

# PR OUT

A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis

## LAND OPPRESSION

# TERRA FIRMA

## The Assault on Land Rights

For years, farmers, peasants, fisherman, local artisans and all those actors in communities who depend on the land for their livelihood and survival are facing serious issues in the realm of compensation, resettlement and rehabilitation and most importantly, in the arena of ownership and their continued existence.



# Birth Anniversary of PROUT's Founder Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar Celebrated



On May 4, on the Full Moon of Indian month Vaishakh, the Preceptor of PROUT, Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar took birth. To honour this joyous day, people from all parts of Delhi and NCR assembled at PROUT Bhavan, Malviyanagar, New Delhi to celebrate this auspicious occasion which included 12 hours of Kiirtana (singing the Lord's Name). The programme began with the reading of a very befitting Ananda Vanii (message) of Shrii Sarkar, reminding all moralists to remain vigilant at all times to keep watch on the forces of vice, exploitation and imperialism at all times while preparing humanity to overthrow them.

Thereafter there followed collective meditation preceded by a birthday song each by Sundaram and Avadhutika Kiirtilekha Acarya. And then the vibrant 12hrs kiirtan started which ended at quarter to seven in the evening. Acarya Santosananda Avadhuta and Acarya Vandanananda Avadhuta spoke on the multi-faceted personality of Sh. Sarkar. All the participants thereafter enjoyed delicious dinner collectively.

Hundreds of needy persons in surrounding areas were served sherbet and then a meal on this festive occasion.

Among the volunteers responsible for the success of the programme were Hari Biswas, Pranav Koul, Ashok Deo, Rajesh Singh, Amit ji, Trilok ji, Hanumanji, Rajiv Singh, Ravi Singh, Arti Didi, Gyanendra Dev, Bibhanshu Maity, Divyendu Dev, Sujit Singh, Tarak, Piyush, Tarun and many more.



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**Rate (INDIA)**

|                          |   |          |
|--------------------------|---|----------|
| Newstand Price           | - | ₹ 25/-   |
| Annual Subscription      | - | ₹ 275/-  |
| Two Years Subscription   | - | ₹ 520/-  |
| Three Years Subscription | - | ₹ 730/-  |
| Five Years Subscription  | - | ₹ 1100/- |
| Ten Years Subscription   | - | ₹ 1800/- |

**Overseas (BY AIRMAIL)**

Annual - US\$ 45

**Overseas (By Paypal)**

US - US\$ 45

Others - US\$ 50

Payments in India may be made  
by cheque favouring

**Neo-Humanist Education Foundation**

mailed to Acarya Santosananda Avadhuta,  
JC-48, Khirkki Extension, Main Road, Malviya  
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For outstation remittance from non  
computerized banks/branches add

Rs 30.00 for bank clearance charges.

Or amounts may be deposited directly  
to any branch of the State Bank of India  
as per details below:

**Neo-Humanist Education Foundation**

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C-30 Malviya Nagar,

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A/C No. 30379188250

IFSC SBIN0001493

Overseas remittances may be made by Paypal  
using id [prout.am@gmail.com](mailto:prout.am@gmail.com)

or electronic bank transfer referring above  
details and **Swift Code SBININBB382**

**Printed, Published and Edited**

by A'carya Santosananda Avadhuta

on behalf of Neo Humanist Education Foundation

JC-48, Khirkki Extension, Main Road,

Malviya Nagar, New Delhi - 110017

and printed at Cyber Creations,

JE-9, Khirkki Extension,

Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-17

Online link <http://www.proutjournal.co.in>

**INSIDE**

June 2015

16

**COVER STORY****LAND OPPRESSION****Terra Firma:  
The Assault on Land Rights****contents****08 EFFECTIVE COOPERATIVES**

Birthing Economic Freedom with Farmers Cooperatives

**11 PROUTIST ECONOMY**

3rd Principle of Proutist Economic Democracy - Part I

**13 THE GUIDE**

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar : The Mahasadvipra

**22 SOCIAL REVOLUTION**

Tactics for Successful Revolutions

**29 CIVILIZATIONAL**

Prison Destroys Families and Communities

**38 URBAN POVERTY**

Multidimensional Poverty in Pune

**43 TRIBALS RIGHTS**Indigenous People Protest Brazilian Bill's  
Violation of Land Rights

22



29

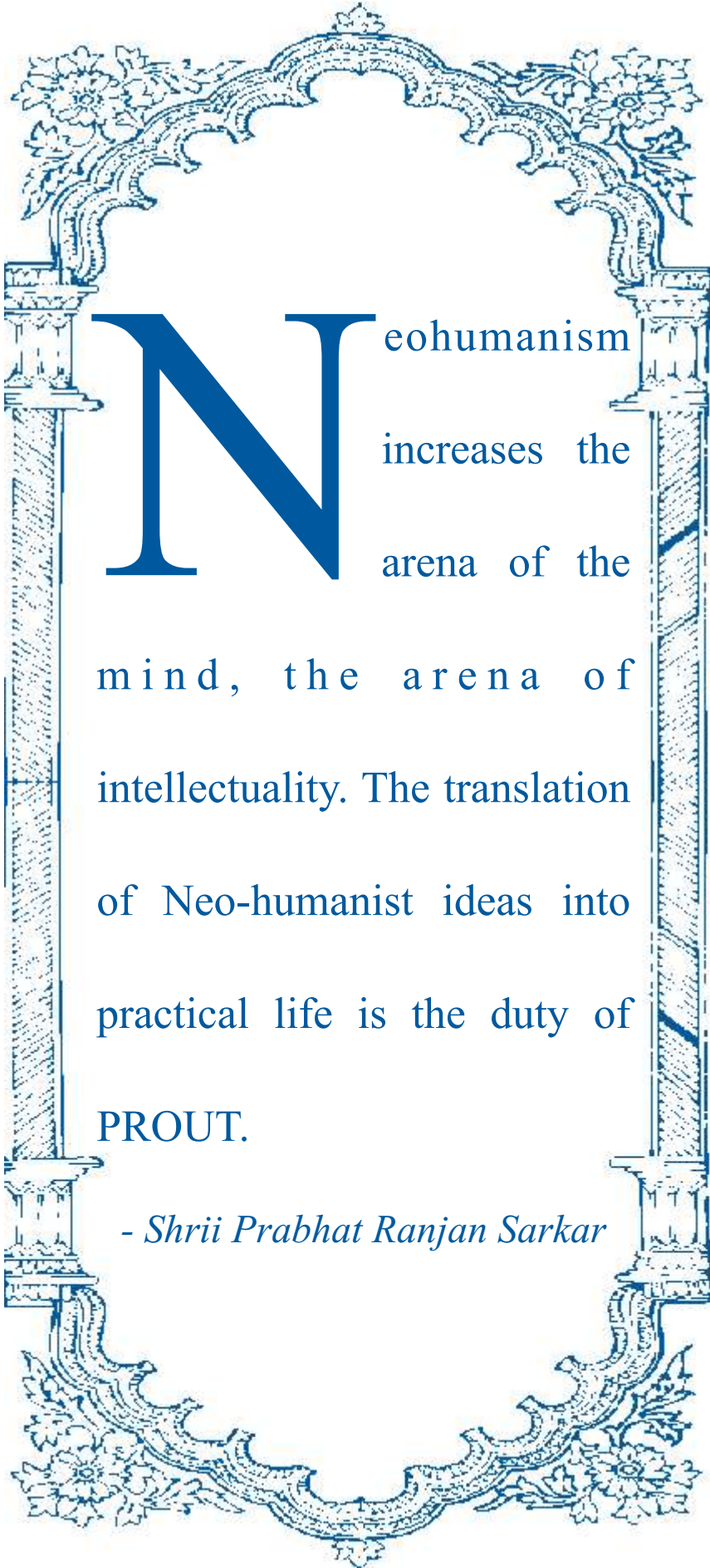
**regulars****05 EDITORIAL****06 LETTERS****07 INSPIRATIONAL****48 ACTIVITIES****For Enquiries  
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## Fundamental Principles :

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.



Neohumanism increases the arena of the mind, the arena of intellectuality. The translation of Neo-humanist ideas into practical life is the duty of PROUT.

*- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar*

# The Only Moon

This year the solemn occasion of Anandapurnima PROUT's founder Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's birthday passed us by on the 4th of May - day of the full moon in the month of Vaisakh, the first month of the Saka calendar roughly covering the period mid April to mid May. Shrii Shrii Anandamurti for that was his spiritual name meaning 'He who attracts others as the embodiment of bliss' was affectionately called Baba (father) – the most beloved one, by his followers. Much has been written and said about the greatness of this renowned spiritualist, philosopher and poet, whose mission to uplift suffering humanity continues to thrive despite great struggles. This has mainly been due to his strong and fiercely uncompromising ideology he has left behind for his disciples to propagate to see human society through its worst crisis now, at the cross roads of its 15000 years of civilisational existence. Those who followed his teachings found their lives transformed as they overcame the weakness and negative tendencies of the mind and experienced a deep peace and bliss within. Inspired by his self-less example, they turned their energies to serving the society and elevating the oppressed. In 1955, while leading a normal family life as a railway official, he formed the organization Ananda Marga 'The Path of Bliss', and began training missionary monks and nuns to spread his teachings of 'self-realisation and service to humanity' all over India and later throughout the world. Reflecting the broadness of his universal vision, Ananda Marga has become a multi-faceted organization with different branches dedicated to the upliftment of humanity through education, relief, welfare, the arts, ecology, intellectual renaissance, women's emancipation, and humanistic economy of PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory) for the collective welfare of the entire society that would provide maximum utilisation and rational distribution of all resources and potentialities of the world physical, mental and spiritual and the creation of a new, humanistic social order of harmony and justice for all.

He had many traits foremost among them was his concern for the poor and suffering humanity, even when young. After his father passed away, to help his mother he would go and buy groceries and vegetables for the house. Sensing their poverty he never bargained with the vendors and paid whatever they asked and at times more. His mother forbade him from shopping again. Still, before starting 'Ananda Marga' he went to seek his mother's consent. She blessed him but couldn't help remarking with a smile that how one who couldn't perform satisfactorily the simple expedient of shopping for home could run a Mission and advised him to improve. Rest as they say is history with Ananda Marga established in 180 countries with over four million members, has become a powerful force for global social change. A spiritual guru unlike any before him in the ancient land of India, he was as much a spiritual guru social as a revolutionary. He did not allow his disciples to only enjoy his own company or the bliss of spiritual realisation while meditating. He deployed them on tasks for social change, and allowed nothing to distract them from that sacred mission, not even their real fascination with his own persona. When arrested in 1971 on false charges and jailed for seven years people often asked him when he would come out. His characteristic reply was, "If you want to see me, do my Mission because I am merged with my Mission". The life he led was verily a reflection of that ideology as reflected by his words, "Ananda Marga is a revolution. It is not only a spiritual revolution but also an economic, social and mental revolution. The economic system, the social structure, the trend of thinking and the spiritual practices prescribed in our Ananda Marga are not only new but something quite different from the established ideas and practices in these spheres of life. Ananda Marga is not a change merely due to the cycle of time but a revolution, a radical change – in the true sense. Never before in the entire history of this world or the universe, if it could be known to mortals, has a system of life fully embracing the economic, social, mental and spiritual spheres ever been correlated in such closely knit society as in Ananda Marga. In Ananda Marga, a sannyāsii (renunciant) is as good a member of society as an ordinary family person earning his or her own living and maintaining his or her family. In our Marga there are no separate classes. Our Marga has eradicated the age-old system of classifying human beings according to their trade or even capacity".

The revolutionary character is evident from the way it tackles one of the oldest vices of human beings, the vice of dividing themselves into classes for their own benefit. The organisation founded by Him is not merely an organisation of idealists or moralists who preach a classless society, but a method, a system or a dharma which leads towards a classless society where everyone has to work for a living, in which a balanced and dependable economic life is important, and where everyone has to physically serve others. In short, all the characteristics of the four classes viz. labour, warrior, intellectual and business, must be mastered by all. A concept that is truly revolutionary concept of life altogether different one that makes life a reality. It teaches adjustment to life, rather than giving up the world by leading a life of useless seclusion. It creates people who are fit for every walk of life, who do not make any distinction among their fellow beings, and who are joined together as one world community. In our Ananda Marga all humanity, nay, all living beings (jiiva matra tare) have combined together in every walk of life".

Since his divine birth on planet Earth 93 years ago in Jamalpur, a small town in the state of Bihar in India Much has been written and said about Him and many moons have come and gone but for me there can be only one Moon and that is Baba, which even in its faint crescent state, lights up the world in the darkest of night.



**DYNAMICS OF ECONOMIC DEPRESSION**

Depression in society is so common in today's collapsing civilization that it is virtually of epidemic proportions. Shrii PR Sarkar's has explained the reasons for the current Global Economic Depression which is equally if not more dangerous. All this is caused due to the capitalistic system of concentration of wealth in the hands of individuals, their greed and profit at all costs. It's high time all this changes.

**Christopher Mulberry,  
Utah USA by email**

**PRINCIPLES OF PROUTIST ECONOMY**

I really look forward to the principles of Economic Democracy and the explanations given to help us understand them better.

**Sagar Malhotra, Mumbai**

**HEALING HUMAN HEARTS**

Ravi Logan's article on causes of human suffering and how to alleviate them is very good. He has

explained clearly how materialism is the bane of human suffering and how balance could be restored.

**Nina Sarpotdar, Belgaum**

**POLITICS OF MORALITY**

Arun Praksh's article was short and sweet and explains clearly the history behind corrupt politicians and how democratic institutions can never cure it.

**Niloufer Shami, Bhopal**

**SUPPRESSION IN BASTAR**

Very pathetic indeed, the plight of the tribals in Bastar. As usual in a cross fire between the rebels and the state it's the poor who suffer.

**Mary Soureng, Bilaspur**

**TETANUS VACCINES**

Mike Adam's expose is an eye opener. It is shocking to what extent such depravity thrives in capitalistic thought.

**John Hangman,  
Nairobi by email**

**CHILD LABOUR JHARKHAND**

When 1 lakh children are made to slave in illegal mines when they should be in school studying what can one say except enough is enough – the time for action has arrived. Despite laws in place to guard against such eventualities, nothing seems to be done for enforcing them.

**Namita Ghoshal, Hughli**

**CREATING SUCCESSFUL REVOLUTIONS**

A very inspiring piece by Joost Van Steenis. Students of history and sociology and those who wish to bring about real social transformation must pay heed.

**Sher Singh, Nabha**

**NEWS ITEMS**

I really like the Prout News Items at the end of the magazine. They give details about actual work being carried out at the ground level. Prout should have more of real time news and less of scholarly articles.

**Shamistha Sen, Nagpur**



## A PAIR OF GOLDEN BANGLES



There are hilly woods dense and deep near Jamalpur a town in Bihar India quite close the tall stalks of withering 'Kaash' which when the sun would go down would burst into scarlet flames. And at night with the moon smiling from the sky and sending down enchanting waves and waves of bliss unknown, the night would stop still and the magic would never seem to end. The most famous and mysterious place in those hills was Death Valley so dense that even by day it was dark and foreboding said to be haunted by ghosts of British soldiers who had accidentally fallen into it.

Such were the forests teeming with tigers, bears and other animals, birds and insects, that after a while one got to love them as they became a part of one's existence. It was near these forests that a young lad grew up named as one who paints the dawn. No ordinary one, this lad was born seven years after his sister. In between two more were born, a brother died at birth and a sister at two. Tiger Tiger burning bright, the entire forest erupts in fear. The forests of Death Valley were no exception but not so for this young lad who feared nothing. Even at the tender age of seven was seen riding one of them by a few of his friends. But this is not a tale about the unusual talents of this lad. This is a story of his love and affection for his elder sister and more importantly how one should keep one's word.

That sister was seven years his elder, she too loved him very much. They had a unique relationship right from his young days. She being older and supposedly more practical could not for the life of her understand why his brother would idle away for hours, a distant look in his eyes. When time came for her to get married and leave her home she was distraught. She also felt somewhat wanting because she did not have a decent pair of gold bangles. The lad then promised, "Don't worry Didi I'll buy one for you". She was touched and admired the sentiment but felt the impossibility of it all, as her brother was still studying. She smiled thanked him got married and left for her husband's place.

Years passed she forgot all about her young brother's promise. But the brother did not. He grew up got a job and after his father's death became literally the man of the house. Many more years passed, by then even her sister's daughter got married and the ceremony was also attended by her special brother, just before he was all set to leave the place of his birth to accelerate the growth of the organisation he had formed with his mother's blessings that grew worldwide. All this while, the young lad never forgot his promise. He kept on saving money, until one day he had enough to buy a pair of gold bangles. No sooner than he did he presented them to his elder sister.

One needs to be very careful about what one says, for words out of the mouth are like bullets fired from a gun. They can never be taken back. We all make promises easily but seldom keep or are able to keep them. It does not matter how long it takes as long as one does. Also in this credit card crazy world it is better to save and buy than buy and be in debt.

*Arun Prakash*



# BIRTHING ECONOMIC FREEDOM WITH FARMERS COOPERATIVES

SHRII PRABHAT RANJAN SARKAR

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Cooperatives have existed for centuries but have failed to create an independent economy. The Anarchist cooperatives created during the Spanish Civil War moved towards a cooperative commonwealth but failed due lack of clear goals and planning. In this article for the first time the pathway to a new economy emerges.

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Providing food, clothing, housing, education and medical treatment is most important for social security. These five minimum requirements are indispensable to raise the living standard of the people. To guarantee these, the principle of production based on consumption has to be adopted. Special emphasis should be placed on agricultural production because the provision of food is of vital importance, and for this the cooperative system should be rapidly expanded.

According to PROUT, too many people should not be engaged in agriculture. Rather, a

major part of the population should depend on industry. Not more than thirty to forty-five percent of the population should be employed in the agricultural sector.

Land is usually divided into economic holdings and uneconomic holdings, according to productivity. Economic holdings are those where the market price of the produce will exceed the cost of production including capital, labour and machinery. Lands which produce economically viable agricultural wealth – that is, where output exceeds input – are called “economic holdings”.

Uneconomic holdings are those where the market price of the produce is less than the cost of

production after including the costs of all the inputs. As uneconomic holdings are not profitable, the landowners usually refrain from producing any crops. In the rural economy of a country such as India, if a village is accepted as a production unit, then there may be many plots of land in a village which are not used for producing crops because they are uneconomical.

While implementing PROUT, the question of agrarian revolution will automatically arise. As I have already said, agricultural land should be brought under cooperative management, but the



cooperative system should be introduced in two stages. In the first phase of the socialization of land, PROUT will not raise the demand for land ceilings, but the sale of agricultural land will be prohibited and uneconomic landholdings will be brought under cooperative management. The responsibility for cultivating this land will not lie with the landowners but with the cooperatives under the aegis of the immediate [local] government, and with its assistance.

The landowners of the uneconomic landholdings in each village will become the members of the cooperatives in this phase. Thus, cooperatives will only consist of those who merged their land together to make uneconomic landholdings economic. The landowners will give their land, and in this phase they will remain the owners of the land. In cases where the landowners employ labour for cultivation, fifty percent of the net profit will go to the landowners and fifty percent to the labourers who work in the cooperatives.

In this phase, the rivers and streams in a village should be harnessed for the collective welfare. For instance, by constructing embankments and small dams on the rivers, large-scale irrigation, electricity generation, and industries based on local needs should be established.

The first steps must also be taken to alleviate the population pressure on land. An increasing percent of the rural population will have to be employed in industry by establishing agro-industries and agro-industries. There should be provision for the preservation of crops by building stores and cold-stores under the control of local administrative



boards. The cooperatives should be supplied with tractors, manure, seeds, water pumps and other farming equipment through producers cooperatives. Consumers cooperatives will supply the commodities necessary for daily consumption to the rural population.

In the very first phase of establishing cooperatives, agricultural labourers, landless labourers, day labourers and sharecroppers will come within the scope of cooperatives. From this phase, the education system in rural areas should be thoroughly reformed. To arouse the cooperative spirit among the people, there should be extensive training and education, but moral education must take precedence over everything else so that people do not give greater importance to individual interests at the expense of the collective interest.

In the second phase of implementing agricultural cooperatives, the economic holdings of the landowners should be brought under cooperative management. Only after all the uneconomic holdings in a village are brought within the scope of cooperatives should the economic holdings be brought under cooperative management. In this phase it will be easy to apply science and

technology extensively in agriculture, increasing the amount of production.

In this second phase, all should be encouraged to join the cooperative system. The net profit will be increased in favour of the labourers working in the cooperatives so that twenty-five percent of the net profit will go to the landowners and seventy-five percent to the labourers. Here labourers means those who employ either their physical or psychic labour in the cooperative. The landowners will benefit in two ways. First, as landowners, they will get twenty-five percent of the net profit of the produce from the land, and secondly, if they are part of the cooperative labour force, they will be entitled to a portion of the seventy-five percent of the profit distributed among the cooperative members.

In this phase, there must be emphasis on the rapid and large-scale establishment of agro-industries and agro-industries so that the rural population will be dependent more on industry than on agriculture. With the development of such industries, there should be simultaneous

emphasis on educational and cultural reforms to further develop the cooperative mentality of the rural population.

From this second phase, production for consumption will increase the standard of living of the rural population, and the basic criteria of social security – that is, the minimum requirements of life – must be arranged for the people.

In the third phase, there should be rational distribution of land and redetermination of ownership. The rational distribution of land will depend on two factors – the minimum holding of land necessary to maintain a family, and the capacity of the farmer to utilize the land. In this phase, the landowners will not be able to employ individual labourers, landless labourers or sharecroppers for the cultivation of land, so it will be more beneficial for them to participate fully in the cooperative system.

In this phase, it will be easy to establish big cooperatives with the extensive application of science, but these cooperatives will not be anything like the huge

collective farms of the Soviet Union or China. If cooperatives are allowed to become extremely large, it will be difficult to utilize natural resources efficiently and this will lead to complications in the sphere of production. One of the main defects of the collective farms in socialist countries is their unmanageable size.

In PROUT, the farmers cooperatives themselves will determine the size of the cooperatives. But while building up the cooperative system, two factors should be kept in mind – first, the high quantity and quality of production should be ensured through the application of science and technology while keeping production costs at a minimum; and secondly, the cooperative members must be encouraged to attain maximum psychic and spiritual development at their highest level in exchange for their minimum physical labour.

In the third phase of implementing the cooperative system, one hundred percent of the net profit will be distributed among the cooperative members. The former landowners will identify fully with the cooperatives in this

phase.

Through these three phases it will be possible to reduce the excessive population pressure on land and to engage thirty to forty-five percent of the population in agriculture. In the second phase, the problem of unemployment will be tackled through the large-scale establishment of industry, and by the third phase there will be no unemployment problems for the agricultural labourers. By the end of the third phase, the rural sector will be freed from the vexing problems of agricultural and industrial production, unemployment and social security.

In the fourth phase of implementing the cooperative system, there will be no conflict over the ownership of land. The agrarian problems of every village will be solved. All the social security arrangements concerned with food, clothing, housing, education and medical treatment will be easily provided to the people. In this phase it will be possible to make the maximum utilization of the collective physical, psychic and spiritual wealth of every village.

For the total implementation of the cooperative system, there must be proper psychic preparation through internal urge and external pressure, adjusting with the time factor, because people will never accept a system which is forcibly imposed on them. Such a change in the collective psychology will not occur overnight, but will depend on the sentiment of the people.

The time period from the first phase to the fourth phase of the implementation of the cooperative system can be called the transitional period for the implementation of PROUT.





### 3rd Principle of Proutist Economic Democracy - Part I

**T**he third requirement for economic democracy is that all the resources in a socio-economic unit should be controlled by the local people. In particular, the resources which are required to produce the minimum requirements must be in local hands, and all the industries based on these resources will have to be controlled entirely by the local people. Local raw materials must be fully utilized to produce all kinds of commodities necessary for the economic development of a socio-economic unit. Economic liberation is the birthright of every individual. To achieve it, economic power must be vested in the local people. In economic democracy the local people will have the power to make all economic decisions, to produce commodities on the basis of collective necessity, and to distribute all agricultural and industrial commodities.

Local people are those who have merged their individual socio-economic interests with the socio-economic interests of the socio-economic unit they live in. Clearly, this concept of local people has nothing to do with physical complexion, race, caste, creed, language or birth place. The fundamental issue is whether or not each person or family has identified their individual socio-economic interests with the collective interests of the concerned socio-economic unit. Those who have not done so should be branded as outsiders. No outsider should be allowed to interfere in local economic affairs or in the system of production and distribution; otherwise a floating population will develop, causing the outflow of economic wealth from the local area. If this occurs the area will become vulnerable to outside economic exploitation and decentralized economy will be undermined.

Commentary: We have seen that the minimum necessities of life must be given to the people and this requires a new vision of what an economy and what a society should be like. We have further seen that this should be done by increasing the purchasing power of the people through proper employment and that this necessitates the creation of a local economy based on the industrialization of local resources. This brings to the key issue that is explored in this principle and that is the control over the economy in any community must be in the hands of the local people alone.

Why is this so important? It is crucial because only then will the local resources be used for the consumption and development of the local area. And it is this alone that will bring economic liberty, equality and fraternity into people's lives. The rich know the joy of economic freedom but their joy is poisoned because their freedom is based on the economic slavery of the fellow citizens of their community. When people do not have to worry about their basic needs and more importantly when they are not getting handouts but are involved and collectively in control over their own economy, then their lives have meaning and purpose beyond earning enough to survive or earning to pay for the schooling of the children and meet their needs after retirement. In the present Depression even those who are able to get jobs get such low paying jobs that they have to work two jobs. Begging all day long is the lot of those who cannot get employment. This is not natural. In the past people thought it was natural that they should be slaves and that dukes, knights and zamindars (feudal landlords) should control what they say and what they do. Now people realize that political slavery is unnatural. Through this Global Economic Depression the same realization is being forced upon countless people all over the world. But ending economic slavery is not the core issue. The core issue is svaraja or the dominion of the local people over their local economy. People must learn to fight for economic freedom just like they fought for the political freedom of their community. This is the second freedom struggle that will create a holistic democracy based on morality and Neohumanistic (socio-spiritual brotherly and sisterly) love.

And while we are talking about this kind of love, we must be clear that we are not supporting narrow xenophobia or hatred of outsiders. Those who have merged their lives in the local community are genuine local citizens. Someone may be born in a community but he may be spending his money outside the community. Hence he is involved in the debasement of the local economy and is an outsider or someone inimical to the local community. On the other hand an immigrant born elsewhere who has learned the local language and culture and added the noble aspects of his/her own culture (while preserving the birth language and culture in their family life) is to be considered as a local person if they invest all their money and labour in the local community. Someone who demonstrates love for the local region (by learning and developing the local culture and devoting one's labour and wealth to the local economy) is the criteria of a local person.

In the area of trade, state (bioregional or samaja) governments must have the right to take action against those involved in black marketeering, speculation, adulteration, illegal misappropriation and the creation of artificial scarcity, but broad-based autonomous bodies (such as district boards or municipal corporations) should also have sufficient power to act. This is because if ordinary people want to take action against a local offender they may have to register their complaint with an individual police officer, then with the police station, then with the sub-divisional administration and finally with the district administration, the entire process taking about six or nine months, and when they reach the state capital, they learn that such matters come under the jurisdiction of the central government and not the state government. This type of situation is certainly not desirable. The state government must have the right to pass and enforce anti-corruption laws.

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Now we have to face the idea of the outsiders. One basic principle of political democracy is that foreign dukes, royalty, or other powerful people have no right to interfere in the politics of one's homeland. This is the foundation of political patriotism. Similarly the foundation of economic patriotism lies in the determination that no outsider capitalist, corporation or capitalist empire has the right to economically interfere, control and enslave the people and the communities of one's homeland. Those who refuse to accept this principle are traitors, no matter how much they wrap themselves up in the flag. The real patriots are those who fight to protect the government and the economy of their homeland from outside control. And while we are talking about homeland we should make absolutely clear that the foremost loyalty lies at the local level. No district should exploit another district; neither should one block (sub-district) exploit another block. And at the bioregional level, that is called samaja in PROUT, there should be complete socio-economic, cultural and ecological independence and self-reliance. We also have to clearly state that even those who were born and live in a locality but who are hoarding property and wealth are in fact "outside exploiters". This is because they are a threat to the economic freedom and prosperity of the local community. As per PROUT all property is the common inheritance of all people and no one has any right but to temporarily use their fair share of it. This is why an aphorism of PROUT clearly states:

***"Samaja deshena vina dhanasain cayah akartavyah.***

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

Purport: The universe is the collective property of all. All people have usufructuary rights but no one has the right to misuse this collective property. If a person acquires and accumulates excessive wealth, he or she directly curtails the happiness and convenience of others in society. Such behaviour is flagrantly antisocial. Therefore, no one should be allowed to accumulate wealth without the permission of society."

# Lord's Advent

Dadhici Acarya Abedhananda Avadhuta

When the dark vicious clouds thunder in the sky,  
The lightning gives her dreadful flash.

When mankind is torn into pieces  
The Great One comes with all His dash.

Then the Great One comes  
With all His arms

The Great One has come  
And all dull moments are gone.

The welkin is crimson coloured  
And the battle is won.

Rending through the wind  
Comes His new song;

In hours of awakening  
One cannot sleep long.

All through plain, hills and dales  
His trumpets are sounding.

Wakeful hour has arrived  
Full of action are the surroundings.

He is calling one and all  
No distinction of high and low.

He gives constant warning,  
"Time is short, don't be slow."

Riding on a glorious chariot  
The Lord has come to bless

All must arise and awake  
And receive His divine Grace.

Men and women, young and old  
All are rushing into His fold.

The Glorious One reckons all  
And sends forth His clarion Call.

"Injustice: He will not forget  
Discrimination: He will not tolerate.

Exploitation: He cannot endure  
Destruction of vice is indeed sure.

The Great One has come on a fleeting  
Chariot of revolution.

For destruction of vices and virtue's  
preservation.

# Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar: The Mahasadvipra



Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, propounder of epoch making philosophy Progressive Utilization Theory (PROUT), has said "He doesn't want to create followers. Instead He will create only leaders". In reality He strived every breath of His physical existence grooming personalities who can give the society an effective leadership. He is the Mahasadvipra, the father of future leaders. Just a glimpse into an unique aspect of His towering personality in this essay.



✱ Acarya Santosananda Avadhuta

The Preceptor of PROUT, Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar was not just the philosophical creator of the new ideal of a revolutionary leader, namely the sadvipra, He was not just a leader, nor just a creator of leaders – He was the creator of great drama in human society on this planet that will serve as an inexhaustible treasure of inspiration for generations to come. It is due to realizing this fundamental truth that so many lovingly address Him as “Baba” [Beloved Father] and revere Him as Shrii Shrii Anandamurti. I would like to briefly highlight how Baba nurtured leaders in society.

Baba wanted us to work with full confidence – without oscillating between an inferiority and an inferiority complex. This Samata’ Bha’va [essential state of being rooted in social equality] is the greatest quality of a worker for suffering humanity.

On one occasion I was sitting with some disciples in the Jamalpur Jagriti (hermitage). One disciple

said, “Baba General Cariappa [a popular retired post-independence first commander-in-chief of the Indian Army] has come to Patna and he is a strong moral person. He addressed a public meeting in Gandhi Maidan [ground]. He has exhorted people to fight against immoralists in government.” He further said, Baba! if General Cariappa joins Ananda Marga [spiritual organization of Baba], then the speed of progress of Ananda Marga (an ideology propounded by Him) will increase rapidly.

Baba replied, “Get him [pointing to the disciple] out of My room because he has such a strong inferiority complex. He thinks that if Cariappa joins, the speed of the organization will increase and Ananda Marga will become popular. Never have any inferiority complex like this. When you work for the Marga you are representing Me. Parama Purusa [the Supreme Being] is working through you. So you are capable of doing any great feat on this Earth. Shun all complexes like

this. Only think that you are working as the child of Parama Purusa.”

If I ever had any such complexes – from that day forward, Baba removed it.

Baba used to steadily inspire with messages when I was later a student at Patna University. I was elected head of the UPSF (Universal Proutist Student Federation). Whenever anyone from Patna visited Baba in Jamalpur, Baba always used to send a message to me. After the election, Baba was very happy and sent a message, “Tell him that when he goes for pracar (ideological propagation), he should take a few students with him. Preferably he should not go alone. Those students may not speak, and he may be the only speaker, but the company of the others will increase his mental strength.”

Once Dr Ramesh, then working in Patna General Hospital, visited Jamalpur. Baba sent the message that we should publish a “wall magazine” on a big (11x18in) sheet of paper, students were to write

short articles on student problems, poetry, satire and jokes. That paper was to be pasted on the walls of the university at prominent vantage points, so that students would read it. Students did not have financial capacity to print a magazine. That is why Baba advised this practical way for the rapid propagation of our ideology. We gave the paper the name "Kranti Dūt" [Messenger of Revolution]. Later Baba gave the instruction for the publication of a UPSF magazine called "The University." After sometime Baba changed the name to "Education & Culture."

We were holding Dharmacakra (collective meditation) exclusively for students on the roof of a spiritual aspirants' residence quite close to the university campus. Nearly 60 to 70 students used to attend. By Baba's blessing, the spiritual vibrations there were tremendous, just like at DMC [Dharma Maha Cakra; spiritual congregation where Baba gave a special blessing]. This vibration was so powerful that several students used to remain lost in meditation long after the Dharmacakra was over. This Dharmacakra became famous, such that any spiritual practitioner visiting Patna would be very keen to attend it.

This is how Baba built our personality steadily through personal messages full of inspiration and personal guidance. During my Personal Contact with Baba, He blessed me saying "Always work for the ideology and you will remain ever pure and holy." I felt great joy in doing His work. Whatever time I could spare from my studies, I spent on doing prakar. A large number of boys were initiated in Patna University. We students used to perform every duty and responsibility during programmes conducted when Baba visited Patna – from managing the kitchen, to guard duty to organizing the function as well as arranging for Baba's stay.

Baba's company, guidance and inspiration made us very bold and

courageous. We did not find that any hindrance could dampen our spirits to establish the ideology.

After passing through a lot of worldly struggle, I wanted to become a wholtime worker for Baba. I sent a message to Baba asking where I should go. Baba sent word that I should go to Delhi. I then left for Delhi. It was the first time that I was going to any large city aside from Patna. Within a week of my arrival in Delhi Baba came there. When I met Baba alone, Baba asked if I felt nervous or frightened. I replied, "Baba I am a disciple of Mahakaola [Great Tantric Guru] Shrii Shrii Anandamurti." Baba smiled and patted my cheeks. By my reply, I am implying that a disciple of Shrii Shrii Anandamurti cannot be frightened by anything dreaded by the public.

Baba gave me responsibility for the publication of PROUT magazine, Education & Culture and Yug ki Pukar (a quarterly PROUT magazine in Hindi). I had no worldly knowledge of financial matters but Baba gave me all responsibilities for this. By His blessings I used to carry on my responsibilities. I realised that absolute dependence upon Him is the Supreme Strength. This is how Baba made the foundation of my personality strong, very strong.

After two years, Baba asked me to print PROUT magazine as a daily paper in Hindi. By His Grace, I was able to do this. When Baba came to Delhi, He asked me how the work was proceeding. I replied, "By Your Grace Baba we are able to print Hindi PROUT as a daily paper."

Baba said, "People think that only a billionaire or multi-billionaire can print a daily paper. But I want to demonstrate that My loving children can do this." In this way, Baba got things done which on a human plane were obviously impossible.

While I used to be well-versed in addressing small gatherings, I was shy before a public gathering. Once Baba came to Delhi to stay for some time. After two days, the Proutist Forum of India (as Proutist Universal was known then) had an

All-India Conference and meeting in Bhopal. Acarya Raghunath had already left for Bhopal.

Baba enquired about the conference and a Central Dada of PFI gave Baba the details of the preparations and the speakers. When Baba heard that Acarya Raghunath had already left for Bhopal, Baba said, "You also send Santosananda, he will also address the meeting there."

So that same night I left for Bhopal without reservation. I stood for three to four hours before getting the chance to sit. The next morning, I arrived in Bhopal. When I met Acarya Raghunath, I told him that Baba had sent me and wanted me to address the meeting.

Acarya Raghunath asked me what would be the topic of my speech. I replied that "I will speak on Shudra [worker] Revolution."

Acarya Raghunath replied that this was a sensitive topic as people have various perceptions regarding the word "revolution", so it requires great care and preparation in speaking on this subject. Hence he suggested that it would be better if I changed to another subject for my speech.

I replied, "No, I am feeling urge only to speak on this subject."

In the scheduled public meeting in a big maidan of Bhopal the same day, I was the first to speak. When I stood up to speak, I forgot what I was going to say. I was in fact speechless and felt uneasy to simply stand before this large gathering without saying anything. My mind became totally blank. Not knowing what to do, my mind changed from reciting my Ista Mantra (meditation mantra) to reciting my Guru Mantra. When I started reciting my Guru Mantra – words started coming out of my mouth without my being aware of what I was speaking. For 15 minutes I spoke but I did not know what I had said. Afterwards, Acarya Raghunath spoke and his talk was well-appreciated by the audience.

That same night I left for Delhi. When I went to see Baba in His

Delhi Quarters, I found Baba already seated in His car to leave for fieldwalk. Baba gestured to the PA and the PA asked me to sit beside Baba in the car. In the front seat, next to the bodyguard, was a Central dada of PFI.

After driving for some time, all of a sudden Baba said to that Central dada, "Santosananda gave a very good lecture in Bhopal." I was astonished since I myself was not aware of what I had said. After this incident and Baba's blessing, I became free of all shyness to face a large audience.

Baba said, "I am not here to create followers. I want to create leaders." This He does by creating the circumstances and bestowing His Grace on those who are always ready to work for His Cause, His Mission and His Ideology. This also unravels His mysterious personality as being omnipotent and omniscient.

When Baba was first arrested in Cooch Behar, after His release He came to Delhi. When I was going for field walk with Him, He began recounting this incident. Then Baba said, "Our opponents think that by insulting Me, they can insult My philosophy and ideology as well – which is simply not possible. They cannot stop the progress of our ideology." The future events showed how Ananda Marga faced innumerable obstacles, impediments and hurdles, but it always moved ever forward.

When Baba was administered poison in Jail, I was going to organize an all-India rally in Delhi. Then I went to Patna – where Baba was in jail – to ask for His blessings. Baba's then Personal Assistant Acarya Pranavananda Avadhuta was then going to meet Him and asked me to accompany him. I replied to him, "It agitates my mind to see Baba in jail. When I think that My Master is in jail and I am outside, my mind becomes tremendously agitated. I will therefore meet Him only when He comes out of jail."

The PA told me to accompany him to the jail. After reaching there, I did Sastaunga Pranama (full



**"The Mahābhārata war was not a spontaneous one, rather this great event was planned out by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. What is mere mental imagination for Parama Puruṣa seems to be real to human beings. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the central figure of the Mahābhārata. He got His work done through different characters as per His own choice. He was God Himself in human form."**

prostration) on the ground outside the big wall of the jail. I told the PA to convey my Sastaunga Pranam to Baba. I asked him also to tell Baba that I was going to organize an all-India rally in Delhi to protest His poisoning and that I wanted His blessing for its success. When the PA went inside the jail and met Baba, he conveyed my Sastaunga Pranam. Baba accepted this Pranam with the gesture of Namaskara [greeting] with His hands. When the PA told Baba about the all-India rally in Delhi and that I was seeking His Blessings for the rally, Baba replied, "Tell him that for doing any good work, My blessings are already there. There is no need to ask for it."

Thereafter Baba added, "Also tell him that when you demonstrate strength (through rallies, etc.), then the Court will also listen to you."

With these two blessings I returned to Delhi and the Delhi protest was a great success. Always, He tried to infuse His own leadership qualities in us so that we can lead a movement for any noble social cause. Baba is a man-making Guide. Indeed, this is how He reveals Himself as Guru.

Once, when I was reading Baba's book, Discourses on Mahabharata, I read one passage which said,

"The Mahābhārata war was not a spontaneous one, rather this great event was planned out by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. What is mere mental imagination for Parama Puruṣa seems to be real to human beings. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the central figure of

the Mahābhārata. He got His work done through different characters as per His own choice. He was God Himself in human form."

I used to be puzzled greatly by these words. I used to think that how could Kṛṣṇa get His work done through all the characters. As per my understanding at that time, all the characters of the Mahabharata were acting as per their own choice or mental inclination (samskaras).

However later, when I was in prison in 1975 I used to reflect on all the events mentioned above and many more. I realized that Baba puts us in different situations and guides us as to how to grapple with each particular situation and in this way a unique personality emerges as per His Choice. After this realization, the aforementioned statement of Baba regarding Lord Kṛṣṇa became clear to me.

I began to understand how Baba created so many personalities as per His pre-scripted drama as a message of inspiration to future generations. I recalled the verse from the Rg Veda (I.164.46) which said,

*"Ekah Sadviprah bahudhā ca yad vadanti –*

*"That one [Supreme] Sadvipra (Mahasadvipra), He speaks through so many vocal cords."*

Then I realized how through so many people in His unfolding Drama on this planet, He is speaking forth to future generations as Dharma Guru to inspire them to struggle against all odds in blissful surrender and ardent love for suffering humanity.



# Terra Firma

## The Assault on Land Rights

\* Shalu Nigam

Past few months have witnessed an intense debate and emotional turmoil over the Land Acquisition law not only in the Parliament but also on streets and corners spanning India. The struggle over land rights is not new; rather it has been long and continuous. However, in the contemporary situation, the state is abetting pro-capitalist neoliberal agenda while amending the existing land laws and policies. Under the new scheme, the plan is to allow acquisition of the land while overriding several social clauses and award the same to industries and businesses on highly lucrative terms. This is a cause for contestation, resentment and struggle. For years, farmers, peasants, fisherman, local artisans and all those actors in communities who depend on the land for their livelihood and survival are facing serious issues in the realm of compensation, resettlement and rehabilitation and most importantly, in the arena of ownership and their continued existence. Therefore, this neoliberal development model is leading to destruction and devastation of the poor and the marginalized by taking away their 'everything' – from the community style living and culture to their entitlement to land and their livelihood, alienating them and making them vulnerable and the

**For years, farmers, peasants, fisherman, local artisans and all those actors in communities who depend on the land for their livelihood and survival are facing serious issues in the realm of compensation, resettlement and rehabilitation and most importantly, in the arena of ownership and their continued existence.**

'other' in their own soil. Hence, they are protesting in different ways at various places. The current situation therefore is such that the government is pushing for reform of land laws on one hand and on the other the victims are strongly resisting this restructuring of laws and policies to evict them from their home. It is leading to an intense ideological conflict and a new form of democracy is emerging out of this churning, giving rise to a new form of politics where the marginalized are countering the state apparatus to negotiate their claims and entitlements. This piece of writing will examine the situation of hegemonic economist regime through the critical framework relating to rights, justice, redistribution, equality and ethics which is resurrecting the new politics of citizenship thus altering the discourse on democracy and people's participation in governance.

### Why Land Acquisition is Critical Issue?

Land is basic to human life. It is also a symbol to affluence and status. Besides its economic or monetary value, land is a source of social and political power. Land is a critical resource to earn livelihood, yet, it is a core asset to extract minerals and wealth. Land provides food and it is also a factor of production; it is used for farming and it is a basis for constructing roads or rail network. It is a source of survival for poor and it is also essential for development. In addition, it is a foundation for reproduction of capitalist mode of production and social relations. Land has emotional and cultural value to it as well as it has material attachment and reality. It has both tangible and intangible value for its users. Land may be used as a social good or an economic good depending on who is using it with what purpose and who will be



benefitting by such utilization. Land is a multidimensional concept and a fundamental resource specifically in the agrarian economy like India where for the small farmers and the rural poor it play a vital role in securing their livelihoods, defending and maintaining their cultural identity and assist them in asserting their civil, political, cultural, economic and social rights. For businesses, land is a basic resource required to earn profits. The state needs land for building necessary infrastructure essential for the growth of the nation. Though the land fulfills multiple needs, it is limited and non-expandable and therefore its judicious utilization is crucial. During the colonial rule in India, the imperial rulers contrived the existing land arrangements for their political and economic gains delegitimizing the original owners of their rights while polarizing the community into those who own land and those who work as peasants. The Land Acquisition Act of 1894 gave absolute power to the government to acquire land belonging to the people where landowners had no choice but to surrender their rights thus leading to agitation and hostility among people. Since then, land has become a serious, agonizing, tormenting and a contentious issue. Initially, land was acquired for 'public purpose', however with the amendments made

in 1984 the land was acquired for private use by companies and investors. In the postcolonial nation, the question of land has been raised again and again while linking it with the discourse on 'development' leading to severe incongruity between state and people while disturbing the community relations and producing regional disparity and imperialism. Further with the advent of globalization during 90s, the framework of neoliberalism subjected agrarian reform to the mechanics of market, putting land ownership in the hands of a few powerful elite. The enactment of Special Economic Zones Act, 2005 led to increases in scale and size of acquisition enormously while displacing millions.

According to the neoliberal agenda, land no longer belongs to those who cultivate it or work on it, rather the proponents of this economic model proposed that it may be subjected to market forces where the one who has the capital and/or the financial capacity can buy it in whatever quantity like any other marketable commodity, own it and use it as a commercial good according to one's own requirement. This concept of treating land as a free commodity helps businesses and transnational corporations; however, it ignores the principle of social or community ownership where the land is used for the

benefits of families, communities and societies and is a part of common property resources. The market based framework excludes landowners, landless peasants, marginal farmers, fish-workers, potters and all other occupational who have been associated with the land directly or indirectly. In the agrarian economy, land is considered as a 'Mother Earth' and has emotional, cultural and social value; however this is being commercialized, commodified in the free trade new market system where land holds only economic value. It is seen as a factor of production or a prerequisite for capitalization and globalization like labor or capital.

As per this fiscal model, the market dictates the distribution and utilization of land which is often done while violating the rights of poor peasants and other community actors who are dependent on it for their life and livelihood. According to a government committee on land reforms more than 2.1 million hectares of agricultural land has been transferred to non-agricultural purposes during the period from 1990 to 2003. This market paradigm deprives people of their means of livelihood without taking into account the local realities, the historic struggles, customs, land use or the needs and requirements of the local people. It has been estimated that more than 60 million people have been displaced and affected by public and private projects between the year 1947 and 2000. The economic framework thus deepens inequality and intensifies poverty, marginalizing those who already are on the periphery. This form of deviation from the agrarian reform could neither lead to substantial improvement in the living standards of poor nor could it eventually lead to actual or just development.

The conceptual inconsistency dictated by the free market regime lies in the fact that the land is often acquired by the state from local citizens who have been working, surviving and living on it for





generations and given to person/s or companies existing far away with the aim of earning profit out of it by exploiting the available resources at low cost which they may not find in their own country. Or the acquired land is given to some giant corporation because it would exploit the rich minerals or may put up a production unit that produces goods at low cost which are to be sold to somebody in a foreign land at high price to earn profit. This leads to unjust development based on the pivot of inequality and injustice giving rise to intense contestations. A mapping exercise undertaken by the Resources and Rights Initiative, Washington and the Society for Promotion for Wasteland, Delhi reveals that more than 250 land dispute cases have been reported in the year 2013-14 in the 165 of 664 districts in India. The report pointed out that most of these conflicts arise when the government took over land on behalf of the private investors.

Recently, when the current government pushed for this neo-economic development model and brought amendments in the Land Acquisition Act of 2013 through an ordinance, it led to ideologically inconsistent confrontations between the government, business and corporations on one hand and marginalized people on the other.

The rising debate leads to hostility, conflict and resentment. Land, thus once again became a prolific terrain for antagonism rather than a moribund discourse, resurrecting a new politics of citizenship and reshaping governance. Along with the land issue what is being questioned and contested is the whole politics and paradigm of the development because development in itself is fluid concept. It is a prolific, controversial and a volatile process in which both compliant and unruly subjects struggle to assert their rights.

### **The Politics and Rhetoric of Development**

Official discourse of development supported by the resourceful international organizations and rich corporations argues that the economic development is essential even if it entails a certain 'cost' and that the fruits of such development will trickle down to benefit the poorest of the poor. Based on the ideology and rationality of 'Davos man', this argument favours economic restructuring based on structural adjustment programs and in the process creates a new form of exclusion, discrimination, dispossession and marginalization. This form of economic development is founded on the ideology of domination and is based on the

narrow concept of 'There is No Alternative' as opposed to the hope enshrined in the approach 'Another World is Possible' given by opponent of this framework. This model of development reifies hierarchies and reiterates the control based on suppression or oppression. It is a new avatar of colonization in the post colonial state where those who possess power use it to control and dominate those who are on the margins.

The logic of neoliberalism fails to recognize the fact that this form of development does not yield similar results for everyone. It is a layered process and produces results which are asymmetrical, suppressing some while enriching others. The neoliberal free trade policies are making profound impact in lives of common people. These are threatening the life and livelihood of poor while ruthlessly exploiting the small and marginal farmers and the landless. The regressive actions of land grabbing, forceful eviction, usurping of forests rights and land alienation by the state to forestall the power of market economy is making survival of the marginalized ever more tenuous because it intensifies inequalities and reifies poverty making poor more poorer. Dictated by the corporate groups with the sole aim of earn profits, the earlier vision of caring and sharing has been replaced with the logic of loot and scoot. This is evident by the fact that the share of agriculture and allied sectors in the GDP of the country has declined from 23.2% in 1999-2000 to about 13.9% in 2013-14. At the same time share of non-agriculture sectors have grown to more than 85%. Thus the agricultural land is being acquired and more and more people are compelled to join service sector. However, though the service sector's share in the GDP is 59.9%, it provides employment to only 26.9% of the working population.

The Census 2011 data reveal that the share of cultivators in total working population has gone down from 31.7% in 2001 to 24.9% in 2011 but the share of total workers

engaged in agriculture has reduced only by 3.3 percent (from 58.2% in 2001 to 54.9% in 2011). The analysis pointed out that the majority of cultivators are now being compelled to work as agriculture workers or labourers in a city because there is no land left. In order to survive they have to work as agricultural workers on the land of those who have not yet sold it or are compelled to search employment under the schemes like MNREGA. There is no place for them in the non-agricultural sector. Those who have been dispossessed are forced to seek an alternative avenue for survival through self-employment or wage work in the economy which is characterized by the jobless growth. Most of these cultivators who are poor, illiterate, semi-literate or less educated workers could not get anything except low paid jobs in unorganised and informal sectors, where they work without any facilities, safety and job or social security. Often, these people are forced to migrate and live in shanty towns or urban slums, in small rooms without basic amenities. The privatization of state and diminishing welfare provisions as pushed by the globalization has further aggravated the adversities while taking away people's control over natural resources and their access to fundamental utilities thus making them vulnerable while exposing them to harshness and competition of the market forces controlled and dominated by the rich corporations. The neoliberal regime is adversely affecting the redistributive programmes and popular social agenda initiated by the earlier governments while reducing the spending on basic welfare provisions and declining the commitments made to 'aam aadmi' or common man. These state policies are contributing indirectly to the land grab by undermining the rights of marginalized by withdrawing essential support besides using might and military power to crush any resistance put up

by tribals, peasants or other social groups thus oppressing people's voice.

### Using Law as a Tool to Oppress

The state as a cultural relic is utilizing the arsenal of transnational governance such as structural adjustment programs and environmental accords, the authority vested in it through the armory of constitutional provisions, laws and legislations besides military maneuvers to push the neo liberal agenda. The law has been used as a weapon against those who are poor and on the margins. The Land Acquisition Act, the Mining Act, the Special Economic Zone Act, the National Highway Authority Act, the state laws, all are used to acquire land, water, forests and other natural resources and legitimize the forceful acquisition under the guise of 'development' thereby infringing rights of millions of families, destroying communities and destructing societies. The neoliberal discourse while ignoring the grassroots praxis is transforming political vision through its inimical 'development' policies and laws.

The legal principle of 'eminent domain' which implies inherent

right of the state to take private property for public use has been used extensively to acquire land from holders who are unwilling to sell it. This brings in the larger question relating to state's sovereignty vis-à-vis ongoing people's struggle relating to dignity and security. The concept of 'public use' has been narrowly construed while using this principle. Who is the 'public' for whom the acquired land will be used and how such land grab will be useful to 'public'? Should this term 'public' include the majority of India's population who are surviving on margins or should it include a handful of elite rich business groups who wish to grab land to further their interests? Why only the poor need to pay in terms of their lives and livelihoods, a cost of development, in case the term public is interpreted in the general sense as masses or majority? All these questions remain ambiguously unanswered.

On account of enforcement of a repressive regime, a large number of people are forcefully evicted without proper rehabilitation plan or information necessary to provide 'informed consent' in addition to adequate compensation. No



measures are being deployed to restore lost livelihoods or assets, no relocation facilities are provided and serious neglect by the state add to the vulnerabilities of the displaced subaltern population which has been rooted out in the name of development. The state has thus moved to create economic enclaves while segregating the society and excluding majority from the development.

The projects being initiated for 'development' ended in creating causalities spanning over social, economic and cultural domains, endangering millions of lives as project affected families. Those displaced face uncertainties throughout their lives. Impoverishment, landlessness, joblessness, homelessness become common among those who are ousted from their own soil. Food insecurity, malnutrition, morbidity and mortality destroy many of these lives. Those left, survive as assetless, deprived of their identity and denied of any support. Fragmentation of communities, breakdown of social support system and increased susceptibility to exploitation and increased vulnerabilities, all are ignored while dispossessing people of their land. Monetary compensation, market value of land, economic parity – nothing recompenses the loss, the deprivation, the trauma and the dispossession because the intangible losses could never be accounted for by money. Although The Rehabilitation and Resettlement policy or the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act 2013 prescribe the procedures for rehabilitation, these policies do not expand to restoration of livelihoods, replacement of lost assets or land for land approach. Nor do they prescribe principles for sharing benefits of projects of development or sharing revenue as being done in certain countries.

Market based land reforms evade redistribution of land to create equality or filter the fruits of development and also cause

tribulations leading to poverty and income inequalities by creating millions of landless families. The market economy cares for profits; it does not care for the needs of the people; rather it breeds corruption. For example, the CAG Report reveals that the state government had gone all the way out to gratify industries like POSCO and Vedanta by forcibly acquiring land. The law was misinterpreted and misread to benefit the corporations while grabbing the agricultural land reducing the area of cultivation by 117000 hectares between the period on from 2005 – 10. The state evidently becomes inimical to the concerns of its citizens while the deals benefit the buyers and exploiting the poor land owners. Market prices were fixed erroneously and compensation was not paid besides other irregularities noted in the deals. In Gujarat, the state government wrongly classified mangrove forest as degraded forest to benefit Adani Group in Mundra Project. Similarly, in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and other states, the land has been usurped by the respective state governments and allotted to private industries. The corporate-state nexus proved to be hostile to the rights of masses as legitimate citizens and holders of claims at par with others. However, this is being countered and defied by local people through protests, dissents and other means.

### **Resurrection of the New Politics of Citizenship**

In contrast to state's perception of development, the popular imagination relating to land issues, democracy and justice is based on the concept of survival, livelihood, rights, ethics and above all recognition as politically legitimate citizens. It demands for collective rights by evoking constitutional guarantees. With the expansion and intensification of the brutalities by the governments and the corporations, the resistance by subalterns also intensified to

challenge deprivation, destitution, displacement and dispossession. Dissents are being made and protests are being carried out all over the country starting from Narmada, Koel Karo, Singur, Nandigram, Kashipur, Raigarh, Kalinga Nagar, Sonbhadra, Chindwara among other places besides Jantar Mantar. These protests and everyday resistance are being made by those on margins against their invisibilization under the neoliberal globalization. Their claim is for the just and equitable development against the arbitrary policies and laws of the state that cannot be ignored or negated in the large vibrant democratic society.

Resistance to land grabs involves multi-class communities and is different from worker's struggle or trade union activities. It includes, peasants, landless labourers, marginal farmers, adivasis and those occupational groups whose livelihood and survival depends on access to land. Failure of the neoliberal economy to provide for alternate employment or livelihood options to those dispossessed added to the woes of many and compelled them to join the struggle. The main agenda of this heterogeneous group is to defeat the neoliberal market forces and to develop a people friendly alternative democratic framework where the ownership of land remains with those who work on it. The goal is to prevent the land distribution being subjected to powers of market forces. This emerging popular struggle is compelling the existing democratic structure to function as per the norms of justice, rights, ethics, accountability as well as fair and transparent governance.

What is articulated through the dissent is a vision that an ideal democratic development model cannot be defined or articulated by the constricted neoliberal logic of citizenship. This form of emerging active participatory citizenship working against the repressive and exclusionary regime of state

apparatus is inclusive, egalitarian and liberating. This politics of citizenship is centered on demanding resources and negotiating claims for the rights and justice from the state thus sculpting and reshaping the distributive system through the subaltern struggle. It is countering the skewed power relationship by creating a new praxis of citizenship and rewriting the notes on democracy and justice with the ink of rights rather than allowing the neoliberal totalitarian regime to dictate the capitalistic norms from the above. The dissent questions the market agenda, struggle for justice in land reform and for progressive land distribution with minimum displacement and maximum benefits to common people.

### **Emergence of New Discourse in Democracy**

A significant issue that is emerging out of this resistance is that the protest by the political society is compelling the state representatives to renew their commitment to equitable national development. Such dissent is forcing the government to re-affirm the rhetorical promises about progress that benefits all – *Sab ka vikas* and not advantages of a few. Disenfranchised subjects are determining their claims in their unequal and different status by using

moral and ethical notions of personhood and community to negotiate for their entitlements. They are exhibiting solidarity to appeal to the powerful state to act in a just and ethical manner thus re-articulating the meaning of citizenship. By evoking the politics of citizenship, the victimized are conjuring and engaging with the state, critiquing it and demanding righteousness. This is above the limited construction of democratic governance which construes the limited role of the marginalized in the governance. By fighting for their rightful claims relating to survival, the marginalized are indicting the state which serves as critical stages in the emergence of a new form of citizenship in a democracy.

Here, a new form of democracy is being evolved where its victims through their repeated and alert response are reflecting the directive principles of constitution in their day to day action to discursively materialize what the state ought to do while critiquing the failure of welfare state. They are challenging the abuse of power by the state to maintain its social, economic and political dominance. The struggle reflects on the manner in which official policies and practice, state and civil society institutions and citizenship is being transformed to meet the goal of social emancipation

and promises of substantive, not nominal democracy to realize the right of equality. The marginals are compelling the state to play an active role in determining the '*Niti*' (the moral policy) as well as exhibit the '*niyat*' (the will) to ensure social justice to all besides focusing on the goals of development. The demand of this struggle is accountability of the state towards the common masses. It is also questioning the legitimacy and accountability of market based institutions and international organizations compelling them to focus on pro-poor policies and alternative approaches. New terrains for resistance are being utilized by the marginalised who are courageously protesting regressive and oppressive policies while keeping democracy alive and imparting a new meaning to it to bring about sustainable, equitable and just development. The politics, dissent and protests is thus creating an unconventional imaginative vision of governance, justice, development, belongingness and a just society by resisting, rewriting and reshaping governance.

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# Tactics for Successful Revolutions



Thus far, history is showing that movements cannot be organised, they arise spontaneously caused by the accumulating dissatisfaction of the 99%. When movements are controlled by pseudo-revolutionary organisations they wither away. Movements have vague or expansive concepts based on great ideals and clear goals that unite the 99%. They have neither leaders nor members, only enthusiastic people who find they belong to a nationwide or even worldwide movement willing to do something to realise the goals of the movement.



\* Joost Van Steenis

Sometimes movements emerge in mass uprisings but they are not yet revolutions. In uprisings the 99% are still protesting, in a revolution they directly attack the power of the leading class. Therefore new action methods must be used because all actions in past revolutions did not succeed in changing the power and money relations to create a world without a 1%, in which all people have the same status.

Movements are always spontaneously and ignited by a single spark that started the prairie fire. But the basic cause is accumulated dissatisfaction – not enough houses, discrimination of women, continuing small earthquakes, growing corruption, increasing number of lies of politicians etc. The accumulation of discontent takes many years.

In the last fifty years I have been involved or have been present



in many movements in Europe but also in countries as Indonesia, Thailand or Colombia. I have seen the fury of the masses and also the inspiration that movements gave for a better future, a future that was destroyed by the greedy selfish

elites. Maybe it takes twenty or thirty years but then the masses break out. Then they are willing to fight, then they can learn how to attack the prime cause of all misery, the existence of a 1%, a bunch of greedy people who only care about

their own future. These mass happenings are not caused by political organisations that strive to improve the situation of the people only a little bit. They are spontaneously caused by people who say "Enough is enough!" It is a wonderful time and leads to a better future when the energy of the masses is directly turned against the real culprits, the 1% and their political lackeys.

In movements, people move, they are finally free, they reject the rules imposed on them by people high above them. Their behaviour becomes unpredictable, chaotic. It is part of the chaos that can lead to a revolution. Organisations are sitting ducks. Authorities can attack leaders and possessions. Movements don't have leaders or possessions, they are elusive. There are no fixed points where security forces can attack. Actions are unpredictable. Disturbing the private living sphere of the 1% can happen anywhere. The 1% has become the sitting duck, the 99% have the initiative. The driving factor is the common goal, taking the money and power away from the 1% by controlling, vetoing and eventually punishing faulty leaders that violate the freedom, privacy and the well-being of the 99%.

Movements are volatile, people move and should not occupy squares, amass possessions or have paid leaders. Movements are offensive, organisations must defend the organisation and its possessions. Organisations differ essentially from movements, they are dependent on the money paradigm having paid leaders, employees and possessions and a power structure that resembles the elitist power pyramid, powerful people at the top and foot soldiers down under. They are easy targets for the opponent. They do not comply with the same status paradigm. They have partial demands within the existing society about which they discuss with the top of society. Maybe they alleviate the inferior position of the 99% a little but they do not challenge why

the 99% are in a bad situation. Some people advanced soon after the start of Occupy, partial political demands. They wanted only small changes and changed the Movement Occupy in the Organisation Occupy. It had no success, the 99% withdrew from Occupy.

We do not need leaders who negotiate with leaders of society. In the words of Marat "*we must not be involved in the process of making decisions ..... we only punish the perpetrators of crimes against public and individual freedom or safety*". Movements only control, veto and punish faulty and corrupt leaders. That are already elements that we need in a future society. Small Autonomous Groups of interested and involved citizens put pressure on leaders at the top of the power pyramid. The new society does not have a power pyramid.

Another kind of society cannot be negotiated. Then faulty leaders remain on top, old powers have still the possibility to regain their power. That is not possible when the 99% have learned how to take the power and money away from any 1%. It is a protracted struggle that ends when the 1% has lost their privileged position, lost their surplus of money and power.

When there are no negotiations we do not need one-sided media. We must force leaders to behave differently and then the media may decide if they want to write about that change. Media are owned by the 1% and because the arrows of the 99% are directed at people at the top, you cannot expect that media write favourably about such a struggle.

Movements should never cooperate with organisations that curtail the initiative and creativity of active citizens to boost the organisation. The Dutch Provo Movement in the sixties withered away when some people participated in elections by using the name "provo". The same will happen with the Pirates Movement and other movements that still trust the parliamentary structure. Taking part in elections without firm

ideological commitment kills the initiative of individual followers, redirects most energy to a goal that has very restricted results. Individual independence necessary for a Humane World is destroyed by changing movements into bureaucratic organisations.

Only a movement in which people independently decide how to be active can lead to a revolution and to a completely different kind of society.

*Organisations have a pyramidal structure with leaders at the top and soldiers at the basis. They are not the right instrument to open the road to a society without a 1%, a society without a pyramid of power and money. Such organisations carry already the seeds from which a new 1% can grow. That is proven after communist revolutions. So-called "Revolutionary" organisations are deeply influenced by the dominating money paradigm. They have paid leaders, offices, employees and costly possessions. Orders come from above as in the society they want to change. For a revolution we need something different. Mao Ze-Dong saw that his best strategy in the guerrilla war was to defend nothing, that conceals the weakness of the communist forces and exploits their strength, the capacity to move at speed and appear at the time and the place of their choosing, surprising the enemy. That is not possible when the organisation has possessions.*

In the new society the 99% have more freedom and an independent power. In the revolution they should not be controlled by leaders because the 99% must learn how to get individual power, they must not be dependent on what other people think but use their own ideas. Occupy failed from the beginning to become a leaderless movement. Decisions were taken in general meetings by people who had the time and the money to be present. Decisions were taken on the basis of consensus by a small group of

would-be leaders. It denied that many different tactics could be used. Furthermore only peaceful demonstrations were allowed and activists who defended themselves against the violence of the police were attacked as not belonging to Occupy. General meetings should be scarce and used to exchange ideas, not to prescribe how people must behave in actions. It was the beginning of the transformation of the Movement Occupy in the Organisation Occupy.

Jean Paul Marat advanced two centuries ago ideas about Autonomous Clubs: *"We will never be a club that is involved in the process of making decisions. That should be a serious mistake: a free union of citizens is not allowed to meddle in public affairs, to govern or to administrate"*. In another society, the 99% control, veto and punish leaders who *"perpetrate crimes against the public and individual freedom and safety"*. People decide when they control and then take action. That cannot be ordered by leading activists in general meetings.

Robert Michels formulated more than a century ago his "Iron Law of Oligarchy" after the study and analysis of trade-unions and other big political organisations. After some time, organisations of free people change into organisations with leaders who decide what members should do.

They copy the hierarchical structure of the rest of society and do not belong to the new society. Common members have hardly influence on decisions that are taken in far off and unreachable places. Elections give citizens only in theory some power, in practice the influence is next to nothing. It is evident that these movements die not produce genuine leaders. It implies they were not true representatives of the people. It is therefore a challenge for the revolutionary leaders to evolve a system of producing thoroughly dedicated selfless leaders.

Small Autonomous Clubs do not obey the Iron Law. Actions stand central and how these actions are carried out is the responsibility of individual activists. The binding factor is that all activities are concentrated on the 1% and on the defence of the interests of the 99%. Only the 1% are disturbed by such actions, the 99% remain out of range.

Movements should not get involved with organisations that are embedded in society even when they seem sympathetic. Trade-unions may have contributed to an increase in wages but they have done nothing to stop the increasing difference in incomes between the top of society and the bottom. They have the narrow goal of improving the situation of workers. When movements start to work with such organisations they wither away

because the freedom to carry out actions is restricted.

The history of the Black Panther Party illustrates this process. Founded on the great idea of militant and armed defence of the rights of blacks, the movement grew from the founding in 1965 to the top in 1969. Then it started to wither away, partly because it became strictly organised, partly because demands for partial improvements replaced revolutionary ideas that could lead to real equality. Community activities that started in 1971 could not prevent the demise of the Party. People lost the possibility to act individually as had been possible at the start of the Party. After 1970 all new initiatives were smothered by the demands of the organisation. Obviously these were not revolutionary organizations in the real sense.

The same withering away occurred in the Occupy Movement when the idea to "Occupy the Financial Centres" was replaced by partial demands. Community activities replaced activities that could lead to a fundamental change. Demonstrations, petitions, strikes, attention for politicians and their political games do not change anything. Attacks on the 1% were suppressed by people who wanted the Movement Occupy to change in the Organisation Occupy. There were never actions in front of the private houses of bankers and only a few in front of banks, never in front of the houses of CEO's but only a few in front of offices of corporations. Action goals were guided by the structure of society that had personalised corporations and not by the role of greedy people who used that structure for their own benefit.

The idea that each action should contribute to the great goal of taking the money and power away from the 1% was abandoned. New ideas as the demand that all people have the same status, new action tactics by intruding in the living sphere of the 1% and clear targets, the wealth of the 1%, are the only





possibility to enter a Humane World.

### Flea Tactics

*“The Flea bites, hops and bites again, nimbly avoiding the foot that would crush him. He does not seek to kill his enemy at a blow but to bleed him and feed on him, to plague and bedevil him, to keep him from resting and destroy his nerve and morale..... All this requires time. Still more is needed to breed more fleas. What starts as a local infection must become an epidemic, as one by one the areas of resistance link up, like spreading ink spots on a blotter”.* (Robert Taber, *The War of the Flea*)

Sun Tzu lived 2500 years ago. In his “The Art of War” he described how to fight a seemingly invincible enemy. Carl von Clausewitz, Mao Tse-tung, Vo Nguyen Giap, Ernesto Che Guevara and many others promoted and developed guerrilla warfare by studying The Art of War. *“So in war, the way is to avoid what is strong and strike at what is weak” leads to the idea “be where your enemy is not” and to the conclusion that “great results, can be achieved with small forces”.* In the last decades these ideas were hardly applied in actions. The emphasis was on mass actions not on guerrilla-type actions. No wonder the 1% still rules.

Imagine a huge demonstration with a hundred thousand participants. It is hardly possible to organise such events more than once a year. It cost a lot of energy and money to get so many people in one place. Making advertisements and placards, caring for transport, organising food, drink and health care at the demonstration etc. Not to mention the time and the money spend by participants to go to the meeting place and back home. Did the demonstration achieve its goal? Was there a small change in decisions that were taken by decision-makers who live somewhere high-up where the 99% are not allowed to come and not allowed to take part in discussions? In most cases the answer is no, the results are mostly very



disappointing.

Such mass actions do not belong to a War of the Flea, they are in contradiction to the simple guidelines of Sun Tzu, *“let your plans be dark and impenetrable as night, and when you move, fall like a thunderbolt”.* A mass gathering is openly planned at a known time and place, the enemy can make preparations to control the action. By following the advice of Sun Tzu *“attack him where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected”* a more successful action is possible that penetrates in the centre of power.

Imagine that only one per cent of the participants of the big mass gathering, one thousand people, throw within a period of one month each one rock through the window of one 1% who lives nearby. One thousand broken windows ..... Not much of an effort, no costs, no time spilled, no arrests when you are careful. A surprising and unexpected series of small actions. Small is beautiful. Thousands of small actions have more success than one big action. Small volatile and elusive Autonomous Clubs using the creativity and individuality of its members can apply the idea that *“the whole secret lies in confusing the enemy so that he cannot fathom*

*our real intent”.* The result is tremendous, use your imagination and you perceive a shock going through the higher echelons of society. It is a first small step on the road to change the world!

Many small actions in a War of the Flea are fundamentally different than mass actions. It are offensive actions in contradiction to defensive mass actions. A War of the Flea consists of a multitude of decentralised small actions on the initiative of individual members of the 99%. Sometimes they act alone, sometimes with a few friends. This War forces leaders to change decisions, mass actions only ask or even beg leaders for change.

Participants in mass actions want to air their dissatisfaction. In such defensive protests the initiative lies by leaders of organisations, activists are followers. Offensive actions during the War of the Flea are resistance actions carried out by small, temporary and more or less homogeneous groups of creative individuals that disturb the private living sphere of people with power. The initiative lies by individuals.

Massive protest actions need consensus about action tactics. Small actions can be carried out anytime and only a few people have to agree with the tactics. No

consensus meetings are needed. It starts as a brooklet that will turn into a river that wipes away the 1%.

It is fun to carry out surprising small actions. By participating once in a while in a big protest you only can hope for a favourable echo of the action in the media. Creative and individual actions by small Autonomous Clubs increase the self-esteem of the members. Because the 1% live in an exclusive world where the 99% only may enter as servant, traditional actions do not penetrate in that world. The War of The Flea is an excellent action method to disturb the life of the greedy, criminal and corrupt leaders in the background.

Mass actions want to get attention of decision-takers and above all of media. Organisers distribute pamphlets and give press conferences. When the media do not write about the action, participants are disappointed and think twice before participating in a next mass action. You may also wonder if media articles penetrate the minds of decision-takers. The results of such mass events are hardly tangible and the energy of protesters is mostly spilled in vain. Media play an important role. In small actions of the War of the Flea, media are hardly involved but sometimes the 1% complain about their difficulties. Their reflections in the media on offensive actions increase sympathy of the masses for the struggle by showing that the 1% are under pressure. That is not the case with the one-time media reports after big demonstrations.

Mass actions do not penetrate in the power centre of the 1%. To take the power and the money away from the 1% you have to destroy their basis, their safe and comfortable eliteworld. Because they have hardly been attacked, the centre of power is not well defended. When defences are strengthened, concentrate on supply lines and disturb the supply of resources to the centre of power.

When the private living sphere of the 1% is disturbed they will be

flabbergasted because it never happened before. The 1% does not understand why this happens. They start to whine and complain about their predicament and the 99% become amused because they see the 1% have the same difficulties as they have had for ages. The same status paradigm is coming nearer. The 99% are often disturbed by police officers, tax officers, house owners, bankers, civil servants, etc. It has become part of their life and it gives them a feeling of powerlessness. That feeling disappears when they become active and transfer the feeling of powerlessness and uncertainty to the 1%.

The 1% is protected by servants. Not only security personnel but also lawyers, cleaners, advisors, etc. These servants regulate any difficult and annoying item. Small War of the Flea actions go around this wall, they “make them toil when relaxed, starve when they are full, move when they are settled”.

In the War of the Flea people are autonomous, independent of leaders, choosing themselves when, why, how, where, with whom and against whom they become active. A new kind of humans comes into being who are creative, individualistic, caring for their neighbours and knowing how to combat and defeat any injustice or restriction of their freedom, privacy and well-being by greedy leaders

who put the interests of the own group over the interests of all people. That leads us to a world without a 1%.

Because of their individual involvement and their responsibility for the own safety activists take care that they do not get damaged too much, that they are only active against targets that are undefended. The War of the Flea complies with the Golden Rule for Actions to avoid clashes with the police who are also part of the 99%.

### **To change the mind of people psychology is important in actions**

*“When actions take place on the border between fantasy and reality attacked targets will never know what is real and what imaginary”. Power is a vague concept. While money is the basis of the power of the 1%, actions intruding the private living sphere of the 1% are the basis of the power of the 99%. Just as money is only sometimes used in power struggles, direct actions should also be used sometimes. The knowledge that the 1% has money, the knowledge that the 99% can penetrate in the private living sphere of the top determines the amount of power. In a world in which all people have the same status, everyone should have the same power.*

*“In battle, there are not more than two methods of attack—the*



*direct and the indirect; yet these two in combination give rise to an endless series of manoeuvres*". (Sun Tzu). In the War of the Flea a direct attack is when a mosquito pricks, an indirect attack the humming of the mosquito threatening to prick. Being pricked once, people find the humming often worse than the pricking. Psychological actions, including the threat that actions could take place, are an integrated part of the struggle. The combination of real and possible actions penetrates the minds of targets, who become constantly occupied by attacks. Sometimes they alleviate the pressure by taking decisions that favour the 99% even when they come in conflict with their own kind of people. Then the conflict spreads in his environment.

Psychological actions are fairly safe. It gives joy realising how such actions influence the mind of the target who must contemplate about what happens when threats become real actions. This kind of actions complies with the Golden Rule for Actions because it does not hurt the 99% and increases pressure on the 1% whose minds are filled with fear about possible actions.

Psychological and material actions only involve objects that are important for the 1%. When masses get a phone call in the middle of the night it is a nuisance but they can disconnect, leaders must always be available. Is it really so bad when you read in a newspaper that you are deceased? You do not ask the police to look for people who throw stinking lysol on the doormat, who trimmed the most beautiful plant in the garden, who flattened the tyres of your car, who ordered a taxi while you did not want to go out, who annulled your hotel in a far-off holiday place. Even when a window is smashed, the police hardly can find perpetrators and the 1% must fear for more stones, wait for new actions while they can do nothing. The direct damage is small but the immaterial pressure influences the mind of the 1%.

One of the action goals is



making leaders realise that the 99% have power. A long-lasting stream of small actions in the private living sphere influences any human. Actions show that activists can penetrate the living sphere of the target. A can of used oil emptied on the beautiful maintained lawn has the same effect as putting a can with used oil on the lawn without damaging the grass. A flask with petrol, oil and a piece of cloth the same effect as a burning Molotov-cocktail. Surrounding him in a mall with some friends or putting some rocks on his car has a threatening effect but these are also real actions. Knowing that always anywhere unexpected actions can occur starts to dominate his mind. What will happen tomorrow, in a week, in a year ..... Real actions strengthen the feeling that he is never alone unless he changes his attitude, his mentality and decisions that are disadvantageous for the 99%.

The power of the threat of real actions increase, only when this threat is accompanied by proof that somewhere, sometimes, something serious happens. It increases the uncertainty of the decision-taker. What will happen is intensified by the idea what may happen. Demonstrations are only temporarily threatening and authorities know that threats shouted out loud in a demonstration are empty words that neither undermine the power nor the private life of the powerful. Activities without a further maybe do not pressure

decision-takers.

Psychological warfare is an integrated part of the power of the 99%. This includes not only direct threats of coming actions but also hoaxes or rumours about something that could be true. As Sun Tzu already said a very long time ago: *"mystify, mislead and surprise the enemy"*. Corruption, sex, domestic violence, employment of illegal cleaners and many other subjects the 1% do not talk openly about undermine their position as respectable persons. This penetrates and dominates the mind of decision-takers if accompanied by real actions.

Nuclear bombs were only twice used in the far past but are still used as a threat, just as super weapons as aircraft carriers, nuclear submarines, intercontinental rockets, drones or chemical weapons. Why has the USA a stock of chemical weapons in Panama? Why has the USA military bases all over the world? Not to threaten with military actions because when the threat becomes a real action, most weapons do not come from the bases but directly from the USA.

The 99% are time and again disturbed in their private living sphere by real actions of the top so they even listen to threats. Threats and real actions are two sides of the same coin. The elites know that a coin has two sides, activists only use one side of a coin, without threats the other side is blank and the coin invalid and useless.

When there is no threat activists are not dangerous. They do not undermine the power of the top. When activists only use arguments they remain dependent on the benevolence of decision-takers. The lack of successes of past activism are not encouraging. The 99% only get some power when they use threats as well as direct actions over a longer period of time.


Sun Tzu said also: *“Rouse him and learn the principle of his activity or inactivity. Force him to reveal himself, so as to find out his vulnerable spots”*. *“A victorious army opposed to a routed one is a pound’s weight placed in the scale against a single grain”*. The goal of the struggle is not do defeat the army but to make it impossible that leaders can use the army because it is spread too thinly to defend the 1% and the centre of power. Small Autonomous Clubs hitting then here and then there are superior to mass actions in which all strength is concentrated. A world without a 1%

demands that the present 1% start to lose their power and that the 99% develop their own power. That happens neither in leftist actions nor in rightist ones. The new paradigm speaks about living people with the same status. Actions should be directed on the private living sphere of leading people and not on dead buildings or corporations used to exert power. Though sometimes power instruments of the 1% may be attacked, most actions against banks or other symbols of power are not in accordance with the new paradigm. In the small Autonomous Clubs people use their own capabilities, characteristics and creativity in actions. Their kind of actions can be applied in the present society but also in the far future.

The concept of Creative Disturbance of the exclusive life of the 1% complies with the idea that all people have the same status which means that nobody has the moral right on an extravagant life at the cost of other humans. Because of

the continuous pressure on the 1% their minds will be influenced by the idea that nobody has the right to have a different status and that getting or using too much money will be prevented. Leaders should be guided by the idea that people stand central and not money.

On the way to a new society an increasing number of actions of Autonomous Clubs care for many small successes that strengthen the self-esteem of the 99%. The chaos in leading circles and the tensions in the top build up. Then suddenly a jump occurs, a catastrophe, a revolution, a fundamental change. We enter a new phase in the development of humanity. Therefore emphasis should not be on how we can improve this society because it is built on the wrong ideas. Emphasis should be on how we can get a new society in which all people can exert the same power. The future is exciting and the new world with autonomous people will be beautiful.



**“Those who are honest try to follow moral principles in their private lives, but at times have to abandon moralism under the pressure of poverty. Eventually they may find themselves in the dock of the accused, charged with committing theft. The law is not concerned with the poverty which forced them to steal, nor, indeed, does the law make provisions for the maintenance of their families if they are given a prison sentence. As a consequence, their children will have to become pick-pockets and petty thieves and their unfortunate wives have to embrace an ignoble and sinful life in the underworld, for survive they must. On being released from jail, the men will meet social discrimination and alienation and, with little other choice, will be forced to select crime as their profession. In this way hundreds of families are being ruined each day. Nobody feels their agony or offers them sympathy; for today the common people are not anybody’s concern.”**

**- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar**

# Prison Destroys Families and Communities

**"I remember Judge McBryde saying 'life,' and Mom screaming over and over, 'You can't do that! You're not God! You can't take someone's life.'"**

**— Billy Jackson, son of federal prisoner Joe Jackson**

\* Maya Schenwar

In the classic game Monopoly, the square called "Jail" sits ominously in a corner of the board. It's a hole into which an unsuspecting player might fall after an unlucky roll of the die, or the drawing of a bad card, or simply stumbling upon a space marked "GO TO JAIL" while ambling along the path to riches or ruin. Once you've been "sentenced," you've got just three possible routes out of your lonesome confinement: luck (rolling doubles), privilege (a Get Out of Jail Free card), or money.

But once in a while, players stuck inside the jail square have company. A pale green space clings to its outward-facing perimeter: a kind of dry, liminal moat between Jail and the edge of the board, inscribed with the words, "Just Visiting." A player who happens upon Jail without being mandated there isn't punished, but must merely spend a brief turn in the square, then get along on her way to other squares and other ventures, as if it had never happened.

However, in real life the vision of prison isn't over for family members after they exit the visiting room, or hang up the phone, or put the letter back in its envelope. The fact of a loved one's incarceration can take on a vacuous life of its own, rambling along invisibly, parallel to yours, inhabiting your sleep, your daydreams, and your minute-to-minute fears and imaginings. It's sometimes difficult to whisk your mind back to your own reality and live visibly in the present while they are—as Wisconsin prisoner Miguel Segarra puts it in a letter—"stuck in the past."

### **"Life Has Never Been the Same"**

In talking to families of incarcerated people—and then trying to write about them—a hard-to-shake anxiety tugs at my brain and my fingertips: "What's the ending?" One author I spoke with when I began working on this book advised me, "Keep in mind that you're writing a book for Americans, and Americans like a happy ending....

Or, at least, a hopeful ending." But for a lot of people embroiled in the system, there's no narrative arc, no reassurance of a liberated tomorrow. The very nature of incarceration ordains an impediment to forward movement—and that impediment is frustratingly vivid to family members on the outside, who witness the rest of the world rushing forward firsthand.

This dissonance bubbles to the surface when I speak with Yvonne, ex-wife of Joe Jackson, a pen pal of mine who is serving life for a meth (illegal drug) distribution scheme undertaken to raise the \$250,000 to pay for his son Cole's life-saving bone marrow transplant. Joe divorced Yvonne three years into his imprisonment, telling her he wanted to set her free—but she still holds on. "They took the one person that had my back no matter what.... They took my best friend, and life has never been the same," she tells me. "We live in our own prison out here, one that never ends."

Joe has been in prison for more than eighteen years. Joe's daughter, April, describes to me how the saga began, during an early-morning breakfast when she was in ninth grade. It was still dark outside, the house hushed, and she had just seated herself at the table to eat a bowl of cereal. Then came a blaring loudspeaker-voice from outside the front door: "Come out with your hands up!" April yelled for Yvonne, who lay asleep in her room with baby Cole; he slept curled up next to her so she could tend to the protruding catheter in his heart when he woke in the night.

There was no slowing down the SWAT team: Two hundred officers swarmed everywhere in the house, in the woods outside, all down the road. They burst through the doors, searching futilely for April's absent dad, tearing through papers and pulling Yvonne onto the porch. "One of them gripped me like a sack of potatoes and carried me to the driveway," she says. "They told me to shut the dog up or they would shoot him.... From that day forward, my kids have had a fear that someone was watching them, and they all slept with me til they were older. It takes away all the security in your own home."

In this small Texas town of fewer than 1,500 people, the scandal was big news. Rumors took flight immediately ... and they never quite

landed. "I learned we had elevators leading to an underground drug lab with an elaborate network of tunnels that went from our home down to my grandmother's.... Trust me, I would have found that had it ever existed," April recounts, recalling some of the worst items of gossip. "Apparently, there were also four dead bodies uncovered in our backyard."

At the age of fourteen—for many of us, the height of caring what people think—April watched as long-standing friendships evaporated within days. Parents barred their kids from coming over to her house, and some even told their children not to talk to April or her middle brother, Billy. Yvonne got the cold eye, too—fellow parents wouldn't sit next to her at the kids' basketball games, and she was voted off the PTA in a closed-door meeting. She says, "There was rumors about me and the kids, always."

The word "stigma" originally referred to a brand, a mark burned into human skin with a hot iron, commonly imprinted on the skin of enslaved people or "criminals." The word hasn't evolved much in the 400 or so years since its first usage, though the mark is now social instead of physical. And in the current era, at least when it comes to incarceration, the "branding" can be contagious, smudging off on families in ways that shift both their

public image and their personal sense of self.

### "The Bills Never Stopped"

Joe Jackson was handed the maximum possible sentence for his offense: three "lifetimes," plus an extra thirty years piled on top. As they wobbled back into their own lives after the sentencing, Yvonne, April, and her two little brothers struggled for footing. Financially, things were a mess.

It's not like the Jacksons had been living large in past years; April grew up in a trailer for the first ten years of her life, and says, "Dad barely made enough to get by." But Joe's imprisonment threw the family into a deeper, shakier pit of financial unpredictability. Their car was repossessed, Cole's medical bills piled up to the ceiling, and Yvonne waged a constant battle to keep their house while working overtime at multiple jobs: a deli, house cleaning, construction. "Joe made our living so I could take care of Cole," Yvonne says. "Without him it was me trying, and some days the bills never stopped."

It's a common turn of events: While prisoners are "stuck in the past," family members are often left floundering to make up lost income. Most incarcerated parents were employed prior to their arrest, according to a 2005 study by the Urban Institute. (And that doesn't count money the incarcerated person was bringing in by "illegitimate" means—also often used to put food on the table.) Sometimes, the family has lost its only income source and must start from scratch.

Amid money troubles and the strain of separation, family tension continued to tighten for the Jacksons. Yvonne and Joe divorced, with Joe insisting that it wasn't fair for him to keep Yvonne tethered to him while he waited out the long years to die in prison. April pulled away from her mom, and, desperately seeking closeness, plummeted into a relationship with a controlling boyfriend who rapidly turned abusive. It took two and a



half years to disentangle herself.

Meanwhile, April's brother Billy slid toward violence himself. Crushed and confused by the loss of his dad—and angered by his classmates' derision of his family—he got into frequent fights. Frantic at the possibility of another family member straying down a troubled path, Yvonne yanked him from school, homeschooling him on top of her other jobs (including, of course, caring for her chronically ill younger son).

Yvonne's concern was no delusion. Boys whose parents are incarcerated are five times more likely to become incarcerated themselves, and kids of prisoners are more likely to go to prison than to graduate from high school. The effects often hit early on: Between 30 and 50 percent of children placed in juvenile detention centers have at least one parent who's been to prison. According to a report by The Sentencing Project, "The arrest and incarceration of parents ... takes an emotional toll on children, leaving some psychologically traumatized, fearful, anxious, withdrawn, socially isolated, grieving, or possibly acting out their feelings in disruptive ways."

Of his dad's incarceration, Billy says, "I think it caused me to grow up way too fast. I was twelve when I started working full time, started dating a girl when I was fourteen and was married to her at nineteen. I never really had a chance to be a kid, so when I was twenty, I started acting like one, and got in a lot of trouble and pretty much lost everything, including my now ex-wife, by the time I was twenty-one." As for April, she fled her small town as soon as she could. These days, she completely avoids it. She doesn't want to respond to the persistent "how's your dad doing?" inquiry. It always has the same answer. April hasn't given up hope, though: She channels her frustrated energy into fighting for her dad's release, applying for commutations, reaching out to public figures, connecting with activists.



Meanwhile, Joe mails me a family picture taken on July 14, 2013. Like every photo for the past eighteen years, it's set in a visiting room. Joe's in his prison khakis, flanked by his children, including Cole, who, thanks to his lifesaving transplant, is alive, healthy, and smiling at twenty-three. A city skyline—a faux backdrop made available for visiting-room snapshots—sparkles behind the huddled group. "If I didn't have my family, I'd just curl up and go to the next level," Joe writes, signing off with his usual closing: "Your friend in a cage."

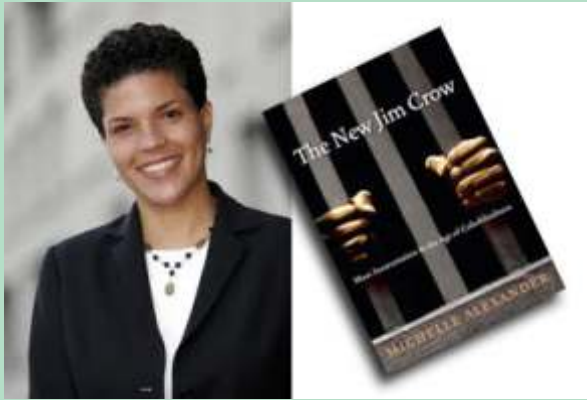
### **Moving Out, Punching Holes**

Even after years of hearing family members' stories of loss and disconnection, each one still pricks me with weird surprise. I'm surprised to be surprised: Most of my brain, of course, knows way too well that incarceration has reverberating effects, hitting and marking all sorts of other people besides those in prison themselves. But a part of my mind still inhabits the pervasive, official logic of the prison-industrial complex, and that logic is all about subtraction. Prison's role in society, the logic goes, is to toss away the bad eggs so they can't poison us—so we don't even have to see them. With those eggs cleared, we seamlessly close up the gaps and carry on, clean and whole.

The surprise pops up when the broken seams are revealed—the way that incarceration rips open new holes in the social fabric of families and communities outside, severing intricate networks strung together in ways that are observable only upon their breaking. Instead of eggs, we are tossing away people's mothers, fathers, daughters, sons, brothers, sisters, partners, friends.

Those split ties are concentrated heavily in poor communities of color. While the fragmentation of black families (especially the departure of fathers) has, in dominant political and cultural spheres, often been attributed to personal failings, Michelle Alexander points out, "Hundreds of thousands of black men are unable to be good fathers for their children, not because of a lack of commitment or desire but because they are warehoused in prison, locked in cages."

When a loved one is locked up, those left behind are often less able to participate actively in community life and in the economy, strained by severe shortages of money and time. There are sometimes more subjective forces tugging them away from their communities, too: shame (on their end) and fear or suspicion (on their neighbors' side of the fence). Families' self-isolation is compounded by the fact that some of



**“More Black men are in prison or jail, on probation or parole than were enslaved in 1850, before the Civil War began,”**

**- Michelle Alexander**  
in her book 'The New Jim Crow'

their neighbors—such as Yvonne's fellow basketball parents inching away from her on the bleachers—aren't crazy about seeing them, anyway.

Often, family members relocate out of their communities either upon incarceration (in search of more affordable housing, since they've lost an income-earner) or afterward (in hopes of a less stigmatized transition). And as they walk away, they leave behind friends, schools, religious groups, and support networks—those ties that link families to the world.

In communities where incarceration is common, these ongoing removals, isolations, and relocations can prove a formidable barrier to building a stable, close community in which people know each other and look out for their neighbors. Researchers Todd Clear and Dina Rose, who have studied incarceration within the context of families and communities, write that the way in which imprisonment disrupts connections can actually make harm and conflict more likely. The researchers frame the effects of incarceration as a type of "social disorganization," a process that interrupts lives, shaking and scattering the collective life of a

community. An important part of preventing violence, according to Clear and Rose, is maintaining "informal social controls": structures besides laws and law enforcement. These are things like neighbor interaction, community groups, close friend networks, and peer pressure (the good kind!) from loved ones.

So, when lots of people are moving in and out of a neighborhood—or isolating themselves to the point that they may as well have moved out of the neighborhood—the effectiveness of those informal controls plummets. It's hard to maintain strong community networks if you're not even sure who's in your community. Add to that the fact that those who are incarcerated have themselves "moved out," abruptly and with no choice in the matter (Clear and Rose call this process "coercive mobility"), punching holes in the networks they left behind. This phenomenon is deepest felt in poor communities of color, where high proportions of people are incarcerated.

Barbara Fair, the New Haven mother whose seven sons have all been incarcerated, hails from one such neighborhood. Unlike April

Jackson's small-town "friends," many of Barbara's neighbors have provided empathy and support: "Going to prison ... was so common in my community that there wasn't much of a raised brow about that," she says. This commonality lends families in neighborhoods with high concentrations of former prisoners a unique base of communal support. If almost everyone has a relative or friend who's been incarcerated, they're less likely to judge. But residents are so supportive, in part, because they know all too well the venomous power of the stigma that runs thick outside the bounds of their neighborhoods—a stigma that captures prisoners, their families, and their communities in its widening net, isolating them in a sort of external jail of their own, in which actual imprisonment seems devastatingly predestined. As legal scholar Dorothy Roberts puts it, "Because all of the children in these communities have some experience with prison and may expect to be behind bars at some point in their lives, prisons are part of the socialization process.... Incarceration is a 'rite of passage' imposed upon African American teenagers."

### **A Landslide of Consequences**

The criminal justice system has coursed through Barbara Fair's life for decades, starting when she was a teen and her brother was sentenced to prison. Soon after, Barbara herself was incarcerated for a couple of weeks—delivering a sharp premonition, she says, of emotions to come. She tells me, "I can still feel the pain and humiliation that cut through me." Barbara's kids grew up in the thick of the drug-war years and could serve as poster children for the strangling effects of that "war" on poor, black families. Each has been locked up for a drug-related conviction. "The greatest factor influencing my sons ending up in prison is the fact that they are young African American males, and thus the targeted commodity for the prison industry," she says.



Barbara explains that not only are black males a targeted commodity, they're an assumed commodity; they're viewed as suspicious from youth on up. Her words mirror an interview I did with Mariame Kaba, the founder of Chicago's Project NIA, an advocacy and education organization aimed at ending youth incarceration. Mariame spoke of how kids of color begin their lives weighed down by an obligation to prove their "innocence." Unlike their white counterparts, their "guilt" is presumed from the start. "Black and brown youth are born with criminality inscribed on them," Mariame said. "When they commit crimes, that's just confirmation. Their job is to prove they're not criminal." On top of this assumption of criminality, family members of prisoners are often handed a whopping serving of guilt-by-association. Siblings often have it the worst, according to Todd Clear, who interviewed a group of families in an impoverished, mostly black neighborhood in Miami. In *Imprisoning Communities*, he writes, "Siblings often bear the brunt because there is the idea that if your sibling could be a criminal, then you could too."

As her sons were carted off, Barbara's life quickly molded itself around prison and its immediate effects: the weekly visits to various facilities—each at least forty-five minutes from home—the expensive phone calls, the panic attacks, the money troubles, the time constraints, the sadness.

Even after her sons came home, she wrestled with the lingering reverberations of their imprisonment. By the time Barbara and I get to know each other in 2013, all of her sons have been released, but her youngest—deeply traumatized by his time behind bars, some of which was spent in isolation—currently lives in a psych ward and still depends on his mother for constant support.

Barbara's ordeal is just one example of how the incarceration of

large numbers of men (especially black men) generates a landslide of consequences for women. In an interview, gender and criminology scholar Beth Richie tells me, "Clearly one of the 'untold stories' of mass incarceration is the way that women are disadvantaged. The most obvious part is their own incarceration. But... there is also the problem of women supporting men who are incarcerated and when they are released. It is visiting, housing, feeding, protecting, hiding, taking the rap for them. All kinds of things have women 'working' to create or maintain stability when men are incarcerated, or when [their] kids are incarcerated."

Barbara Fair carried on this support work routine, sevenfold. But amid the sleepless chaos, she gleaned a panoramic view of the system in which she was entangled—and became convinced that the best way to cope was to dig in and fight it. In the years since, Barbara has jumped into the struggle full-force, traveling the country to speak out about bail, plea bargains, sentencing, juvenile justice, and the war on drugs. She's reached out to Yale students to collaborate on projects like "The Worst of the Worst," a video aimed at exposing the harmful effects of solitary

confinement. She led a fight to oust a corrupt New Haven judge, she held a "Biking While Black" protest to speak out about the anti-black profiling of bikers on the street, and nowadays she's working to set up dialogues throughout Connecticut between victims and people who've caused harm.

Yet after thirty years, the challenges are still just beginning, says Barbara. She's thinking long-term—and big: "I have worked so hard at reform, and saw so little change, that I have come to the conclusion that revolution might be the only response to what is occurring in America relative to criminal justice and the prison industry it feeds."

### **Prison Comes Home**

On January 27th, domestic violence survivor Marissa Alexander will walk out of Florida's Duval County jail -- but she won't be free.

Alexander, whose case has gained some notoriety, endured three years of jail time and a year of house arrest while fighting off a prison sentence that would have seen her incarcerated for the rest of her life -- all for firing a warning shot that injured no one, to fend off her abusive husband. Like many black women before her, Alexander was framed as a perpetrator in a clear



case of self-defense. In November, as her trial date drew close, Alexander accepted a plea deal that will likely give her credit for time served, requiring her to spend "just" 65 more days in jail. Media coverage of the development suggested that Alexander would soon have her "freedom," that she would be "coming home."

Many accounts of the plea deal, however, missed what Alexander will be coming home to: she'll return to "home detention" -- house arrest -- for two years.

In other words, an electronic monitor, secured around her ankle at all times, will track her every movement. Alexander will also be paying \$105 per week to the state in monitoring fees, as is the custom in Florida and more than a dozen other states.

Such a situation is certainly preferable to being caged in a prison cell. However, does Alexander's release -- and that of others in her shoes -- mean freedom? In reality, an ever-growing number of cages are proliferating around us, even if they assume forms that look nothing like our standard idea of a cage.

As mass incarceration is falling out of fashion -- it's been denounced by figures across the political spectrum from Eric Holder to Newt Gingrich -- a whole slate of "alternatives to incarceration" has arisen. From electronic monitoring and debilitating forms of probation to mandatory drug testing and the sort of "predictive policing" that turns communities of color into open-air prisons, these alternatives are regularly presented as necessary "reforms" for a broken system.

It's worth remembering, however, that when the modern prison emerged in the late eighteenth century, it, too, was promoted as a "reform," a positive replacement for corporal or capital punishment. Early prison reformers -- many of them Quakers bent on repentance and redemption -- suggested that cutting people off from the rest of the world would bring them closer to God. (The word "penitentiary"

comes, of course, from "penitence.")

An oppressive version of surveillance played a central role in this vision, as in British reformer Jeremy Bentham's famed Panopticon, a model prison in which inspectors would be able to view prisoners at any moment, day or night, while themselves remaining invisible. If the ultimate Panopticon never quite came into existence, Bentham's idea profoundly influenced the development of the prison as a place in which, for the prisoner, no time or space was inviolable and privacy was a fiction.

As an idea, the Panopticon remains embedded in our notion of state discipline. Now, it is spreading out of the prison and into the neighborhood and the home, which is hardly surprising in a society in which surveillance and monitoring are becoming the accepted norms of everyday life. Like the plans of the early reformers, many current prison "reforms" share a common element: they perpetuate the fantasy that new forms of confinement, isolation, and surveillance will somehow set us all free.

At first glance, these alternatives may seem like a "win-win." Instead of taking place in a hellish institution, prison happens "in the comfort of your own home" (the ultimate American ad for anything). However, this change threatens to transform the very definition of "home" into one in which privacy, and possibly "comfort" as well, are subtracted from the equation. Perhaps the best example is the electronic monitor, an imprisonment device that is attached to the body at all times.

### **Electronic Monitoring**

House arrest has long been used to quell political resistance. By confining people to their homes, repressive governments are able to weaken an oppositional figure's ties to the world, while allowing the authorities to know where the confined person is at every moment. From St. Paul to the deposed pro-democracy Iranian president

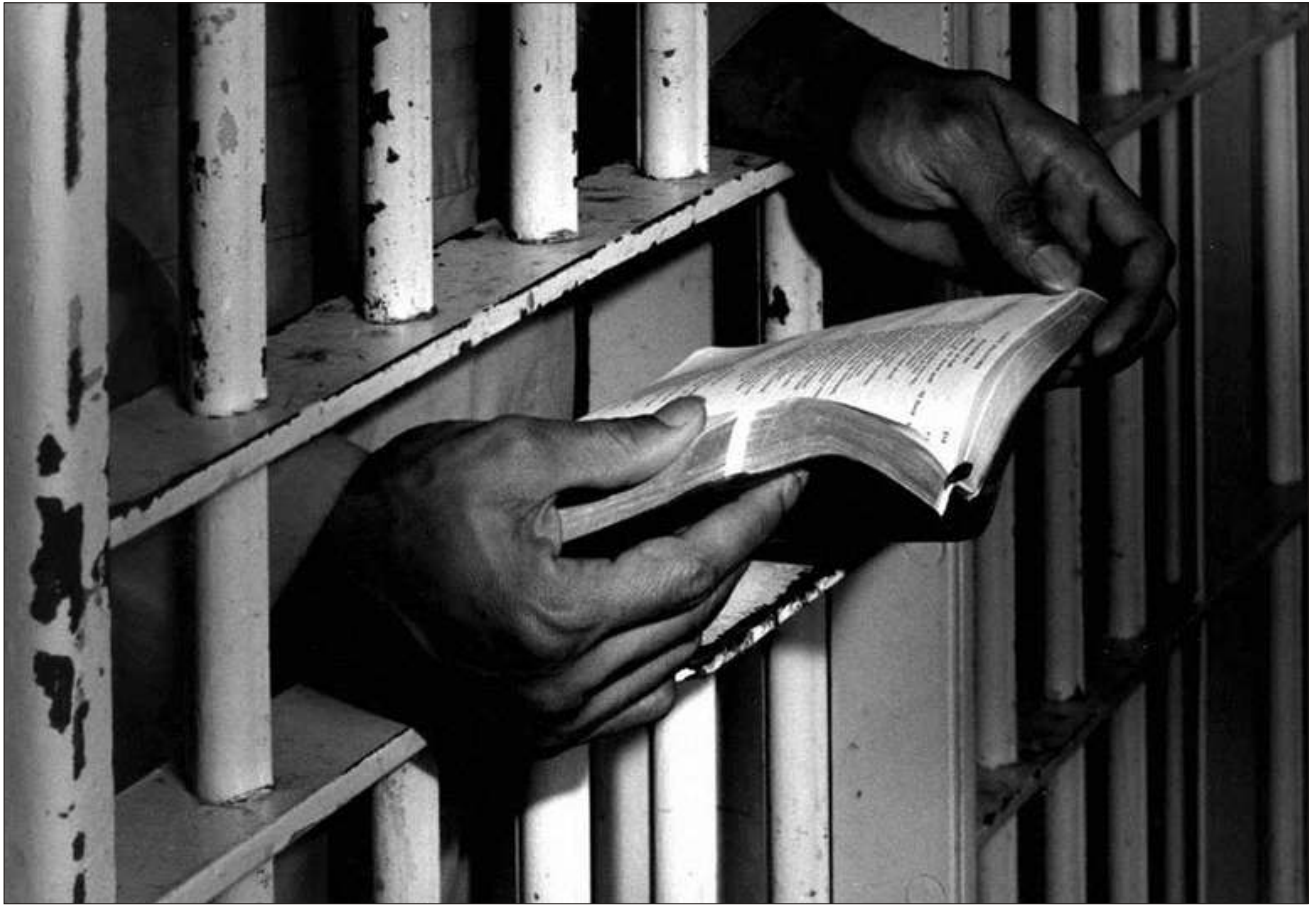
Mohammad Mosaddegh, Galileo to Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi, dissidents and nonconformists have long watched their homes become their prisons.

However, the rise of new technologies -- in particular, electronic monitoring -- has allowed the practice of home confinement to become widespread. Nowadays, if you're under house arrest, there are no longer armed guards circling the premises. Instead, the "guards" are satellites, their gaze always present, and they don't even blink.

Appropriately enough, electronic monitoring was introduced in the year 1984 made famous by George Orwell. Since then, it has been used for an ever-expanding range of purposes, including pretrial confinement, parole, and probation, or simply as a punishment in and of itself. Monitoring has put new populations under state control, expanding the range of people who are confined in this country. According to an analysis in the *Journal of Law and Policy*, most of those placed on electronic monitors haven't committed serious or violent offenses and, were it not for monitoring, "at least some of these populations would not in fact be incarcerated or otherwise under physical control."

In prison, the loss of one's civil liberties is glaringly apparent. The strip search, the cell sweep, and the surveillance of letters, phone calls, and visits are givens. For those whose homes have been "prisonized," however, basic constitutional rights also crumble. Probationers and monitorees are subject to warrantless searches and drug tests; probation officers have ready access to their homes. In fact, though seldom thought of this way, the ankle monitor is essentially a constant, warrantless search.

As research scholar James Kilgore notes, for those being monitored, "the default position in most instances is house arrest" and therefore they're often more restricted than their counterparts in



jails and prisons. Incarcerated people have daily quotas for calories and are usually granted a certain amount of outdoor exercise time (however miserable the food or outdoor facilities may be). Under house arrest, neither of those protections apply. The prisoners no longer have the right to food. Similarly, prisoners are usually granted the right to access legal materials; this guarantee is not a given for monitored people. Even probation officers have acknowledged how monitoring -- both the actual physical confinement and the constant knowledge of being watched -- seeps into each moment of a confined person's daily life. A Department of Justice study, for example, found that, with the visible ankle monitor acting as a "scarlet letter," those permitted to go to work had a difficult time finding or holding jobs. That's a problem in itself, since it's well known that gaining employment is a crucial step in avoiding future offenses. Full-scale house arrest, however, locks people into a life of stasis and boredom, inhibiting their ability to

connect with loved ones or form new bonds -- crucial factors in building a sustainable life.

Eighty-nine percent of probation officers surveyed by the Justice Department felt that "offenders' relationships with their dear ones changed because of being monitored." Both officers and those monitored observed that the ankle band had a distinct impact on children. As one parent testified, "When it beeps, the kids worry about whether the probation officer is coming to take me to jail. The kids run for it when it beeps." Another noted that his child repeatedly strapped a watch around his ankle "to be like Daddy."

Beyond the physical and emotional burdens, those under monitoring often pay for their confinement in the most literal possible fashion. As Marissa Alexander discovered in Florida, private companies often exact fees from the people they're imprisoning. They average around \$10-\$15 per day -- in addition to installation costs and fees imposed for drug tests or other "services." Those unable to

pay may be re-incarcerated in a cycle that harkens back to debtor's prison. By the end of her sentence, Alexander will have spent \$16,420 on her own imprisonment and constant surveillance.

### **Probation and Drug Testing**

You don't, however, have to be hooked up to a fancy monitoring device to find yourself paying for your confinement. As probation is increasingly contracted out to private companies -- in Georgia, for example, 40% of probation services are privatized -- many non-monitored probationers are subject to steep fees and failure to pay such probation costs might also result in jail time. This phenomenon, dubbed "offender-funded probation" has recently become ever more popular. A 2014 report by Human Rights Watch revealed that 1,000 courts in at least 12 states now employ it in a twisted mix of budget-tightening, privatization, and corporatization. As author and organizer Kay Whitlock writes, "This industry is built upon disdain for poor and low-income people, and a determination that their wretchedly limited

resources should not only support the illusion of administration of justice but simultaneously provide private business owners and courts with new revenue."

With nearly four million people on probation in this country, what an increasingly "offender-funded" system would look like is coming into focus: state coffers would be filled with dollars from those with the most meager resources, while the threat of debtor's prison would hang over the heads of those who don't or simply can't comply. In addition, despite their rhetoric about "correction" and "rehabilitation," for-profit enterprises are actually driven by the distinctly for-profit urge to keep people in the system, while bringing in ever more of them.

In addition to monitoring and probation, mandated drug tests are another standard item that can be turned into a cash cow. Most people ensnared in the criminal justice

system (whether incarcerated or on supervised release) are required to undergo regular drug testing, regardless of whether their offense is drug-related. Companies now charge about \$25 per test, meaning that a person serving a year-long probation sentence is likely to be saddled with a \$1,250 drug-testing bill.

Moreover, drug testing is helping to expand the criminal system into new areas of society. Thanks to decades of drug-war policies, the tests have entered schools, hospitals, workplaces, and the welfare system -- and testing positive can result in serious punishment, including surveillance and confinement. One in five high schools now use drug tests and many punish a "dirty drop" with loss of extracurricular activities or even expulsion from school.

As the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals noted decades ago, "there are few activities in our society more personal or private than the passing of urine." Yet in many circumstances, from workplaces to law enforcement probation visits, people being tested are not only listened to, but also watched as they urinate. The Minnesota Department of Corrections, for instance, gives these instructions to its probation and parole staff: "Staff must... position himself/herself in such a manner as to verify the specimen passes directly from the offender's body into the specimen collection container."

Such drug tests are also used by child protective services agencies

during home visits to surveil parents, overwhelmingly mothers of color and particularly black mothers. A failed drug test may result in the removal of children from the home -- regardless of whether the drug use is affecting the parenting abilities of the user.

During the drug-war years, unlike the other ways in which we relate to our bodies and our health, drug use has become fair game for policing and state surveillance. No state intervention can mandate that you stop eating gluten or quit smoking cigarettes or undergo chemotherapy, but we have come to accept the idea that outside authorities may monitor, control, and punish your choice to use certain drugs -- and rampant drug testing is a graphic manifestation of that. Like any health-related blood or urine test, drug testing is not inherently bad, but its widespread, mandatory, and invasive deployment by the state is unique among health procedures. It is the only routine medical test that can land you in jail.

As public approval of drug-war-fueled mass incarceration ebbs, however, it's important to remember that the drug "battlefield" now extends well beyond the prison and that privacy violations once reserved for jails and drug treatment centers are now common in places where privacy was once a given.

### Predictive Policing

Perhaps the most prevalent prison-outside-of-prison version of incarceration happens before, not after, arrest. It's what anti-police-violence activist Joseph "Jazz" Hayden calls "open-air prisons" -- that is, the intensification of policing and surveillance in poor neighborhoods of color.

As a growing national movement has made clear recently, in many black and brown communities police are a feared source of violence, not an answer to it. A recent Pew survey showed that black Americans are much less likely than whites to believe that police protect them from crime.



Only 31% of black respondents believed that the police were "good" or "excellent" at protecting their safety and for just 6% were they "good" at "using the right amount of force for each situation."

Yet when right-wing advocates against mass incarceration opt for a new approach, they tend to support approaches that lead to identifying certain areas (homes, blocks, schools, neighborhoods) as "crime hotspots," and cramming them with law enforcement and surveillance. Right on Crime, a Texas-based "prison reform" group which Newt Gingrich, Jeb Bush, and many other conservative luminaries promote, calls for using money saved from reducing prison populations to expand "data-driven policing" and, in the process, increase the use of electronic monitoring and private security firms.

Case in point: a method called "predictive policing" is increasingly gaining favor with right-wing "reformers." Appropriately enough, as reporter Aaron Cantú documents, the very concept was birthed by a private company called PredPol. As the ACLU of Massachusetts notes, this technique "essentially applies the Total Information Awareness approach of the CIA to policing." That means drawing upon large pools of surveillance, arrest, and other data to develop "algorithms" to determine when and where a crime might happen in the future. The use of historical arrest data ensures, of course, that police presences will intensify in places that are already most heavily patrolled and where the most arrests occur: poor neighborhoods of color.

**As that ACLU report observes:**

"If police arrested lots of bankers and lawyers for cocaine use and for hiring expensive sex workers, we might see predictive policing algorithms sending cops to patrol rich suburbs or fancy hotels in downtown areas. Instead, the algorithms simply reproduce the unjust policing system we've got."

In recent years, as the barriers



between local law enforcement and the country's intelligence agencies have broken down, opportunities for race-based targeting within communities have multiplied. For example, under the banner of counterterrorism, national and local outfits have colluded in intensifying the surveillance of Arabs and Muslims. The Electronic Frontier Foundation notes the dissemination of "suspicious activity reports" through national police and intelligence networks with titles like "Suspicious ME [Middle Eastern] Males Buy Several Large Pallets of Water." In this way, "predicting" crime falls in line with racial and religious profiling.

Current applications of the "predictive policing" strategy usually involve expanding surveillance and data collection and increasing the number of police clustered in certain locations. However, the predictive software may be used in more aggressive ways in the future. In Albuquerque, for example, police have begun using the software to flag "bait" items, such as copper wire and cars, placing them in targeted neighborhoods. If the items are taken, arrests can be made on the spot or police can continue to track them (and the people who've taken them), enlarging the area that is directly surveilled.

Even some of the "reforms" being proposed in response to racist

police violence carry the potential to be used against the public in ways that expand the bounds of who is watched and when. The body cameras that President Obama proposes all police wear face outward. As constitutional lawyer Shahid Buttar notes, they monitor anyone who crosses their path, including people suspected of no crime, "without the individual basis for suspicion constitutionally required to justify a police search."

Buttar warns that this uptick in public surveillance could actually fuel incarceration. Constant video footage means more opportunities to convict people of the small "crimes" occurring all the time, from jaywalking to selling loose cigarettes to causing a public disturbance. The more convictions there are, the more potential for punishment in the form of fines. Ferguson, Missouri has become infamous as a place where nearly

every citizen (largely poor and coloured) were victimized by endless fines. This is because more and more courts are reviving debtors' prisons and hence the increasing opportunities to fine people means increasing opportunities for the jailing of those who cannot afford to pay. And that means more and more money for the prison corporations who use prisoners for cheap labour. This is all part of the War on the Poor being waged in America.

# Multidimensional Poverty in Pune

**With income as the only indicator, an absurd 5% of Pune's population would be classified as poor. But the Pune Municipal Corporation itself accepts that 40% of the city lives in multidimensional poverty, suffering residential, occupational and social vulnerabilities. While Pune's poor have relatively higher levels of access to public services than the poor in other cities, a closer look reveals the extent of their vulnerability**

✱ A CCDS report

A fairly simple and popular way to define poverty is to use monetary indicators and proxies linked to estimates of income and consumption. The value of a basket of goods essential for daily living can be used as a monetary indicator. The 'poor' can be defined as those who do not earn enough to purchase the basket, or whose expenditure is less than the value of the basket. The percentage of people who cannot afford the basket of basic goods is called the 'poverty rate' of a given population.

Accordingly, in India, formal 'head count' of the poor uses the average, minimum daily calorie requirements per person, estimated in 1979 by a government-appointed taskforce as 2,400 calories in rural and 2,100 calories in urban India. The monetary equivalent of these requirements, or the poverty line, is based on the 28th Round of the National Sample Survey (NSS) for 1973-74. It was found that, on an

average, at 1973-74 prices, consumer expenditure of Rs 49 per capita per month was associated with intake of 2,400 calories per day in rural areas and Rs 57 per capita per month with intake of 2,100 calories per day in urban areas. Poverty lines were then estimated for each state, using state-specific

prices. Over the years, the poverty lines have been updated by adjusting for inflation.

Whatever purpose it may serve, this method does not account for the causes, dimensions, dynamics and relativity of poverty. It does not help us understand rural-urban, regional, gender, and social



differences among the poor and non-poor.

In the urban context, the dimensions not captured by this method include vulnerability to fluctuations in income, vulnerability to health hazards due to crowded living conditions in urban slums, and lack of tenure security (right to occupy a dwelling site). Other dimensions not captured include access to basic services such as water, sewage, health and education, and safety nets to tide over crises.

There are also serious objections to the validity of data: the findings are said to be gross underestimates as realistic adjustments have not been made for the extra costs of urban living — the higher expenditure incurred by urban households on housing, transport, and the fact that they cannot generally grow their own food.

Without all these adjustments, plainly absurd poverty rates can emerge. This is clearly seen in the case of Pune (excluding areas falling under the twin-city Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation). Using the 2004-05 all-India official poverty line of Rs 538.60 per person per month for urban areas (for minimum intake of 2,100 calories per person per day), the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) set Rs 591 as the poverty line for Pune in 2005, and thereby, through a survey of the city's slum population, estimated that only 10,800 households in the city, constituting less than 5% of the total population, were below the poverty line (BPL). The figure, which has not been updated or modified, is not taken seriously by anyone -- not even by the PMC, though it uses the list of 10,800 households to provide them some social welfare benefits.

The data that emerges from these efforts has limited use in locating the poor across and in cities.

Location of the poor is possible through BPL surveys conducted by state governments. The surveys identify eligible beneficiaries for poverty-alleviation programmes, using multiple indicators of



deprivation. However, BPL surveys have been conducted across the country only in rural areas.

A third source of official data on the urban poor is Census of India surveys of urban slums. Strictly speaking, these cannot be used to estimate the number and location of urban poor, as everybody who lives in a slum is not 'poor' in the conventional sense: many slum-dwellers own assets like TV sets and motorcycles, which are not generally associated with the notion of poverty. Further, an exclusive focus on slums leads to exclusion of persons who do not live in slums but nevertheless face considerable deprivation or vulnerability, which are key criteria for identifying the poor.

That apart, the available census data on slums is of little use. According to Census 2001 data, only 15% of the country's total urban population lived in slums. This patently gross under-estimate arose from the fact that the slum population data (collected through the census for the first time) was gathered only from 'notified' slums with at least 60 households, in cities and towns with a population of 50,000 or more persons in 1991. As a result, no slums were 'found' in over 100 cities/towns, and the percentage of slum population reported from many cities was plainly absurd: in

Patna, for example, it was only 0.3% of the total population.

An expert group constituted by the Planning Commission in 2010, under S R Hashim, recommended a vulnerability-based identification of the urban poor. Rather than looking at only indicators of income, the committee said that vulnerabilities in three broad categories should be looked at: residential, occupational, and social. Recommended indicators of residential vulnerability included (in decreasing order of ranking): having no home, living in kutch/temporary houses, and facing insecurity of tenure along with absence of civic services. Indicators of occupational vulnerability included: access to social security, susceptibility to significant periods of unemployment, susceptibility to informal/casual occupations with uncertain earnings, employment subject to unsanitary, unhealthy and hazardous work conditions, etc. Suggested indicators of social vulnerability included gender and age of the head of the household, disability and/or chronic illness, education status, and disabilities arising from religious and caste status.

The committee's recommendations formed the basis of the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC), 2011. Till the date of



writing this article, however, even draft SECC data for Maharashtra and several other states was not available.

### Slum populations in Pune

The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) uses a common Marathi term to describe a slum: *galicha vasti* ('filthy settlement'). While the term richly evokes brahmanical revulsion towards 'filth' and condemnation of people associated with 'filth', it does not help us identify and understand slums. Parts of many slums in the city are by no standards filthy, while quite a few housing societies of middle-class families are poorly maintained and dirty.

A more useful definition of a slum can be obtained from the Maharashtra Slum Areas (Improvement, Clearance and Redevelopment) Act, 1971, which states that a "slum area" is one that "is or may be a source of danger to the health, safety or convenience of the public of that area or of its neighbourhood, by reason of the area having inadequate or no basic amenities, or being insanitary, squalid, overcrowded or otherwise"; and one in which buildings used for human habitation are "unfit" for this purpose, on account of dilapidation, overcrowding, "faulty arrangement and design of such building", lack of ventilation, light or sanitation facilities, or any combination of

these factors, which is "detrimental to the health, safety or convenience of the public of that area".

Another definition of a slum is used by the NSSO: a slum is a "compact settlement with a collection of poorly-built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions".

The UN-Habitat defined a slum as a contiguous settlement where inhabitants have inadequate housing and basic services. Characteristic features of slums are:

- Inadequate access to safe water.
- Inadequate access to sanitation and infrastructure.
- Poor structural quality of housing.
- Overcrowding.
- Insecure residential status.

Using these definitions, particularly the last, one can calculate the number of slums in the city, and the number of households and persons living in slums. However, in the case of Pune, and probably all other Indian cities, we have no up-to-date and reliable data on slums or slum populations. What we have is different sets of questionable data:

- According to Census 2001, Pune had a slum population of 0.49 million people, constituting 19.39%

of the total population (2.53 million). Enumeration of slum population was limited to slums having a population of at least 300 persons living in "poorly built, congested tenements", and as such the data does not give us total slum population.

- Using unspecified internal sources of data, the PMC has been routinely saying that around 40% of the population of the city lives in slums. For example, without giving any source of data, the PMC's revised City Development Plan (CDP) for JNNURM funding (May 2012) stated that the city's slum population in 2001 was 1.1-1.2 million, or more than twice the Census 2001 figure, and using that figure, the CDP estimated that the city's slum population was "approximately 40%" of the total population in 2012. The CDP stated that there were 564 slums in the city, of which 353 were notified, and the remaining 211 were not. However, this data is also suspect as according to the PMC's draft Development Plan (DP) for 2007-27, this was the number of notified and non-notified slums in 2009 -- there would surely have been an increase in the number of non-notified slums since that year (the PMC stopped notifying slums in 2001).

Households (HHs) living in slums have no legal rights over the land they occupy. Nevertheless, 80-90% of households in Pune's slums have built the house they occupy. Other households occupy rented tenements. In 2009-10, the average monthly rent paid by these households was reported to be Rs 1,000 (CHF International-Mashal report, Socio-Economic Profile of Slums in Pune, 2011).

Apart from expenditure incurred on construction and subsequently repairs and renovation, many households owning houses in slums have incurred expenditure for securing occupancy "rights": they have paid some amount to the local goon or "slum lord", who "developed" the slum and granted them the "right" to



occupy a specific plot of land. Survey data on these amounts, and amounts that have to be paid to sell the “occupancy rights” are not available. However, some data on market rates for sale of slum houses is available, which shows that the rates are determined by the cost of land in different areas, and the cost of acquiring a pucca house of only 12 sq m in a notified and well-serviced slum in 2007 was over Rs 180,000, and could go up to Rs 350,000.

### Access to basic services

Access to basic services such as health and education determines the vulnerability level of households. If poor households have access to affordable or free health and education services of good quality, they could, despite their low income, substantially reduce their vulnerability and improve their prospects for a better life.

#### ‘That’s all we want’

**“We want drains to be cleaned every eight days. (Public) toilets should be cleaned regularly. Wherever people are facing a water problem, they should be served. Widows should be given pensions. That’s all we want.”**

**-- Woman participant in CCDS FGD**

Both non-slum and slum populations in Pune appear to have assured access to safe drinking water. However, CHF-Mashal 2011 data shows that the percentage of slum households with personal water connections varies from 0% to 98% across different slums. There are around 40 slums in which over 70% of households are dependent on public water taps.

Most of Pune’s slum households have access to public toilets (free or paid). However, they are lacking both in quantity as well as quality. The PMC’s sanitation department estimated in 2012 that around 24,000 households (or over 100,000 persons) in the city do not have a toilet within walking distance. Further, as field group discussions (FGDs) conducted for this report revealed, many toilets are

not safe or usable: they are used as meeting places by criminals, do not have adequate water, or do not have electricity. As a result, at least 8,000-9,000 persons in the city defecate in the open daily, using over 100 defecation “spots”.

A 2008 study on the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) status in 256 PMC-run schools, which mostly draw students from low-income households, showed:

- Three schools had no toilets.
- 40% of schools had no separate toilets for girls, boys and staff.
- 16% of schools did not have water in the toilets.
- No school had soap for washing hands after using the toilet.
- Only 11% of schools had child-friendly toilets.
- 50% of schools had toilets with damaged doors requiring repair.

According to PMC data, all private, community, public, pay-and-use and group toilets in the city are connected to an underground sewerage system. Septic tanks have also been connected to the sewerage network. Over 90% of slum households also have access to drainage lines/gutters that carry away household liquid waste (CHF-Mashal 2011).

For collection of solid waste, the PMC has introduced a system of segregating and collecting waste door-to-door, and then transporting it through trucks. In 2012, the door-to-door collection system is

estimated to have covered 52% of all households in the city, with the rest using neighbourhood bins. CHF-Mashal data however indicates that around 20% of slum households simply throw solid waste onto available open spaces and there are around 35 slums where over three-fourths of households dump garbage out in the open.

Only around 50% of the city is covered by closed drains that carry away rainwater. Thus, around half the city is prone to waterlogging during the monsoons. Worst hit are slums on hill slopes, along rivers, and in low-lying areas.

### Access to health facilities

As in other urban areas of India, the people of Pune, including the poor, are dependent on private health facilities. Data for 2008-09 indicates that of the 10,000 hospital beds available in the city, over 85% were in private hospitals, 11% were in the state government’s public hospital and only 6% were in PMC hospitals. Thus, according to both International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) 2011 and CHF-Mashal 2011 data, only around 21% of slum households use the services of government or PMC hospitals. According to PMC data for 2013-14, only 6,000-7,000 pregnant women avail of free pre-delivery, delivery and post-delivery services at its hospitals every year.

The most common reason for not using government/PMC health



services, reported by over 43% of slum households, was that there was no such facility nearby; 27% of households also said that the waiting period at government/PMC hospitals was too long (IIPS 2011); during FGDs conducted for this report, women participants linked poor service in public hospitals to class prejudice. Despite high dependence on private health services, less than 5% of slum households have medical insurance (CHF-Mashal 2011).

**‘Go to a private hospital’**

**“When we tell staff in government hospitals to cater to us promptly, they say: ‘This is a government hospital... not private. If you have money why don’t you go to a private hospital?’”**

**-- Woman participant in CCDS FGD**

IIPS 2011 data indicates that under key parameters like availability of essential infrastructure and equipment, government and municipal hospitals in Pune are as good as or better than private hospitals. However, the former are poorly stocked with some basic drugs like ORS packets.

IIPS 2011 data indicates that there is not much difference between slum and non-slum households on utilisation of reproductive and child

health services. In fact, slum households report higher use of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), including supplementary nutrition, immunisation, health check-ups and health counselling. But coverage of these services is low, with only one-fifth of eligible women living in slums getting supplementary nutrition and counselling.

**Access to subsidised school education**

Subsidised school education is available at government and municipal schools, government-aided private schools and, to some extent, from unaided private schools which have to reserve some seats for students from economically weaker sections of society under the Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009. Data for 2008 (before RTE came into force) indicates that the largest proportion (44%) of all school-going children in Pune were in private-aided schools, where parents have to spend money on uniforms, books, supplementary fees, etc. Only 26% of children were in municipal or government schools which, theoretically, do not require parents to spend any money on their children’s education.

While it would be expected that most children from low-income households would go to PMC

schools, 2008-09 data on nearly 2,000 school-going children from five slums showed that only 57% were going to PMC schools; in two slums, less than 40% of the children were going to PMC schools. The main reason was that there were not enough PMC schools near the slums.

Further, only around 10% of parents of school-going children in the five slum areas reported that they were spending nothing on school education; nearly 50% of parents reported spending up to Rs 1,000 a year on uniforms, notebooks, etc, and nearly 10% reported spending over Rs 5,000 a year.

**Access to subsidised food**

CHF-Mashal 2011 data indicates that 90% of slum households in Pune have ration cards and 6% have two or more ration cards. Nearly 15% of households have a yellow ration card which entitles them to foodgrain at the rate of Rs 5-6 per kg; nearly 70% have an orange ration card which entitles them to foodgrain at a 50% higher rate. FGDs conducted as part of this study however revealed widespread dissatisfaction with time that required to procure commodities from ration shops, and the quantity and quality of commodities. Most FGD participants said they had to spend several hours getting their rations; some stood in queues at dawn, though the shops open only at 10 am. Many participants said they were forced to buy kerosene from the black market as the PDS allotment was inadequate. Large-scale data is not available on the average amount spent by slum households on subsidised and non-subsidised foodgrain to meet their monthly consumption needs.

**‘We get nothing if we go late’**

**“If we do not have money, and we go to the ration shop two-three days after the monthly stock has come, we should get our allotment but we get nothing... after it’s already sold in black, what will we get?”**

**-- Woman participant, CCDS FGD**



Cooked food and nutritional supplements are directly given to children through the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme and ICDS centres. According to PMC data for 2012-13, 70,000 school-going children in the city are covered by the MDM scheme, and only 12,000 children are given nutritional supplements through ICDS centres.

### Access to finance and social welfare schemes

As only 30% of slum households have at least one member with salaried employment, easy access to low-cost finance is a critical requirement for slum households, for starting or expanding a business, or investing in better housing. However, while around 12,000 self-help groups have been promoted and/or supported by the PMC, only 11% of slum households have used SHGs to access finance (CHF-Mashal 2011).

The PMC runs a plethora of social welfare schemes, funded by the central or state governments, or through its own finances, for the benefit of school students, women, women’s self-help groups, people from backward classes and persons with disability. With total expenditure on all these schemes less than 1% of the PMC’s annual budget, and the total number of beneficiaries less than 70,000 (half that, if student beneficiaries are excluded), the reach of the schemes appears to be scattered, and the monetary or other value of benefit and purpose served is not clear. No social audit of the schemes or beneficiaries has been done; it is unclear whether most vulnerable persons like widows and the aged living without family support have been targeted. FGDs conducted in a few slums for this report revealed that none of the women participants knew the name of the social welfare schemes run through the PMC’s Urban Community Development (UCD) department, though some participants were aware of self-help groups formed or trained by UCD staff.



### Grievance redressal

The PMC does not yet have an e-governance system, and follows the traditional system for dealing with complaints about basic services. Its website provides a complicated form for registering complaints only in English; the corporation does not have a 24-hour helpline or even an emergency number in case of disasters.

A “service demand and performance survey” undertaken by the PMC in February 2006, covering a stratified sample of 2,523 “general citizens” and 1,196 “slum-dwellers” showed that:

- Only 16% of general citizens and 11% of slum-dwellers reported that they knew where to complain about a basic service.
- Only 14% of general citizens and

10% of slum-dwellers had ever registered a complaint with the PMC directly.

**‘Do we have only this work?’**

**‘They (staff of PMC sewerage and water supply department) talk back to us. They roam around smartly dressed, wearing jeans, with cellphones held to their ears. When we approach them, they say: ‘Do we have only this work (your complaint to resolve)? We have a thousand pending things to do.’**

**-- Woman participant, CCDS FGD**

So in slums, the general mode of registering a complaint is to approach corporators or their aides; FGDs revealed that attempts to get complaints addressed directly are generally unsuccessful. Complaints

about broken toilets, choked drains and flooding in particular remain unaddressed for weeks.

**‘Our foreheads are bruised**

**“Sometimes I think we should leave this place and go somewhere far away... our foreheads are bruised, falling repeatedly at the feet of these people (staff of sewerage department).”**

**-- Woman participant, CCDS FGD**

Plans for affordable housing for all slum-dwellers

The PMC’s draft Development Plan (DP) for 2007-27 talks about making the city “slum-free”. However, other than providing scanty and rough data, the DP does not elaborate on how this ambitious goal can be met. Neither the DP nor the City Development Plan (CDP) for JNNURM funding has the data required to make a realistic plan for a slum-free city, such as:

- An updated list of notified and non-notified slums, with details of ownership status of land, number of current houses and residents, level of infrastructure and level of housing; and with identification of “tenable”, “semi-tenable” and “untenable” slums (located on residential lands, located on non-residential lands, and located on environmentally vulnerable lands).
  - A ward-wise inventory of vacant lands available for the construction of houses.
  - Prevailing land values in areas surrounding slums.
- On the basis of the above, it would be possible to choose, for each slum in the city, one of the following options:
- Slum improvement: extending infrastructure in slums where most residents have already invested in better housing.
  - Slum upgradation: extending infrastructure and facilitating construction of better housing in slums where housing is generally of a poor status.

**The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) uses a common Marathi term to describe a slum: galicha vasti ('filthy settlement'). While the term richly evokes brahmanical revulsion towards 'filth' and condemnation of people associated with 'filth', it does not help us identify and understand slums.**

- Slum redevelopment: in-situ redevelopment of the entire slum after demolishing existing structures, at locations where prevailing land prices would draw the interest of private developers.
- Slum resettlement: relocation of untenable slums to alternative sites.

It would then also be possible to assess the investment requirements for each slum, taking into consideration cost of land, construction, and physical and social infrastructure. On the basis of total cost, financing options can be considered and criteria for determining beneficiary contribution fixed.

Without such an exercise, the Pune DP vaguely talks about how the housing needs of the poor could be met through SRA and BSUP schemes. To deal with future demand, reservation of land for EWS housing has been proposed. Remarkably, there is no discussion on how SRA and BSUP schemes have fared so far, and what has happened in the past and continues to happen to reservations made in the DP for EWS housing.

In relation to the last point, the following facts are important:

- In Pune’s first DP, for the period 1966-76, which was finalised by the state government in 1987, nearly 75% of sites reserved for EWS housing were de-reserved. The decisions were made without inviting suggestions and objections from citizens.
- Rejecting a legal challenge to these de-reservations, the Bombay High Court (Sawant and Kantharia J J, July 18, 1988) ruled that it was not within the jurisdiction of the city planning authority to reserve plots for “residence of a particular section

of society”-- there was no need to reserve land for EWS housing.

- During 1966-76, the PMC acquired only 4% of the land earmarked in the first DP for public purposes.

Even after the DP was finalised and became a statutory document, the state government made several changes: between 1987 and 2001 reservation of 29 sites to be used for public purposes was deleted; 15 of these sites had been reserved for EWS housing.

It must also be noted that in all slum improvement, upgradation, redevelopment or resettlement schemes carried out so far, beneficiaries have not received security of tenure. There is no central or state government policy on this vital issue and the courts are not inclined to press for such a policy; reflecting the opinion of many non-slum residents, a judge of the Bombay High Court observed that “public lands and government lands are not properties to be gifted away by the government to grabbers and encroachers”.

In these circumstances, far from preparing a platform for a slum-free city the DP exercise serves only to “foster real-estate interests at the cost of access to even basic necessities of healthy living conditions for the low-income population”.

*This is an excerpt from a CCDS (Centre for Communication and Development Studies) study on urban poverty and governance in Pune, supported by ActionAid. The report has been written by Ashok Gopal, an independent journalist and researcher based in Pune, with inputs from Anosh Malekar and CCDS's senior researchers Anjula Srivastava and Swati Shinde. Full text of this and a similar report on Thiruvananthapur is available at [www.infochangeindia.org](http://www.infochangeindia.org)*

# Indigenous People Protest Brazilian Bill's Violation of Land Rights

**All indigenous groups have suffered violations of their human rights. There are hundreds of projects in indigenous communities and none of them consulted the people. They are violating the 1988 constitution, which came at the cost of a lot of blood.**

\*Santiago Navarro F. and Renata Bessi Translated by Miriam Taylor

Indigenous leaders from the five regions of Brazil traveled for days to an encampment convoked by the Coordinating Body of Brazil's indigenous people (APIB), which took place from April 13 to 16 in the federal district in Brasilia. The district is both a geographical center and a center of power in Brazil, as it is where the three branches of government are headquartered.

For four days and three nights, more than 1,500 indigenous individuals filled one of the gardens in front of the National Congress with colors, music and rituals. Their principal objective was to put pressure on the three branches of government so that the proposed constitutional amendment No. 215 - better known as the PEC 215/2000 - is not passed. This amendment, among other things, would transfer the decision-making power of demarcation of indigenous territories to Brazil's legislative branch. Currently, this type of legal-political decision is in the hands of the executive branch.

**"Indigenous people are moving toward complete disappearance. This law will leave us in the hands of the multinational corporations."**

Within Brazil's Congress, there is a faction known as the "Rural



**Representatives of indigenous groups from the five regions of Brazil protest against Bill PEC 215.**

Legislators," a group of legislators who have transferred jurisdiction over private multinational companies to the legislative branch. Of the 50 members of Congress that make up the special commission that will review the proposed constitutional amendment, PEC 215/2000, at least 20 financed their electoral campaigns with support from big farming, mining and energy firms, as well as from the forestry sector and banks. Among the members of the Rural Legislators group is Agriculture Minister Katia Abreu, a business

owner and fierce defender of big agriculture businesses. Another is Luis Carlos Heinze, one of the leaders of the group, who is also the president of the Parliamentary Farming Front (FPA). In 2014, a lawsuit was brought against him by indigenous organizations because he encouraged industrial farmers to use armed guards in order to forcibly remove indigenous people from their land.

Those who attended the protest dressed in their traditional attire as leaders and sages of the community and painted their faces with vibrant



*The military police were constantly present, protecting the headquarters of Brazil's three branches of government from the indigenous protesters.*

vegetable-based paints of red, yellow and black. Some smoked tobacco; others prepared their bows and arrows. It was a moment to take to the streets and deliver a letter signed by all of the groups present at the encampment, addressed to President Dilma Rousseff, urging her to approve and sign a bill that is still within her power regarding 20 indigenous territories. They also reminded her of her commitment, expressed to indigenous groups during her presidential campaign in an open letter in 2014, where she pledged not to change the constitution and to move ahead with demarcating indigenous lands.

"During her presidential campaign, she [Dilma Rousseff] committed to demarcating indigenous territory in Brazil. Today, we see that indigenous people are moving toward complete disappearance," said Francisco da Silva, an indigenous Kapinawá leader from the state of Pernambuco. "If she herself does not honor her own words and the constitution, the only thing left for us to do is for us to demarcate our own territories and to defend our ancestral lands ourselves, because if we do nothing, this law will leave us in the hands of the multinational corporations."

While the encampment was underway in Brasilia, Rousseff was asked by various media outlets in an April 15 press conference about those who were protesting. Her response attempted to discredit the presence of the indigenous groups.

She affirmed that the discussion regarding indigenous rights in her administration is "systematic," and stated that "there is no unified indigenous movement; the question regarding indigenous movements is not singular; it is diverse."

"Having declared that, [Rousseff]

committed a grave error in her discourse, because we are here with representatives of the five regions of the country, with more than 200 different indigenous groups represented," said Sonia Guajajara, an indigenous woman from the state of Maranhao in northeast Brazil.

### **Dried Up Dialogue**

The indigenous leader Babau Tupinamba, leader of one of the best-organized groups in Brazil, who live with a high degree of self-sufficiency, readily affirmed that indigenous people need to prepare themselves for a more radical, even violent struggle. "I said in the Congress that we have returned to colonial times. And we, as the Tupinamba, the first people to confront the colonizers in the year 1500, today we call on all indigenous people to prepare themselves for a confrontation. And if it is necessary, we will even form a guerrilla force if this law is not rejected," he told Truthout.

**"An indigenous person without land is no longer indigenous."**

Babau knows that his words carry a heavy weight and extreme responsibility, but argues that what is at risk are the lives of the indigenous people who are being assassinated by the owners of industrial farms. "We as indigenous people are pacifists; we have no desire to have a confrontation; we just want our lands. But with these types of decisions, they are pushing

us to a point of rebellion. If we don't have another option and they continue like this - there are 102 proposals in Congress against indigenous people - we will have to form a guerrilla, because we are not going to let them force us off our ancestral lands; we refuse to leave. Because an indigenous person without land is no longer indigenous."

The PEC 215 bill is just one of the many violations of the human rights of indigenous people in Brazil. "There is no community right now that is not suffering the impacts of a capitalist project. Behind the impetus for this law are the interests of Monsanto, Nestlé, Syngenta, Cargill and other corporations that want to take our lands. They are the same ones that promote the killing of indigenous people," Rootsi Tsitna, an indigenous person from the state of Mato Grosso do Sul, told Truthout.

All indigenous groups have suffered violations of their human rights. "There are hundreds of projects in indigenous communities and none of them consulted the people. They are violating the 1988 constitution, which came at the cost of a lot of blood, and the United Nation's International Labor Convention 169, which establishes the requirement of previous consultation of indigenous people. We should not have to negotiate anything, because they are our lands and it is our right [to be here]," said da Silva, the indigenous man from Pernambuco.

### **Allies?**

Not only indigenous groups worry about the PEC 215 bill. Organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) have also expressed concern, since the amendment would also affect protected natural areas in the country. However, theirs contrasts with the position of several indigenous groups that have been affected by their politics. As an example, in 2011, the Maggi Group sold for the first time 85,000 tons of its "responsible soy," with the

"green label" given by the WWF, through a program of "environmental certification" in collaboration with Bunge, Cargill, Monsanto, Nestlé, Syngenta, Unilever and other corporations that have been connected to the forcible removal of indigenous people from their lands in Brazil and various countries around the world.

**"The impetus for this law are the interests of Monsanto, Nestlé, Syngenta, Cargill and other corporations that want to take our lands."**

Some political figures came to visit the indigenous encampment as supposed allies, such as ex-presidential candidate Marina Silva. She is an honorary member of the International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN) and a defender of the conservation policies promoted by the WWF and other nongovernmental organizations that promote national parks, natural protected areas, peace parks, cross-border parks, sanctuaries and green market policies such as carbon credits.

"There are many politicians who have come to talk with us, above all during election season, but all that we want is the demarcation of our territories," an indigenous Cayapo individual from the town of Xingu in Mato Grosso do Sul told Truthout. He argues that carbon credits are another way to remove them from their land. "We have seen the experiences of the Suruí people, who accepted the REDD and its carbon credits and conservation projects. They can no longer hunt, grow crops or use materials they need for celebrations and rituals," he said. "We know how to take care of nature because she is our mother and we don't want another carbon credit agreement, because it is just another way of removing us from our sacred lands."

### **Indian Day?**

During the encampment, the indigenous leaders appeared in the House of Representatives and the Senate several times, not just to deliver their signed letter, but to

express their discontent and their rage. The response was that PEC 215 will not be voted on, but neither will it be archived, which left the indigenous representatives unconvinced.

On the encampment's last day, April 16, Congress' doors were opened in a tribute to the indigenous representatives in honor of "Indian Day." Due to security issues, only 500 out of 700 in attendance were allowed entrance. The mayor did not attend the event.

**"We don't want another carbon credit agreement because it is just another way of removing us from our sacred lands."**

Indigenous leader Marcos Xucuru expressed his anger and said that little should be expected of the government and political parties; what remains is the necessity of taking their land and assuming the consequences. "Our fight will continue and we are going to demarcate our lands ourselves. And if necessary, we will fight like the Tupinamba, who have confronted the federal police and the military and we will force them to leave our territory. As indigenous leaders, we are willing to give our lives for our Enchanted Ones - our ancestors - and for nature," Xucuru stated.

Babau says that it is the government that will be held responsible if the genocide continues in his country. "We call upon all indigenous people all over the world, who are the only ones who understand us, to pay attention to what will happen. Because the government had the opportunity to negotiate with us, but the dialogue is drying up," he said. "We will offer our lives if necessary, but we will not let them take away our lands."

### **SANTIAGO NAVARRO F.**

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**An indigenous Tupinamba leader present at the march for the delivery of a letter addressed to Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff. He says that the dialogue has run dry.**

## PBI Odisha Meeting

Bhubaneswar (Odisha): A State Level meeting of Proutist Bloc India (PBI) was held on 11th May 2015 presided over by State Chairman Kulmani Nayak. It was attended by the National Organizing Secretary Kanhu Charan Behera and National Convener Acarya Santosananda Avadhuta. The agenda was the holding of the National Convention of the party. After thorough discussion, it was decided to hold the National Convention on 10-11th October in Bhubaneswar. It was also resolved to support a non-governmental organization named Samaj Andolan which is active for the resurrection of the language, culture, arts and various sentimental legacies. This NGO is very active and has begun the Kevalam Odiya programme of defacing signs in Hindi and English -- even those of officers and ministers. The local media has taken this movement very seriously due to its serious efforts to arouse the people's consciousness about the sublimity of Odiya language and culture. Even the Culture Minister was apprised about the declining status of Odiya in cultural life and urged by Samaj Andolan to start reversing this trend by having signs solely in Odiya script. The Culture Minister however, curtly remarked, "You do your job and we will do ours." In the ensuing protests, several Samaj Andolan activists were detained for a day in the police station including Kanhu Charan Behera, Kedar Sahoo, Khageshwar Baloo, Pitambar Dhuliya.

The next meeting of the State Committee will be held on the 21st June in which planning for conducting the National Convention will be effectively executed.



## Remembering Bijan Setu Brutality



On April 30th, Ananda Marga Pracaraka Samgha took out a silent procession from Deshapriya Park and marched to Bijan Setu to pay homage to the 17 Dadhics, who were brutally killed on this day 33 years before in broad day light. It is during CPM rule that Bengal has lost its pride as a pioneer in culture and civilization. The incident of Bijan Setu and post facto behaviour of CPM rulers made the world forget that Bengal is the land of much respected scholars, devotees, yogis and moral leaders.

More than 2000 followers of Ananda Marga and its sympathisers took part in the procession, inspite of Bandh call by CPM.

The procession started from Deshapriya Park at 2.00 pm and reached Bijan Setu by 3.00 pm. The procession was decorated by banners, flags and festoons. It was led by prominent members of civil society of Kolkata, including Pulak Narayan Dhar, a prominent columnist and social reformer, Balai Chakraborty, retired IAS officer and regular newspaper columnist, Professor Bhaskar Purakayastha. The Sanyasis (monks) and Sanyasinis (nuns) in front were carrying the urn pots. After the procession reached at Bijan Setu, it converted in a homage paying meeting.

The speakers included civil society members and members of the Samgha, Ac.Mantreshvarananda Avadhuta (Mahasachiv, Ananda Marga Gurukul), Ac. Raviishananda Avadhuta (Public Relations Secretary) and Dr.Jagdish Haldar, Retired Doctor of Nilratan Sarkar Hospital where the injured and dead of Bijan Setu massacre were brought. His speech was the most heart touching. He said today after so many years he feels much relaxed that after so long, he could express his heartfelt emotions openly before everyone. He further said that the brutality of this incident cannot be expressed in words. It is unimaginable.

"I have seen these great souls mortal remains and I am relieved of a great agony that I am able to express it in this homage paying meeting. The brute force that CPM is proved beyond doubt in this incident." After saying this, he read out the names of persons behind planning of this incident. He said they do not deserve to be called human beings.

A young Proutist student leader from Midnapur, Raju Manna was emphatic in his expression. He said without Prout - an ideology based on moral and spiritual principles -- humanity cannot be saved from the murderous politics that has started by CPM. They emphasized that unless morality is established and the education standard as well as the





socio-economic consciousness is raised, the present democracy will only throw up self-centred leaders. To bring a real Paribartan (all-round transformation), the moral fabric has to be rebuilt and for that a socio-economic theory like Prout based on morality is needed.

The honourable Justice Amitabha Lala Commission, which is heading the inquiry to nail down the involvement of CPM in Bijan Setu massacre, was also mentioned in the programme with expectations that this commission will certainly be successful in its endeavours.

## Relief Work In Nepal By AMURT & AMURTEL



In the wake of the powerful earthquake with a magnitude of about 8.0 on 25th April, 2015, that originated in Nepal and rocked most parts of India and some parts of China and Bangladesh, killing and injuring thousands of people in Nepal and destroying the property worth millions of dollars, several volunteers of AMURT and AMURTEL have been working tirelessly to provide relief to the earthquake victims with essential commodities and medical assistance.

Soon after the calamity hit Nepal, several teams of AMURT and AMURTEL arrived in Kathmandu with loads of relief material, such as essential medicines including broad-based antibiotics, large quantity of mineral water, Tarpaulins, Blankets, LED Torch lights, food materials etc.

A team of AMURT and AMURTEL volunteers is conducting relief operations in two vastly affected villages of Nepal viz. Tanpur and Kharel Thok at Baluwa Devbhumi Panchayat of Kavre District near Dhulikhel City. They are distributing commodities like rice, pulse, beaten rice, molasses, biscuits --- besides blankets, tarpaulins, plastic sheets, glucose, soap, detergent, salt, match-boxes etc. Man Bahadur Ranabhat, Dayaram Shrestha, Mahendra Shrestha, Jivan Shrestha, Rajendra Srestha (prominent margiis and office bearers of registered AMPS, Nepal) besides Ac Vivekaranjananand Avt., Ac. Kamalkrishnananda Avt, Ac. Samsuddhananda Avt., Ac. Vinayasundarananda Avt and some other volunteers are the part of the team. Another camp under the guidance of Ac Bodhgyananda Avt is working in full swing, undertaking both rescue and relief operations.

AMURT Coordinator, Ac. Paripurmananda Avadhuta and Sudattanandaji, in Sitamarhi (a place in India, close to Nepal border) had a meeting with the President of Red Cross. Impressed by the spirit of the volunteers, he provided

AMURT with a four-wheeler for the relief work and also medicines worth Rs.80,000. Also, Zilla Parishad (District Collectorate) of Sitamarhi assured AMURT of all sorts of assistance in providing relief to quake-victims in Nepal. The team volunteers collected food material and money from Sitamarhi. Team members included Dr. Shyamapada Dalui, Dr. Shrikanta Mahanta, Didi Ananda Mahavrata, Didi Ananda Naviina, Didi Ananda Abhaya, Didi Ananda Viitaraga, Dada Sudattananda, Dada Pramateshananda, Dada Samdrptananda and two members from Red Cross Sitamarhi.

On 30 April. an AMURT team distributed relief materials at the village Hoske and Jorpipal of Hoske Panchyat and Shikarapur of Panchkal Municipality, Kavre District. More than 2000 earthquake victims were directly benefited.

A team of grihii mariis of Thakurganj in Nepal (bordering India) led by Dada Sarvajayananda distributed rice, pulse, beaten rice, puffed rice, tripals (tarpaulins), garments, buckets, utensils, to the earthquake victims. Drinking water was also arranged, as it was in short supply.

A medical team led by Dr. Shyamapada Dalui returned to the base camp on 11th May after completing the first phase of service at Hagama village of Sindhupal Chok district, which is at the high Himalayan altitude. The team was there for 4 days. More than 1500 patients from distant villages benefitted from the camp. From a transit camp at Sitamarhi, 10 quintals of rice and 300 pieces of tarpaulin were also sent for the earthquake affected people at Sindhupal Chowk district.

AMURT & AMURTEL has been serving continuously in the remote areas of Nepal, where no one else has reached yet. Repeated earthquakes have rendered innumerable Nepalese homeless. According to a reliable source, a total of 1,60,786 houses have been destroyed. The victims are on roads without shelter. Thanks to the help in cash and kind that is flowing in to AMURT from India and abroad.

Since fresh episodes of earthquake are still ravaging Nepal, AMURT will continue the relief operations there and help the affected in their rehabilitation. Since the task is gigantic, it will need more and more funds; therefore it appeals to all to donate generously and help in this humanitarian work.

## Water Crisis and PROUT Solutions

### Maharashtra March - A Report



After the auspicious birthday celebrations of Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, propounder of PROUT - Progressive Utilization Theory, Proutist Sahayadri Samaj started water conservation movement from Pune city on 6th May, 2015.. The movement will travel in Sahayadri and Marathwada regions for 20 days. We are trying to inspire people to start conservation of water in their village and towns. A mobile travelling thought exhibition Van has been designed for the purpose. Proutistic ideas given by Shrii Sarkar in a booklet form and posters are being distributed all around the areas of Sahyadri and Marathwada regions. The movement was inaugurated by India's acclaimed Water Man" Jal purusha" Rajendra Singh . Efforts are on to adopt some villages and develop model water conservation project there.

**Kurli Village :** The village once had very high quality water from the Wells. But due to greedy capitalists, they built a plant that has been polluting ground water from the factory waste. We have promised legal and administrative help from our sources. We had a meeting with the villagers and learned about their problems. Areas covered include Chakan, Shirkrapur, Shirur and Ranjangoan. Activities like corner meetings, pamphlets distribution, posters are being pasted. We need to work hard to raise the water conservation consciousness.

**Hiware Bazaar :** Two meetings were conducted at Dainte Jugal and Hiware Bazaar villages. We had very good response. Water scarcity is very big problem in Dainte Jugal village. We are committed to their cause. A discourse on spirituality was also presented.

At Hiware Bazaar we met Popatrao Pawar, a social reformer who has transformed his village in all aspects. He showed the water conservation plan of his village. Due to collective effort the village now has brought up the water table. There is no liquor shop, no sale of cigarettes, no tobacco product sale in this village. Disputes are solved locally. We have discussed the economic and spiritual aspects of PROUT. He promised for a yoga class afterwards. He was inspired with the ideals of PROUT. In particular he was amazed about Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar's overall solution to the rain shadow area of Maharashtra by building a tunnel through the mountains.

**Night stay in SNEHALAYA.** "SNEHALAYA "is a centre for children who are affected from" HIV positive".

# Activities

Interacted with the children and felt very blessed to be getting spiritual care. Ananda yogi gave a class on yoga. In the campus they have a school for the children. We thank the management for their hospitality. We also had breakfast with them. We need to remove the misconception regarding the HIV AIDS disease. Deeply touched.

**Verul :** At Verul a group of people have already started to conserve water by widening and deepening the river. We have committed to do work for about 2kms, already 4.5 km of work has been done. This will lead to percolation of rain water and eventually raising of water level of the surrounding villages.

**Najik Pangri :** The villagers have already started water conservation by digging trenches and 2kms long water collection canal. This is inspired by Shirpur water conservation management model.

**Jalna District :** Jalna is worst hit by water crises. The two villages we visited are Patardevulgaon and Tupewadi. Both of the villages have check dams but they are non functional due to incompetent design and corruption. The youth in these villages have formed a committee to make this dams functional. The youth are committed for plantation of trees and restarting the water check dams. Women also took active part in our movement. We had decided to adopt one project of check dams.

This programme will continue, listen to the problems and share Proutistic solutions for water sovereignty (svaraj) for every block of great Maharashtra civilization. Once water blossoms, then once again Maharashtra will lead India with noble ideals, practical genius, and devotional love.

## Honouring the Ultimate Sacrifice

On April 24th, a special programme was held to commemorate the Self-immolation of Dadhici Dineshvarananda Avadhuta in Purana Qila, New Delhi. Acarya Dineshvaranandaji was an ardent Proutist who in a short life worked courageously to manifest PROUT. When PROUT's founder, Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar was poisoned, Acarya Dineshvarananda threw himself into the protest that followed. Eventually, he took the ultimate step of sacrificing his life to draw attention to his cause. After a short meditation session the final message of Acarya Dineshvaranandji was read out.

It said in part, "It gives me great pleasure to tell you that Baba Nam Kevalam is the only goal and only ideology for which I am living. I am fully satisfied with my life and God has given me strength to sacrifice my life for sake of ideology..."

Let me tell to all my brothers and sisters to sing all the time, "Baba Nam Kevalam." We shall come on our feet with the Swastika flag in hand to establish moralist society."

Santosananda began to recall in vivid detail the circumstances leading to the self-immolation of Delhi Dadhici, Dineshvaranandji. The participants all were very thankful for these forgotten memories of a lost history. The courage, determination and sacrifice of Dineshvaranandaji to fight against immoralists and establish Sadvipra Samaj will live on in the deeds of Proutists tomorrow.



## UPSF/YF Conference in Siliguri

Two state level conferences were organised at Siliguri, West Bengal on 11-12 April 2015 by Universal Proutist Student Federation (UPSF) and the Universal Proutist Youth Federation (UPYF). The conference was attended by students and youth from all over the state of West Bengal numbering over 400. It was a very inspiring event and organisers claimed that they will create more than 10 full-time workers in the programme. The trainers included Ac. Mantreshvarananda Avadhuta, Ac. Tanmayananda Avadhuta and other senior Proutists. The rally on second day concluded in a huge public meeting where apart from lectures a Proutist drama composed by Ac. Mantreshvarananda Avadhuta "Sonali Bhor" was staged at the street corner attracting thousands of spectators.

At Guwahati the state level conference of UPSF/YF was held on 18-19th April and in spite of heavy rains more than 100 students and youth attended the meeting from all over the State. Ac. Raviishananda Avadhuta and Ac. Kalyaneshvarananda Avadhuta were the main trainers. A public meeting made a key impact in this prominent city of the Northeast. District level and state level committees of UPSF and UPYF were also formed.



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