production will increasingly rely on natural gas from fracked wells, which leak 40 to 60 percent more methane than conventional natural gas wells. (Methane is 25 times more potent than CO₂ as a greenhouse gas.)

Production, however, accounts for only a small fraction of the GHG emissions generated by chemical fertilisers. Most emissions occur once they are applied to the soil.

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that for every 100 kg of nitrogen fertiliser applied to the soil, one kg ends up in the atmosphere as nitrous oxide (N₂O), a gas that is 300 times more potent than CO₂ as a greenhouse gas and is the world's most significant ozone-depleting substance. In 2014, this was equivalent to the average annual emissions of 72 million cars driven in the US -- about a third of the US fleet of cars and trucks.

New research, however, shows that these alarming numbers are at least three to five times too low. The use of chemical fertilisers this year will likely generate more GHG emissions than the total emissions from all of the cars and trucks driven in the US! (See box: *The fertiliser footprint*)

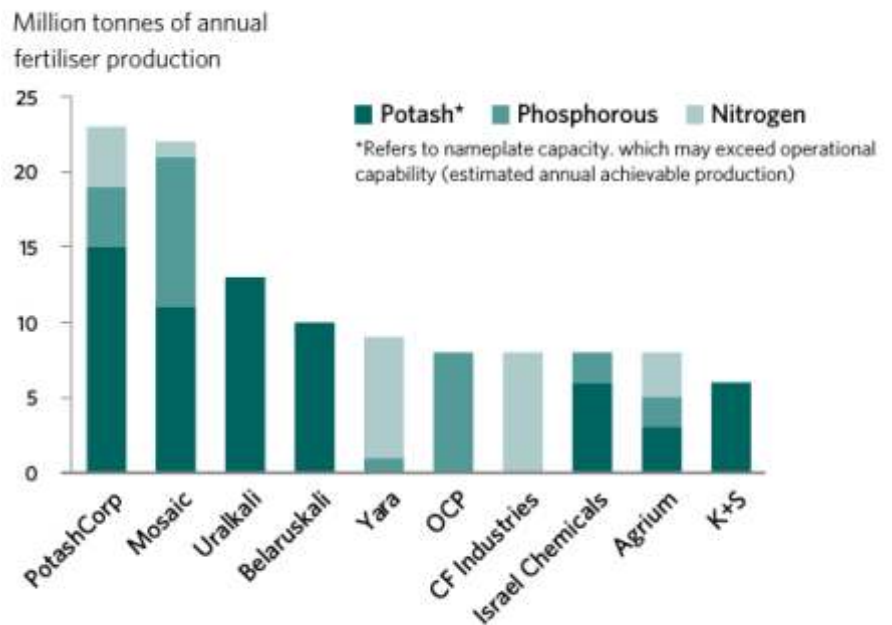
The fertiliser industry has long known that their chemicals are cooking the planet and there is a growing body of evidence that shows that their products are not needed to feed the world. Farmers can stop using chemical fertilisers without reducing yields by adopting agroecological practices. This was the conclusion supported by the 2008 International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) -- a three-year intergovernmental process involving over 400 scientists that was sponsored by the World Bank and all of the relevant UN agencies.

Faced with this dilemma, the fertiliser companies have moved aggressively to control the international debate on agriculture and climate change, and to position themselves as a necessary part of the solution.

Fronting for Fertilisers

"There have been several organisations advocating at the international level for sustainable agriculture to be interpreted as

Graphic 1. World's ten largest fertilizer companies



Source: Fertecon, CRU, Company Reports, PotashCorp

synonymous with agro-ecology. However, agro-ecology has unfortunately come to represent principles which reject the use of farming inputs. Therefore, initiatives such as the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture are important to ensure the UN system adopts decisions that are reflective of modern agriculture." -- Canadian Federation of Agriculture

The global fertiliser industry is dominated by a handful of corporations. Yara, which is over 40% owned by the Norwegian government and its state pension fund, dominates the global market for nitrogen fertiliser, while US-based Mosaic and a few companies in Canada, Israel and the former Soviet Union operate cartels that control the global potash supply. Mosaic is also the leading producer of phosphates.

These companies are collectively represented by a number of lobby groups. The main ones at the global level are The Fertiliser Institute, the International Fertiliser Industry Association and the International Plant Nutrition Institute. Fertiliser companies are

also represented by energy consumer lobby groups such as the International Federation of Industrial Energy Consumers. Yara chairs its Gas Working Party, which, in collaboration with Fertilisers Europe, is lobbying heavily for shale gas development in the European Union (EU).

The fertiliser companies and their front groups play an active role in various alliances that they have formed with other corporations from the food and agriculture sectors to define and protect their collective interests on policies related to the environment and climate change.

In North America, for instance, Yara and other fertiliser companies and lobby groups co-founded the Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture ("Field To Market") alongside other major food and agribusiness companies like Walmart, Kellogg's and Monsanto. Also active in this alliance are big US environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) and the The Nature Conservancy (TNC). These NGOs work directly with Yara, Mosaic and other fertiliser companies on "climate smart"

Graphic 2. How fertiliser companies control the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture



fertiliser efficiency programmes that Walmart, PepsiCo, Campbell's and other major food companies and retailers are using as a basis for their internal GHG emissions reduction plans (*See box: Pollution as the solution*).

The same NGOs and fertiliser front groups are behind Solutions from the Land, a US alliance of agribusiness corporations and corporate farmers established to defend industrial agriculture from environmental regulations, initially dealing with the destructive impacts on waterways from chemical fertiliser run-off and now focusing on climate change.

"We're scared to death we'll get hijacked by some groups that oppose technology," explains Solution from the Land's Fred Yoder, speaking in Abu Dhabi in March 2015 at an agribusiness forum on climate change.

In early 2015, Solutions from the Land changed its name to the North American Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture and now acts as the regional coordination for the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture.

This cosy relationship between the fertiliser industry and other

multinationals of the food and agribusiness sector reaches beyond the US and Europe. Yara is particularly active within the World Economic Forum (WEF) where it co-chairs the development of its New Vision for Agriculture with Walmart. Yara also chairs the WEF's Climate Smart Agriculture working group, through which it coordinates the implementation of "climate smart" fertiliser programmes with Nestle, PepsiCo, Syngenta and other companies in Asia and Africa.

Fertiliser companies also have a long-standing relationship with the international research centres of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Today, the fertiliser industry collaborates with these centres on various climate smart initiatives in the South (see box: *Pollution as the solution*). The relationship extends to the Bill Gates-funded Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) which has several areas of cooperation with the CGIAR and the fertiliser industry, such as the African Green Revolution Forum that was established by Yara and AGRA in 2010.

The main vehicle for the

promotion of fertilisers in the South, however, is the International Fertiliser Development Center (IFDC), which was established in the US in the 1970s and is funded by several fertiliser companies, including Yara. IFDC lobbies governments for policies that increase fertiliser use and promotes different fertiliser application techniques, such as integrated soil management that AGRA, the World Bank and other funding agencies have embraced as "climate smart".

All of these various corporations, agencies, front groups and alliances have converged behind a common effort to promote "climate smart agriculture" as the official response to climate change. It builds upon previous, equally abstract terms promoted by the fertiliser industry to cast chemical fertilisers as part of the solution to climate change, such as "climate compatible agricultural growth" and "sustainable intensification".

"I believe 2015 and 2016 will be the years where we move from building a global movement to action on the ground. And the key words are climate smart agriculture, an area where Yara has products and knowledge," says Sean de Cleene,

Vice President Global Initiatives, Strategy and Business Development in Yara.

The UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) first coined the term "climate smart agriculture" in 2010 as a means to attract climate finance to its agricultural programmes in Africa. The term only became significant in international policy circles in 2012 after the second Global Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change, organised in Hanoi by the World Bank and FAO and hosted by the Government of Vietnam.

The choice of Vietnam was no accident. Yara and other food and agribusiness multinationals of the WEF had recently launched a major public-private partnership with the Vietnamese government under which these corporations were given exclusive responsibility over the "value chains" of the country's main export commodities. Yara was put in charge of coffee and vegetables, and the programmes in Vietnam were adopted as the WEF's first pilot project for climate smart agriculture, which Yara was tasked with overseeing.

The programme of the Second Global Conference was dominated by Yara and the other corporations collaborating with the Vietnamese government. Civil society organisations were marginalised from the discussions, and their vocal rejection of the "climate smart agriculture" concept was ignored. While the previous conference had called for a "paradigm shift at all levels", this time the conference ended with a call for "a paradigm shift in the role of the private sector" to "institutionalise and scale-up" private sector involvement and "move from public-private to private-public partnerships."

By the time of the next Global Conference in South Africa a year later, the fertiliser lobby and its allies had produced a plan for the creation of an Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture to be formally presented at the UN Climate Summit in

THE FERTILISER FOOTPRINT

Scientists now know that the 17% increase of N₂O in the atmosphere since the pre-industrial era is a direct result of chemical fertilisers, owing especially to the deployment of the so-called Green Revolution programmes of the 1960s that brought chemical fertilisers into use in Asia and Latin America. They also now know that the amount of N₂O emissions resulting from the application of nitrogen fertilisers is more in the range of 3-5%, a dramatic increase from the IPCC's assumption of 1%.

Yet even this 3-5% estimate does not go far enough in assessing current and future emissions from fertilisers. First, fertiliser use is expanding fastest in the tropics, where soils generate even higher rates of N₂O emissions per kg of nitrogen applied, particularly when the soils have been deforested. Secondly, fertiliser use per hectare is growing and new studies show that the rate of N₂O emissions increases exponentially as more fertiliser is applied.

Chemical fertilisers are addictive. Because they destroy the natural nitrogen in the soils that is available to plants, farmers have to use more and more fertilisers every year to sustain yields. Over the past 40 years, the efficiency of nitrogen fertilisers has decreased by two-thirds and their consumption per hectare has increased by seven times.

The effect on organic matter, the world's most important carbon sink, is the same. Despite industry propaganda to the contrary, recent studies demonstrate that chemical fertilisers are responsible for much of the massive loss of organic matter that has occurred in the world's soils since the pre-industrial era.

"In numerous publications spanning more than 100 years and a wide variety of cropping and tillage practices, we found consistent evidence of an organic carbon decline for fertilised soils throughout the world," says University of Illinois soils scientist Charlie Boast.

Soils around the world have lost, on average, at least 1-2 percentage points of organic matter in the top 30 cm since chemical fertilisers began to be used. This amounts to some 150,000-205,000 million tonnes of organic matter, which has resulted in 220,000-330,000 million tonnes of CO₂ emitted into the air or 30 per cent of the current excess CO₂ in the atmosphere!

The overall contribution of chemical fertilisers to climate change has thus been drastically underestimated and a reassessment is urgently needed. Factoring in the recent research, the growing reliance on shale gas and the impacts on soil organic matter could push estimates of the share of global GHG emissions from chemical fertilisers to as high as 10%. The world needs to move quickly to end our deadly addiction to these toxic products.

September 2014 as the international community's main platform for action on climate change and agriculture.

The US State Department then took the lead in moving the plan forward. At the Alliance's "Partner Meeting" in The Hague in July 2014, where the final details were hammered out, the US sent five government officials, four representatives of US agribusiness lobby groups and four corporate representatives -- a number equal to the entire number of delegates from developing countries.

"The international discussions were hijacked by agribusiness companies, the World Bank, the US and other climate smart agriculture-friendly governments," says World Food Prize winner Hans Herren. "They have the money and the lobby

groups. Those of us defending agroecology, local food systems and small-scale farming as the holistic and truly climate friendly solution were simply pushed out of the process."

Today the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture is stacked with fertiliser companies, fertiliser front groups and NGOs and companies that work directly with them (*Graph 1*). Its steering committee includes Yara, Mosaic, EDF and TNC, as well as their home governments of Norway and the US.

Back to a Paradigm Shift

Food and agriculture are low hanging fruits for action on climate change. Dramatic and rapid reductions in GHG emissions can be achieved in our food systems without major economic consequences. The elimination of

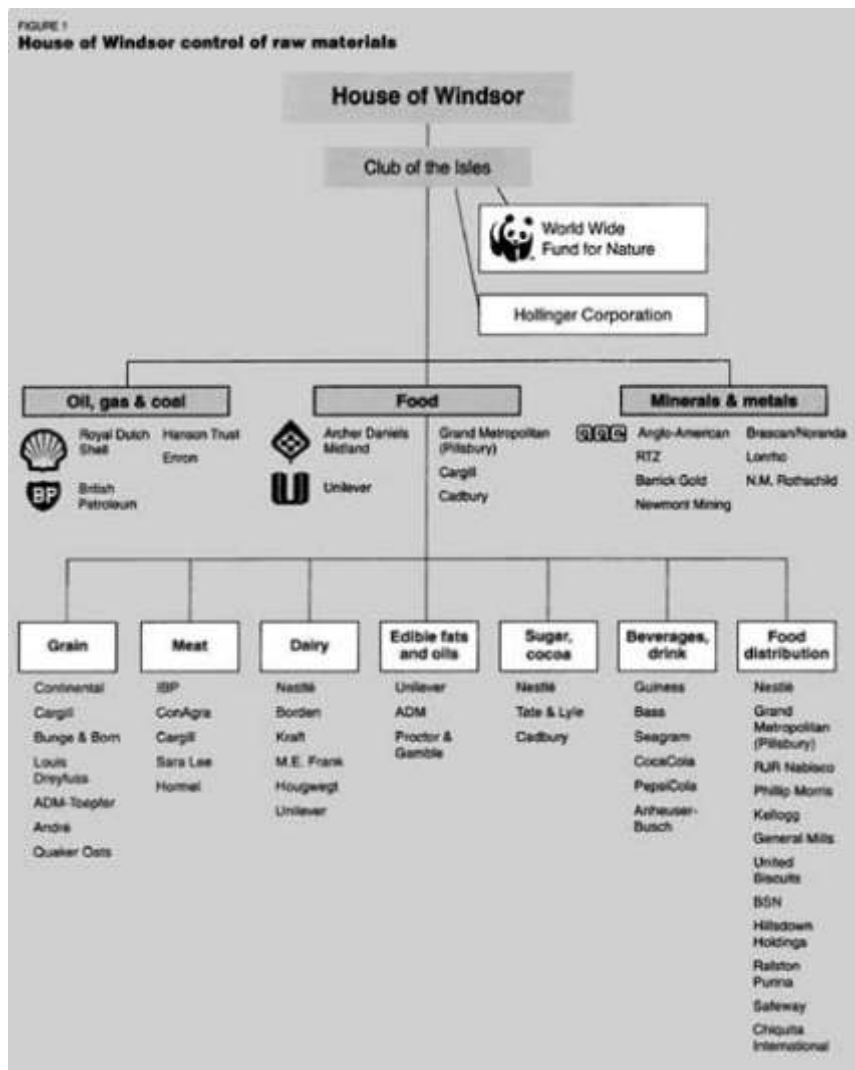
chemical fertilisers is one of the easiest and most effective places to start.

Cutting out chemical fertilisers could reduce annual global greenhouse emissions by as much as 10% (See box: The fertiliser footprint). Additionally, the shift from chemical fertilisers to agroecological practices would allow farmers to rebuild organic matter in the world's soils, and thus capture a possible two-thirds of the current excess CO2 in the atmosphere within 50 years. There are also the added benefits of improved livelihoods for farmers, more nutritious foods, protection of the ozone layer and safe water systems.

No technical hurdles stand in the way. Fertiliser companies may claim that if we stopped using their products we would have to plough up the earth's remaining forests in order to meet global food needs, but there are plenty of studies showing that farmers using simple agroecological practices can produce as much food without chemical fertilisers on the same amount of land.

When it comes to global food security, we should be much more worried about our dependence on the cartels that the fertiliser companies operate. **During the 2007 food price crisis, as a billion people starved because they could no longer afford food, the fertiliser companies jacked up their prices and held governments and farmers at ransom.** They pointed to rising costs for raw materials (natural gas) but the profits of Yara and Mosaic jumped a staggering 100% that year.

Kicking the fertiliser habit is really a matter of politics. No meaningful action can occur until the fertiliser industry's grip on policy makers is loosened. Let's start making this happen by shutting down the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture and booting the fertiliser companies out of the COP21 in Paris.



The Right to Life

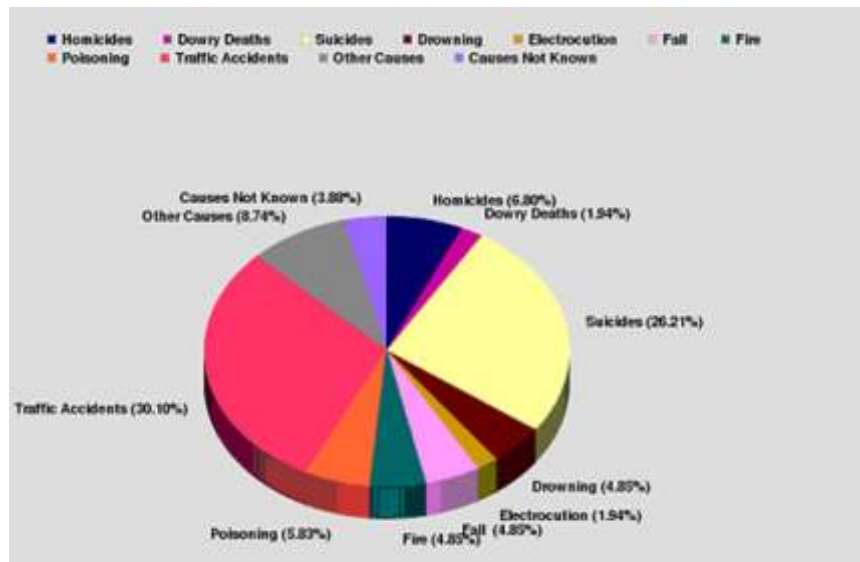
The Most Violated Right

★ Asian Centre for Human Rights

Article 21 of the Constitution of India guarantees the right to life but 'procedures established by law' sanction violation of the right to life through imposition of death penalty in violation of the international standards on fair trial, dispersal of unlawful assembly (crowd control), self-defence (extrajudicial executions in fake encounters), and effecting arrest and dealing with unlawful assembly of civilians in 'disturbed' areas. Further, there are blatant failures of the State to ensure citizens' right to life when it is threatened by non-state actors who violate the right to life on the basis of gender, caste, tribal or religious identity, or in the pursuit of political and ideological goals.

The right to life is perhaps the most violated right in India. In the last 10 years from 2004-2005 to 2013-2014, as per official records the right to life of at least 130,407 persons or 1,086 persons per month were violated either by the State agencies or caused by the failure of the State agencies to fulfill their responsibilities to prevent violations by the non-State actors. The majority of the victims are women (80,947) followed by victims of custodial deaths (16,465), encounter deaths (10,900), deaths in police firing (2,527), deaths of 10,219 civilians in militancy/Naxal related violence; deaths in caste related violence (8,138) and deaths in communal violence (1,211).

For the same period, as for the State security forces, this report counts 16,465 cases of custodial death (with 1,389 deaths in police

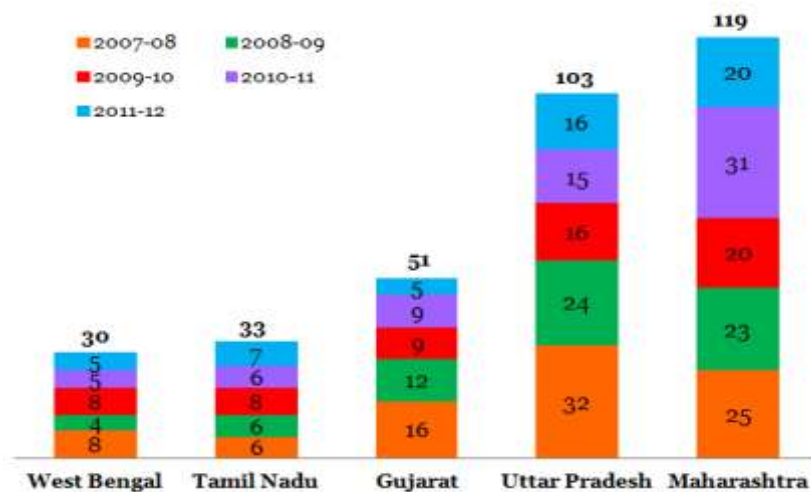


custody and 15,076 deaths in judicial custody); 23 cases of death in the custody of the army and the central paramilitary forces; 10,900 deaths in "encounters" (1,654 deaths involving police and 9,246 deaths involving the armed forces and paramilitary forces, of which 4,005 in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), 3,650 in the North East and 1,591 in the Naxal affected areas); and 2,527 deaths in police firing.

The State's failure to safeguard the right to life of individual citizens and those belonging to vulnerable groups during the same period also resulted in the death of 80,947 women (79,404 dowry killings and 1,543 killings of those suspected of witchcraft); 10,219 civilians in militancy/Naxal related violence; 8,138 (1,646 Scheduled Tribes and 6,492 Scheduled Castes) in identity-related violence; and 1,211 persons in communal violence.

Ironically, the Supreme Court of India, which has gradually expanded elements of the right to life, has not been immune from its role to diminish the right to life. The Supreme Court had imposed death penalty in at least eight cases based on judgements which were subsequently held as *per incuriam* (out of error or ignorance). That the President of India rejected mercy plea of death row convict, Saibanna Nigappa Natikar of Karnataka on 4 January 2013 despite being informed by 14 former judges of the High Courts and the Supreme Court in separate letters on 1 June 2012 that the judgement sentencing Natikar had been declared *per incuriam* by the Supreme Court, explains the malaise that result in the violations of the right to life in India.

The root causes for blatant violations of the right to life are not hard to find: impunity at all levels



States with Highest Police Custody Deaths – 2007-8 to 2010-11

and across the spectrum and the dispensability of the victims because of their caste, creed, ethnic origin, economic status, gender or simply geographical location i.e. residing in areas notified as “disturbed areas” under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) of 1958.

The most blatant violation of the right to life is extrajudicial execution, euphemistically called deaths in “fake encounters” in India. There are no witnesses in most encounter killings and the security forces usually register “attempt to murder cases” against the deceased, thereby stopping further processes there itself. The Andhra Pradesh High Court in a judgement on 6 February 2009 made registration of First Investigation Report (FIR) mandatory against the police officers for the death caused to any person in encounters and put the onus on the police to prove they were acting in self-defence resulting in death in encounters. On appeal by the Andhra Pradesh Police Officers Association, the Supreme Court in an order 24 on 4 March 2009 stayed the decision of the five-judge bench (Full Bench) of the Andhra Pradesh High Court. The Supreme Court is yet to dispose this appeal.

In another decision relating to encounter killings by police, the Supreme Court on 23 September 2014 in the case of the People's Union for Civil Liberties & Anr v. State of Maharashtra & Ors issued 16-point guidelines to deal with encounter killings. In these guidelines, the Supreme Court essentially stated that it is not

necessary to register the FIR against the police officers for the death caused to any person in encounters or putting the onus on the police to prove they were acting in self-defence resulting in death in encounters. The guidelines further limited the powers of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) both on reporting of encounter killings by the police and in awarding compensation. The NHRC, responding responsibly, filed a writ petition before the Supreme Court against the judgement in December 2014 and this judgement has direct bearing on pending case of A.P. Police Officers Association v. A. P. Civil Liberties Committee & Ors [SLP(C) NO. 5933/2009].

The fallacious nature of the Supreme Court judgement in the PUCL case stands exposed from the direction of the Andhra Pradesh High Court on 16 April 2015 to register FIR against the members of the Special Task Force for murder of 20 labourers dubbed as smugglers in a forest in Chittoor district on 7 April 2015. It is equally pertinent to mention that the Supreme Court had also upheld the constitutional validity of the AFSPA empowering a non-commissioned officer to use fire-arms and force, even to the extent of causing death. This judgement of the apex court sits uneasily with the specific recommendations made to the GoI by the Justice Jeevan Reddy Committee to Review the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, the Second Administrative Reforms Commission, and the Justice J S

Verma Committee, in addition to plethora of recommendations of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the UN Human Rights Council under its Universal Periodic Review (UPR). It is another matter that it was Justice J S Verma himself who as the Chief Justice of India had upheld the constitutional validity of the AFSPA in 1997 but went to recommend its review in 2012 as the Chairman of the Justice Verma Committee set up following the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case in Delhi.

In cases of police firing for dispersal of unlawful assembly (crowd control), the use of force is often justified by magisterial inquiries and conviction of any law enforcement personnel for the excessive use of firearms for crowd control is an exception. In the highly unusual situation that an independent and timely investigation is secured and a chargesheet filed against State security force personnel, prosecution is virtually impossible to pursue since Section 6 of the AFSPA and Section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) stipulate that prior permission must be sought from the government. There are well-known cases in which prosecution has stopped for want of permission from the government to prosecute, such as the fake encounter deaths of Sohrabuddin Sheikh and Tulsiram Prajapati and of Ishrat Jahan of Gujarat and the Nandigram firing in West Bengal. The violations of the right to life have been an integral part of India's law enforcement, counter-terrorism and national security strategies. Both the executive and the judiciary have been complicit; and ensuring the right to life remains a challenging task.

(This has been excerpted from the report 'The State of the Right to Life in India' by the Asian Human Rights Commission)

Svetlana Alexandrovna Alexeivich

An Extraordinary Human Being

True history should be a faithful record of the entire human life.

- Shrii P R Sarkar

✳ Arun Prakash

Last year's Nobel Prize in Literature went to Svetlana Alexandrovna Alexieivich. An extraordinary writer and an extraordinary human being her work has been described by the Swedish Academy as a "monument to suffering and courage in our time" by which she actually recorded the voices of suffering people in many tape recorders affected by great events of our time. When the academy called and informed her about the award and the prize money of 8 million Swedish Krona (£775,000) she was at home ironing her clothes.

Svetlana was born on the May 31, 1948 in the Ukrainian town of Ivano-Frankovsk into a family of a serviceman. Her father is Belarusian and her mother is Ukrainian. After her father's demobilisation from the army the family returned to his native Belorussia and settled in a village where both parents worked as school teachers. She left school to work as a reporter on the local paper in the town of Narovl. She has written many short stories, essays and feature articles on events by conducting thousands and thousands of interviews with children women and men, which offered a history of ordinary human beings about whom no one knows offering a history of emotions, a



Svetlana at the Nobel museum in Stockholm, Sweden December 6, 2015

history of the soul. These are all recorded on audio tapes and are not really history about events. Her various books are a history of emotions covering major events viz. on the Second World War, the Chernobyl disaster, the Soviet war in Afghanistan. They all explore the emotional sufferings of common people in Russia during the years of communism and after the fall of communism. She says "I don't ask people about socialism, I ask about love, jealousy, childhood, old age," She also writes about music, dances, hairstyles, sundry details of a vanished way of life. She feels this is

the only way to chase the catastrophe into the framework of the mundane and attempt to tell a story. She adds "It never ceases to amaze me how interesting ordinary, everyday life is. There are an endless number of human truths ... History is only interested in facts; emotions are excluded from its realm of interest. It's considered improper to admit them into history. I look at the world as a writer, not strictly an historian. I am fascinated by people".

Her exploration of the Second World War was from a perspective never known before, in fact almost



Kiev, June 23, 1941 grieving womenfolk who lost their men folk - husbands, sons and fathers who never returned back from the battlefield. Around 20 million soldiers and civilians were killed.

unknown. According to her “It tells the story of the hundreds and hundreds of women who were at the front in the Second World War. Almost one million Soviet women participated in the war, and it’s a largely unknown history. It’s a touching document and at the same time brings you very close to every individual”.

Here are a few excerpts. Svetlana writes “I lived in a country where dying was taught to us from childhood. We were taught death. We were told that human beings exist in order to give everything they have, to burn out, to sacrifice them. We were taught to love people with weapons. Had I grown up in a different country, I couldn’t have traveled this path. Evil is cruel, you have to be inoculated against it. We grew up among executioners and victims. Even if our parents lived in fear and didn’t tell us everything – and more often than not they told us nothing – the very air of our life was poisoned. Evil kept a watchful eye

on us”. About the suffering of Soviet women in the Second World War, “I grew up in the countryside. As children, we loved to play outdoors, but come evening, the voices of tired village women who gathered on benches near their cottages drew us like magnets. None of them had husbands, fathers or brothers. I don’t remember men in our village after World War II: during the war, one out of four Belarusians perished, either fighting at the front or with the partisans. After the war, we children lived in a world of women. What I remember most, is that women talked about love, not death. They would tell stories about saying goodbye to the men they loved the day before they went to war, they would talk about waiting for them, and how they were still waiting. Years had passed, but they continued to wait: ‘I don’t care if he lost his arms and legs, I’ll carry him.’ No arms ... no legs ... I think I’ve known what love is since childhood”.

This was a war I had never heard about. A woman’s war! It wasn’t about heroes. It wasn’t about one group of people heroically killing another group of people. I remember a frequent female lament: ‘After the battle, you’d walk through the field. They lay on their backs ... All young, so handsome. They lay there, staring at the sky. You felt sorry for all of them, on both sides.’ It was this attitude, ‘all of them, on both sides,’ that gave me the idea of what my book would be about: war is nothing more than killing. That’s how it registered in women’s memories. This person had just been smiling, smoking – and now he’s gone. Disappearance was what women talked about most, how quickly everything can turn into nothing during war. Both the human being and human time. Yes, they had volunteered for the front at 17 or 18, but they didn’t want to kill. And yet – they were ready to die. To die for the Motherland – you can’t erase those words from history.

Another poignant description “I met my husband during the war. I was in a tank crew that made it all the way to Berlin. I remember, we were standing near the Reichstag – he wasn’t my husband yet – and he says to me: “Let’s get married. I love you.” I was so upset – we’d been living in filth, dirt, and blood the whole war, heard nothing but obscenities. I answered: First make a woman of me: give me flowers, whisper sweet nothings. When I’m demobilized, I’ll make myself a dress. I was so upset I wanted to hit him. He felt all of it. One of his cheeks had been badly burned, it was scarred over, and I saw tears running down the scars. Alright, I’ll marry you,” I said. Just like that ... I couldn’t believe I said it ... All around us there was nothing but ashes and smashed bricks, in short – war.”

Svetlana adds, “I’m absolutely convinced that there will never again be young women like the war-time girls of 1941. This was the high point of the “Red” idea, higher even than the Revolution and Lenin.

Their Victory still eclipses the GULAG. I dearly love these women. But you couldn't talk to them about Stalin, or about the fact that after the war, whole trainloads of the boldest and most outspoken victors were sent straight to Siberia. The rest returned home and kept quiet. Once I heard: 'The only time we were free was during the war - at the front.' Suffering is our capital, our natural resource. Not oil or gas - but suffering. It is the only thing we are able to produce consistently. I'm always looking for the answer: why doesn't our suffering convert into freedom? Is it truly all in vain? Chaadayev was right: Russia is a country without memory, it's a space of total amnesia, a virgin consciousness for criticism and reflection".

There are similar stories about the pain and suffering felt by the common people during the ten year long war following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. "I talk to the guys. Many have come voluntarily. They asked to come here. I note that most are from educated families, the intelligentsia - teachers, doctors, librarians - in a word, bookish people. They sincerely dreamed of helping the Afghan people build socialism. Now they laugh at themselves. I was shown a place at the airport where hundreds of zinc coffins sparkle mysteriously in the sun. The officer accompanying me couldn't help himself: "Who knows ... my coffin might be over there ... They'll stick me in it ... What am I fighting for here?" His own words scared him and he immediately said: Don't write that down.

At night I dream of the dead, they all have looks of surprise on their faces: what, you mean I was killed? Have I really been killed? I drove to a hospital for Afghan civilians with a group of nurses - we brought presents for the children. Toys, candy, cookies. I had about five teddy bears. We arrived at the hospital, a long barracks. No one has more than a blanket for bedding. A young Afghan woman approached

me, holding a child in her arms. She wanted to say something - over the last ten years almost everyone here has learned to speak a little Russian - and I handed the child a toy, which he took with his teeth. "Why his teeth?" I asked in surprise. She pulled the blanket off his tiny body - the little boy was missing both arms. "It was when your Russians bombed." Someone held me up as I began to fall. I saw our 'Grad' rockets turn villages into plowed fields. I visited an Afghan cemetery, which was about the length of one of their villages. Somewhere in the middle of the cemetery an old Afghan woman was shouting. I remembered the howl of a mother in a village near Minsk when they carried a zinc coffin into the house. The cry wasn't human or animal ... It resembled what I heard at the Kabul cemetery ...

This from the story about Lyudmilla Ignatenko whose

husband Fireman Vasily Ignatenko who died a horrible death due to exposure to nuclear radiation while fighting a fire that followed the explosions in the Chernobyl Nuclear power plant on April, 26, 1986. "We were newlyweds. We still walked around holding hands, even if we were just going to the store. I would say to him, "I love you." But I didn't know then how much. I had no idea . . . We lived in the dormitory of the fire station where he worked. I always knew what was happening—where he was, how he was. One night I heard a noise. I looked out the window. He saw me. "Close the window and go back to sleep. There's a fire at the reactor. I'll be back soon. Later in hospital He got so bad that I couldn't leave him even for a second. He was calling me constantly: "Lusya, where are you? Lusenka!" He called and called. The other biochambers, where our boys were, were being tended to by



Soviet women soldiers at the front during WW II, 800,000 women served in the Soviet Armed Forces



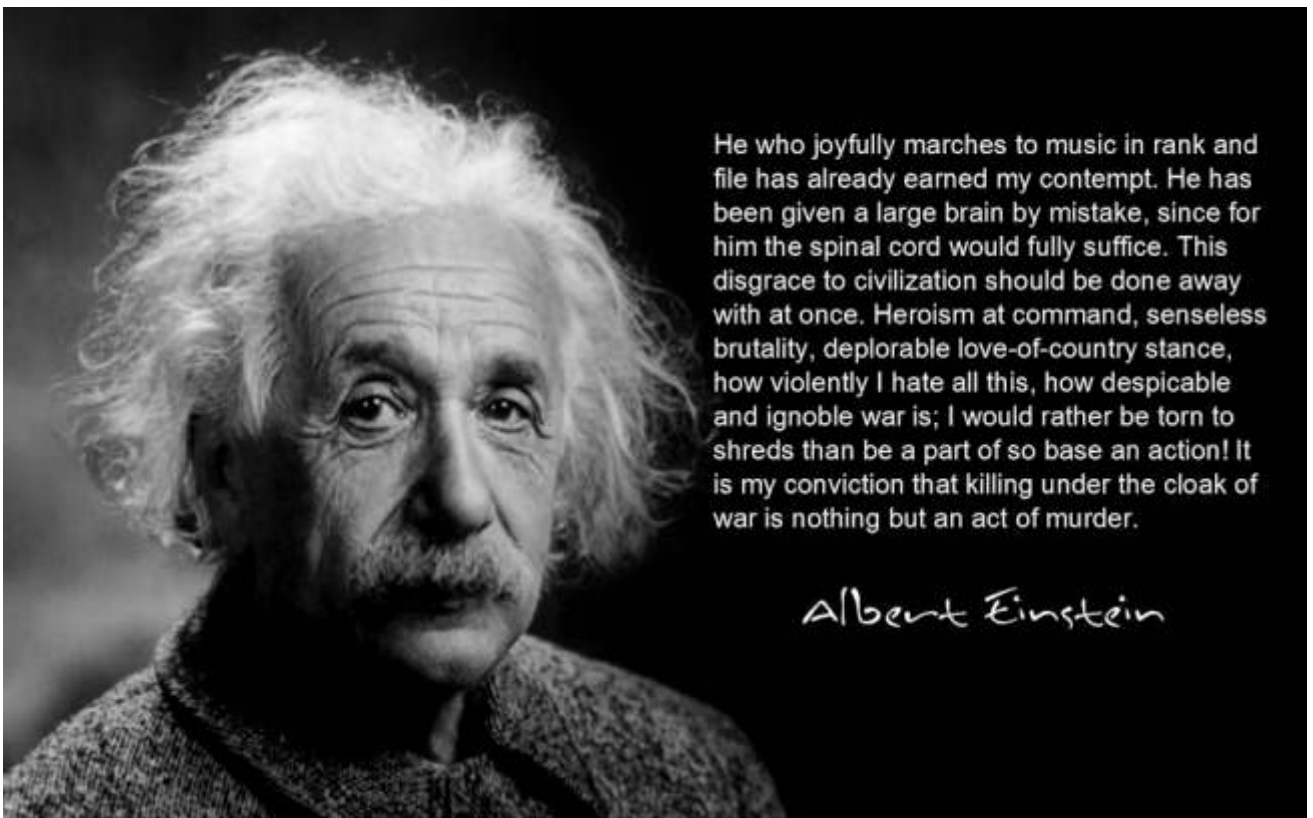
Soviet women soldiers at the front during WW II, 800,000 women served in the Soviet Armed Forces

soldiers because the orderlies or staff refused, they demanded protective clothing. The soldiers carried the sanitary vessels. They wiped the floors down, changed the bedding. They did everything. Where did they get those soldiers? We didn't ask. But every day I would hear: Dead. Dead. Tischura is dead.

Titenok is dead. Dead. He was producing stool twenty-five to thirty times a day. With blood and mucus! His skin started cracking on his arms and legs. He became covered with boils. When he turned his head, there'd be a clump of hair left on the pillow. I tried joking: "It's convenient, you don't need a comb."

Soon they cut all their hair. I did it for him myself. I wanted to do everything for him myself. If it had been physically possible I would have stayed with him twenty-four hours a day. I couldn't spare a minute".

As the renowned philosopher Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar said, "History should focus upon the prevalent cultural standards, thoughts and ideas, dress, the social condition of women, the role of women in the social and economic spheres, and the socio-economic conditions of the weak and backward communities of the society of a particular age, etc. If any of these aspects are omitted while writing history, it will be incomplete". This piece is a salute to Svetlana Alexandrovna Alexievich - a true history writer and a true human being, without whose efforts the history of what the people had to go through during such global events would have remained unnoticed. There could be more like her in the world though not so well acclaimed or of such renown.



He who joyfully marches to music in rank and file has already earned my contempt. He has been given a large brain by mistake, since for him the spinal cord would fully suffice. This disgrace to civilization should be done away with at once. Heroism at command, senseless brutality, deplorable love-of-country stance, how violently I hate all this, how despicable and ignoble war is; I would rather be torn to shreds than be a part of so base an action! It is my conviction that killing under the cloak of war is nothing but an act of murder.

Albert Einstein

Supreme Court Investigating Gates Foundation Vaccines

* Jonathan Benson

If Monsanto, the most evil corporation in the world, were a person, his name would be Bill Gates. Reports indicate that Gates' many crimes against humanity in the form of illegal vaccine testing on innocent children are finally being addressed in a new lawsuit filed by the Indian government, which seeks to stop this demon of death from killing any more babies.

The Supreme Courts of India are currently conducting an extensive investigation into the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's devious actions abroad, which mainly involve testing deadly vaccines on poor, and oftentimes illiterate, children in developing nations without informed consent. According to Health Impact News, the case focuses specifically on illicit human experimentation that occurred with the two available vaccines for HPV, Cervarix (GlaxoSmithKline) and Gardasil (Merck & Co.). Back in 2009, the Gates Foundation quietly funded trials of Gardasil on some 16,000 tribal school children living in Andhra Pradesh, India. According to a report published in Economic Times India back in August 2015, many of the children fell violently ill not long after receiving the vaccine, and at least five of them died.

In a separate trial of Cervarix that took place around this same time, also funded by the Gates Foundation, an estimated 14,000 tribal children in Vadodara, Gujarat, were vaccinated for HPV. The result

of this trial was two children dead and possibly hundreds of others severely injured. In both trials, many of the consent forms used were obviously forged, and many of the children's illiterate parents were coerced into signing consent forms with their thumbprints, not really know what they were doing.

A petition condemning these atrocious crimes against humanity notes that the Gates Foundation, as well as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH), both of which supported the trials, were "criminally negligent" for testing deadly vaccines on "a vulnerable, uneducated and under-informed population [of] school administrators, students and their parents who were not provided informed consent or advised of potential adverse effects."

It wasn't until a non-governmental organization known as SAMA began investigating the two trials that these Nazi-like experiments on human beings were finally brought to light. But none of the controlled media in the U.S., or anywhere else in the West for that matter, agreed to cover it. The only country that took notice was India,



which is now seeking justice against Gates and his band of vaccine terrorists.

Sadly, this isn't the only time that Gates and his crew were found to have committed evil acts against the world's most vulnerable. In December 2012, five children in the small town of Gouro, Chad, were forcibly vaccinated with a meningitis-A vaccine that was still in trials and not even approved for commercial use. The children were told that if they didn't agree to the vaccine, which was administered without parental consent, they would not be allowed to receive any further education.

And again in 2013, both the Gates Foundation and GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, were exposed for forcing untested polio vaccines and 5-in-1 pentavalent vaccines on innocent children in Pakistan. Many of the children developed so-called "non-polio acute flaccid paralysis," or NPAFP, which reports indicate is twice as deadly as polio itself.

Mental Equipoise

Shrii Shrii Anandamúrti

In reality, man wants neither joy nor sorrow. Man seeks mental peace and quietude. In daily life, man comes in contact with different kinds of people. At times he even fights with some people. How will he then find mental peace?

Those who do injustice will also suffer injustice. The people who do injustice will lose their mental balance in any fight. Those who do no injustice will be able to maintain their balance in their fight against injustice. This is the characteristic of a person who has attained mental quietude.

Jealousy and hatred can cause you sleepless nights. When the person you hate suffers a setback, you normally do not feel sorry for him or her. But you must have compassion for even the most sinful. You must feel sorry for them.



There is a Hindi couplet in which a man is asked why he looked sad. "Have you lost something, or have you given something to somebody?" The man replied, "I have not lost anything, not have I given something to somebody. I am sad because I see others getting something that I do not get." Such envy and jealousy is mentally degrading.

Do not despise even the most fallen, the most sinful, and the most wretched. You will degenerate mentally and spiritually if you hate anyone.

Lord Buddha said:

*Akkodhena jine kodham'asa'dhum'sa'dhuna'jine
Jine kadariiyam'da'nena sattyena aliikava'dinam.*

[Overcome anger by patience, overcome dishonesty by honesty, overcome greed by generosity, overcome falsehood by truth.]

The intelligent thing for you to do would be to never get angry. Be moral in the midst of immorality and falsehood. If you have this skill, you will triumph in any battle. You will remain unassailed.

Lord Krs'n'a says in the Gíita' that you should not be dejected in sorrow, nor should you be excited in joy. You should always maintain your mental balance.

You see now that [our] fame is on the rise. What should we do? We must maintain our mental balance and remain indifferent to both praise and slander, to both joy and sorrow. A rich person once abused Lord Buddha. He remained unperturbed. By refusing to accept the abuse, he returned the slander. When I was in jail, I was subjected to a lot of calumny by some people and these very people now praise me. But I was indifferent to all their slander, and now I do not want their adulation.

27 August 1978, Patna

PBI Fields Candidate in Bihar Bye-election



Parmanand Paswan

Benipatti (Madhubani, Bihar) : PBI has fielded Parmanand Paswan as its candidate in the ensuing bye-elections to the Harlakhi Assemble constituency of Bihar. The seat has fallen vacant due to the demise of the elected MLA from the constituency in the General Elections held in November 2015.

Parmanand Paswan and his father Vikru Paswan are sincere Proutist activists. Therefore the Proutists of Madhubani district have resolved to contest in this bye elections. Parmanand Paswan being a young boy of 25 years is a very popular youth leader here. When he went to submit his nomination papers to the Returning Officer, large number of youth accompanied him from his village to the election office. When Parmanand came out of the chamber of electoral officer, he was profusely garlanded by big crowd of his admirers and supporters.

Parmanand told the gathering that he will leave no stone unturned in this contest. He also said that it is so sad that immorals are ruling the moralists. As a result thereof, we witness rising graph of crime and widening gulf between haves and have nots in the country. It doesn't behove us to sit idle and leave everything to the fate. He exhorted the audience to work hard in order to organise and unite the moralists of Madhubani district. This is the pressing need of the hour. No sooner this objective is achieved, the real effort towards the implementation of Prout will start. An immoral government can never be expected to be Prout friendly It is therefore most urgent to create a strong moral force to give befitting fight to the immorals in power. Once moralists work unitedly, the goal of implementation of Prout will not remain a distant dream. We will surely see Prout in practice in near future.

Some of Pramandas ardent admirers included Nagendra Dev, Manjit Singh, Ashokji, Shiv Narayan Safi, Ram Kripal, Satnam Singh, Ram Preet Yadav, Dev Sharan and Shafiq Rain They assured him all their sincere assistance in his fight against the rule of immorals.

PBI Protests Robbing of Poor People

The poor people are denied the benefits of NFSA-2013 throughout the state of Odisha. Telibandh gram pachayat of Boudh district is a case in example. Due to careless approach and political interference in choosing the eligible/ worthy beneficiaries, the bureaucrats of the state government have denied ration cards to the poor people. Rich people using their influence have got their names included and the poor peoples' names are deleted. Without ration cards, they will not get the benefit of 5 Kg rice per head from the NFSA scheme. People from this gram panchayat called a meeting and the Proutist, Kedarnath Sahoo was invited to guide them. Kedar Sahoo spoke on the callous policies of the government and how it is creating hardships for the rural people.

As decided earlier, the poor people assembled at Telibandh Bungalow from different villages. The important village leaders like Swapneswar Chand, Premshankar Das, Baudi Bhukta from Kampara; Jagannath Mahakud from Telibandh and many others from Andapur, Telibandh, Goutampali, Chandrapur, Kamalpur, Kasalpur and Subarnpur villages participated in this protest. The gathering swelled to around 300 people. The mass rally under the leadership of Kedarnath Sahoo (Proutist), Swapneswar Chand, Premshankar Das, Bishikesan Pradhan, Susant Hota and Gyanaranjan Mahakud shouted the slogans against the implementation policy of the government regarding NFSA-2013 in Telibandh Gram Panchayat of Boudh in Odisha. Such mass protests were organised elsewhere too.

When the mass rally reached the block office, the police escorted the officers and Sarapanch out of the office building. Demonstrators threatened the district administration of still more aggressive movement in case of inaction.

PBI Seminar in Boudh College

A seminar was held at Man Maheswari Degree College, Baunsuni of Boudh in Odisha. The topic was 'Socio-economic Problems of Odisha and PROUT is the Panacea.' The Odia lecturer Jena introduced Kedarnath Sahoo to discuss how students are facing innumerable problems due to defective educational policy of Odisha State Government. There is not a single government college in the areas where there is junior or senior secondary high school. Students seeking admission in colleges at other places have therefore to pay high fees which is very painful for the parents due to poverty.

Amiirii Rekha (Wealth Cap) was discussed in the seminar as a solution. The students agreed to lead this type of awareness programme in their areas as well. Students promised to propagate this revolutionary thought in the villages for the socio-economic change in Bousuni area.

Due to the public demand, the State Government has declared exemption from paying fee by the students of the drought affected area. Usual practice is to charge 91 rupees in place of 9 rupees as tuition fee which is kind of a robbery.

Cold drink companies are selling drinks with poisonous preservatives like Linden, Chloro-pyrafos, Malatheon, DDT and Hepnotoyer. They are minting money through sale proceeds. CEOs of these company are getting more than 100 crore rupees as their annual salaries. We can imagine the discrimination and disparity when we find the labourers receiving only 100 rupees per day for 7 hours of hard work and women only 120 rupees per day.

The students attending the seminar were puzzled and asked, "Is there any solution to this problem?" It was explained to them that only Prout has the solution in the form of AMIIRII REKHA.

PBI Office in Palsagora

PBI Office (MLA Constituency Kantamal-Odisha) was inaugurated at Palsagora by Aditya Pradhan and Jayanta Meher. The office will function for promoting the socio-economic-political progress of the local people on the Proutistic Model. Hrusikesh Tripathy, as the chief guest and Sankarsan Baghar chief speaker attended the programme. They appreciated the Proutists' work and wished them bright future.

Haryana Organises PBI Cadre Training Programme



On 11 January, 2016 Faridabad unit of Proutist Bloc, India held a cadre training programme at Adarsh International School, in Ujina, Mewat District, Haryana with Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta and Rajesh Singh as the trainers. Enthusiastic trainees participated in the programme from 1 pm to 5 pm, learning about the Proutistic solutions to the various problems of the country and the world.

Rajesh Singh spoke on the need for a Proutistic government. Using the latest data and facts he showed how the present capitalistic economic system is exploiting the masses and leading the country to a bleak future.

Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta said that a theory may be very good, but unless one works rigorously to materialize it, the world will not be benefited. He called upon the cadres to work with a missionary zeal to uproot the present inhuman socio-political and economic system.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Subhash Chand Tyagi, Chairman, PBI, who was also the main organizer of the programme. Raju Singh and Yuvrajji worked very hard to make this programme a success.

PBI Cadre Training Programme



On 19-20 December, 2015 Bihar unit of PBI held a two day long cadre training programme in Patna, which was attended by good number of PBI cadres from Patna, Hajipur, Supaul, Madhepura, Sivan, Gaya, Sasaram and Sitamadhi. Besides a large number of

students were also present to learn about Prout and its practical implementation.

The programme started with the lighting of the lamps and garlanding of the photograph of Shri Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, the propounder of PROUT and the founder of Proutist Bloc, India. It was followed by a welcome speech by Shiv Narayan, the Chairman of Bihar state committee of PBI. Besides welcoming the participants, he spoke about the need and importance of the such programmes. He expressed the hope that the two day long training camp will accelerate the expansion of the party in the state.

The trainers for the first day were Acharya Kisan Sood, Dr. A.K. Bhaskar, Engineer Suresh and Arjun Narayan Chaudhary. Acharya Kisan Sood spoke on the salient features of Prout philosophy which make it superior to capitalism and communism. He discussed how Prout is relevant to the present day world. He spoke at length about the kind of the world envisaged by Prout. Dr. A K Bhaskar spoke critically about the various strategies PBI as a political party should consider and adopt to present itself as an alternative to the existing political parties.

Engineer Suresh dwelt on what can be learnt from the contemporary social and political movements from all over the world, and how proutistic movements are more universal in spirit despite being local in impact. He said that youths and particularly the students are life blood of any movement and, therefore, need to be approached before any other section of the society. Arjun Narayan Chaudhary, a senior proutist, poet and writer, spoke on how different pseudo-revolutionaries are creating confusions in society and preventing the real revolution and delaying the change.

On the second and the last day of the programme, party convenor Acharya Santosananda Avadhuta spoke on the need of moral leadership for the implementation of Prout. He said that without moralist leadership no theory, however good it may be, can see the light of the day. Party general secretary, Rajesh Singh spoke on three-tier economy of Prout and how its implementation can solve the existing problems of the country. The first session of the second day ended with a power point presentation on Amiri Rekha by party's public relations secretary Ravindra Singh, who told that implementation of Amiri Rekha i.e. ceiling on wealth can solve the problems of poverty, unemployment, corruption, economic depression etc. The programme ended with the resolution to expand the base of the party in Bihar by forming committees in every district of the state within three months.

Proutists hold classes on Prout

The five day Prout Cadre Training programme was conducted at Krishnanagar (Nadia District of West Bengal) . More than 300 students youth and Proutists attended the camp.

The classes were given by well known Proutists like Dhyanesanandajii, Trayambakeshvaranandajii, Raviishanandajii, Prasunanandajii, Tanmayanandajii and Satyasvarupanandajii. Secretary General of Proutist Universal, Acharya Kalyaneshvarananda Avadhuta also addressed the gathering. Dr. Bhaskar Jena (from Baleshvar-Odisha) and Bakul Roy (General Secretary, Amra Bangali) were the other speakers who acquainted the gathering with the specialities of Prout

An impressive procession was also taken out on the occasion. A Street play with the theme "Mukta Bhumir Meye" (Daughters of free land) composed by Ac. Tanmayananda Avadhuta was also successfully staged by "Lavanya" theater group from Kolkata.



Golden Jubilee of Women's Welfare Department



Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar established the Women's Welfare Department of Ananda Marga on the 23rd May, 1965, in Patna, India. It aims to promote the all round well being of women and encourage leadership, as its management is exclusively female. While imprisoned for propagating the PROUT movement, Shrii Shrii Anandamurti said, "WWD is a part of Ananda Marga. It is a department set up for the poor and neglected women of the world. You should do service to these women."

As 2015 was the 50th anniversary of this auspicious mission, all sisters and whole-time workers of WWD were invited to an open global meet to commemorate this great moment. Approximately 450-500 delegates from all over the globe congregated at Ananda nagar, West Bengal, the global headquarter of WWD, to mark this great event.

During the program, 150 shawls were distributed to impoverished local villagers to help them prepare for the cooler temperatures of winter.

The following workshops took place during the Jubilee program:

Women's well-being

- o Natural Treatment and Prevention of Breast Cancer : Didi Ananda Rucira
- o Homeopathy for Children: Radha, Ratisha

Awakening our spiritual potential

- o Deepening your Spiritual Practice: Didi Ananda Vibha
- o Experiences with Baba: Didi Ananda Karuna and Didi Ananda Giita

Women's role in social change (leadership skills, tapping our full potential, historical women)

- o Leadership skills in the 21st Century: Laksmii

Finding our voices through artistic expression (interactive workshops on dance, music, theater, film, painting etc)

- o Science and Bliss of Kiirtan: Jyotsna
- o Diving into the Beauty of Prabhat Samgiita: Didi Ananda Abhiisha

Educating for a Neo-humanist future

- o Growing up in Children's Homes: addressing the Special Needs and Spiritual Needs of our Children: Didi Ananda Devapriya, Didi Ananda Kalika
- o Neohumanist Education: Didi Ananda Rama

Creating dynamic social service to meet local needs (designing projects, social businesses)

- o Addressing the challenges of School Principals in Delhi Sector: Malati
- o Increasing the economic self-sustainability of our projects: Didi Ananda Rucira, Didi Ananda Devapriya
- o Setting up disaster relief programs: Didi Ananda Prama, Didi Ananda Utama

The workshops were well attended and well presented. At the conclusion of the program, a rally was organized in the nearby town, with over 250 participants and it was incredibly powerful and empowering.



DRIVE US FORWARD!

Je path dhariyá caliyá chilo prabhu.
Jata tapas more se pathe cálaó áj
Áloke udbháśita satye unmocita
Se path dhariyá cale jábo tyáji láj
Jata tápas more se pathe cálaó áj.

Thákuk shata upal thákuk jata kántá
Joyáre bahiyá jábo mánibo ná bhántá
Tomári rashmi páte tomári bháver shrote
Bhese jábo se je jeman parábe sáj.
Jata tápas more se pathe cálaó áj.

Tomár pathe prabhu náhiko kono bhaya
Karuná kańá dio ei shudhu anunaya
Kete jábe jata moha kete jábe samshay
Drirha pade jábo kariyá tomár káj
Jata tápas more se pathe cálaó áj.
Je path dhariyá caliyá chilo prabhu.
Jata tápas more se pathe cálaó áj

That path of austerities (tapas)
That You, my Lord followed
Drive me forward on it today.
Flooded with effulgence
Set free by Truth (Satya)
That path I shall follow
Casting away fear and shyness.
That path of austerities (tapas)
Drive me forward on it today.

Let there be hundreds of rocks
Let there be many, many thorns
I shall be swept away in the floodtide
Not paying heed to the ebb tide.
Upon Thy silken path.
In the flow of Your Bháva
I shall go on floating.
In that, I am becoming adorned.
That path of austerities (tapas)
Drive me forward on it today.

Upon Your path Lord there is not any fear
Just please give me a wee bit of grace
This is my only entreaty.
All the delusions and doubts
Shall be torn away.
With firm, determined feet
I shall go on doing Your work.
That path of austerities (tapas)
That the Lord followed
Drive me forward on it today.

With best compliments from



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