

# frontier

Vol. 55 : No. 35

ISSN 0016-2094

February 26-March 4, 2023

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## On Other Pages

Comment	2
Note	3
MARX ON EXPLOITATION OF NATURE 'Robbing the Worker, Robbing the Soil' Chris Stewart Keishia Taylor	4
ELITES AND THEIR GATEKEEPERS Yale, Oxford in India Kancha Ilaiah Shepherd	7
LIES AND LIES America Sabotaged the Nord Stream Pipe Lines Farooque Chowdhury	8
INDIAN BAIL SYSTEM "Helpless Prisoners" I Mallikarjuna Sharma	9
A BAND-AID BUDGET Nine Years of Stagnation M K Venu	11
REMEMBERING MARTIN LUTHER KING "Walk to Freedom" Abayomi Azikiwe	12
Letters	14

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Published weekly for Germinal Publications Pvt. Ltd. by Sharmistha Dutta from 44, Balaram Dey Street, Kolkata-700006 and Printed by her at Laser Aid, 35A/3, Biplabi Barin Ghosh Sarani, Kolkata-700 067.

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[Typeset by THE D-COMLASER, 60 Sikdar Bagan Street, Kolkata-4, Ph : 98361-58319]

## *Endless War*

**A**T THE TIME OF WRITING BOTH SIDES WERE PREPARING TO observe the first anniversary of Russia-Ukraine war in their own way to assert their stated positions. It would be symbolic for Russia and Ukraine as well because after a year of bloody conflict the war is in a state of stalemate. Anticipating a massive Russian offensive in Spring Zelensky is frantically lobbying in the West to procure more sophisticated weapons, including fighter jets to continue the war to the end. In his second trip abroad since Russia started special military operation in February 2022, Zelensky met the UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak before an audience with King Charles III and a visit to Ukrainian soldiers being trained to use Challenger battle tanks. Zelensky expressed his gratitude to Britain for its help and renewed his request for combat aircraft—or as he put it, "Wings of Freedom". The UK is one of Ukraine's most loyal backers, with parliamentary support unanimous across party divides. There is no difference between Conservative and Labour when it is the question of promoting Britain's imperial interests. And Ukraine war means bonanza for defence industry. True, Britain hasn't been the largest supplier of equipment but it is always one of the first, closely following the senior partner in crime—the US. As things stand today, it won't be very long before the world witnesses western advanced aircraft being sent to Ukraine to aggravate the war situation. Already German and British tanks stationed in Poland, are to be delivered anytime. All this is aimed at keeping Ukraine in perpetual war trap and blocking the possibility of negotiations. Zelensky returned home with heaps of goodwill and commitments for latest military hardware. How enhanced military spending fuelling environmental and ecological degradation is anybody's guess. Just a bomb is said to be releasing a slew of toxic heavy metals into Ukraine's soil and ground water. And in Ukraine today it is being multiplied by thousands. A horrible scenario indeed! While ignoring the climate disaster America is not only spending to boost its own military powers but also providing Ukraine with missiles and modern air defence system in the current war that is now one year old. But Zelensky is demanding more bombs inviting retaliation from Russia only to write a script for climatic and human catastrophe. The course of war in Ukraine is being dictated by America and Britain, more precisely by America-led NATO and Ukrainians are cannon fodders. America's total military aid to Ukraine of around \$ 54 billion is now almost large as or larger than the

entire defence budgets of several big economies like France, Germany, Japan and Australia. Ukraine is reportedly training its school boys to handle automatic rifles while in Russia boys are learning the art of firing from AK-47. In short war psychosis seems to have gripped both Russians and Ukrainians.

If this conflict remains conventional and limited to Russia and Ukraine then it will likely end with an agreed peace accord. Neither side can achieve an absolute victory that would allow it to dictate terms. So any understanding would involve compromise. No, America and its allies won't allow that to happen unless Ukraine gets further marginalised in this war game, facing the possibility of disintegration

and division. The stubborn reality is that Ukraine has a long way to go to retake the territory it lost to Russia in 2022, let alone since 2014. Ukraine while not winning this war at the moment, notwithstanding the western drum beat that Russians are losing on all fronts. In a time of misinformation and too much biased information truth remains blurred.

Now it is time for realism and restraint. If the continuing carnage—or a path to half a million dead and severely wounded—is allowed to go on, Ukraine will be ruined beyond repair. Already in some parts of the country people are experiencing existential crisis. There is no dignity in living as refugees in foreign countries, albeit able-bodied men are not

allowed to leave Ukraine. Nor can obvious nuclear or other escalation risks simply be wished away. But Zelensky is opposed to any negotiated settlement because his master in the White House doesn't want it.

Nearly all wars end in some form of negotiation. It is unlikely that Ukraine will return to 1991 boundaries by force of arms despite enormous western military assistance. What is needed is a global anti-war movement against America and NATO for not permitting Ukraine to come to a mutually acceptable agreement. Provided it continues to receive western military package regularly, the Ukrainian leadership is likely to hold out until Ukraine faces further destruction. □□□

[19-02-2023]

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## COMMENT

### A Year with Ukraine

A year has passed since Russia began its Special Military Operation in Ukraine. The imperialism's proxy war in Ukraine is older, since 2014.

Guns are busy in the Ukraine battle fields. Civilian life is devastated in the European country. Millions of Ukraine civilians in their land spread out in countries in Europe are going through unfathomable sufferings—cannon-fodder of an imperialist war.

Disinformation dominates propaganda space as battles rage Ukraine towns and villages. A recent New York Times report said of exhausted Ukraine soldiers. The economy of Ukraine is in a shambles. The imperialist media ignore Ukrainian army's shelling of civilian structures including hospitals in the regions that recently joined Russia. These bombarded areas include Donetsk, Kherson, Lugansk and Zaporozhye. But western propagandists see only Russian forces committing atrocities.

Battle field scenes and reports on the battles are age-old, regular, as happens in all wars—shelling, devastation, loss, deaths, dismembered human bodies, advances, retreats and tactical retreats.

The problem goes with interpretations and propaganda. Many turn confused as they digest imperialist propaganda, miss imperialist onslaught, their hidden agenda and overlook developments in the wider area.

It was propagated that Russia had to retreat from Kiev. It was missed that Russia never claimed to occupy entire Ukraine and the country's capital city. The Russians told: Going back from the doors of Kiev was its positive signal to facilitate negotiation, as Moscow was ceaselessly telling negotiation is the path to avoid war.

Ukraine's enactment of constitutional provision banning negotiation, probably unprecedented in the history of diplomacy the world over,

with Russia went unreported by the imperialist propaganda machine that confuses many minds including a part of the progressives.

Russia's damn defeat that the imperialist media propagated made many including a part claiming to be left joyful, as they found graveyards of Russian tanks. Now, they find the tanks Russia sent forward initially were from the 60s and 70s—virtually obsolete in today's battle fields. Similar goes the stories with Russian guns, ammunitions, soldiers and tactics. Now, they find Russian force deployed in the battle fields isn't regular army.

On the opposite, the imperialist camp is facing a hollowed out-stock-scene—arms depots in countries near-empty after gifting stock to the Kiev regime. Now, a part of them, responsible and authoritative, say: it's unlikely Russian forces would be pushed out of the territories Kiev claims as its own; the moment to defeat Russia has passed away; it's not possible to defeat Russia; Ukraine is in a very, very difficult fight, the frontline situation is very difficult,

Russia is grinding down the Ukrainians.

Now, the Kiev regime talks of non-acceptance of any Korea-like scene. There are reports that the Empire offered 20% percent of Ukraine to Russia.

Russia claims: no Korea-like division of Ukraine proposal from Moscow, a false claim; and no 20% offer. Kiev is now recognising ground reality—losses in the war.

The scene appears hopeless for Ukraine. This may create a situation most dangerous to the entire world: Ukraine's masters may use Ukraine to use nuclear arms.

It'll not be astonishing with Kiev using nuclear arms, if it smells a sure-defeat. The war is not limited in the Ukrainian battlefields, be it Artyomovsk (renamed by Kiev as Bakhmut), Soledar, or Severodonetsk or Lysychansk. Battles can move to new areas.

But the conflagration of war has a wider spread, beyond Ukraine—almost entire of Europe. A few places are training grounds for the proxy fighters from Ukraine, a few others are stocking places or arms depots

used by the imperialists, the war is biting most of the people of the entire continent; and the entire imperialist camp has already actively joined the war. The camp was planning and organising this war for about a decade. The Minsk Agreements, brokered by Germany and France, were signed only to buy time—use ceasefire to build up powerful Ukraine armed forces to carry on war against Russia.

In truth the Ukraine conflict has been incited by the West, the triggers of the war are the Americans and the NATO, the scale and the number of sanctions show that all of this was organised a long time in advance.

It is now being told: the sanctions have been a complete failure; the EU is actually rewarding Moscow by increasing imports from Russia; effect of the sanctions on Russia is less than zero; not only the Ukraine population suffer, the US is also making Europeans suffer, everyone suffer in their daily life; it's an economic war, from which the Americans are the beneficiaries; the Americans sell their gas to Europeans for a price four to seven times higher

**Just Published**

## **WITH THE PASSING TIME**

by  
**Farooque Chowdhury**

Published by  
**NGG Books**  
4, Aati Bazar, Keraniganj,  
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Email: [nggbooks@gmail.com](mailto:nggbooks@gmail.com)

Website: [www.nggbooks.wordpress.com](http://www.nggbooks.wordpress.com)

Price: 400tk

[300tk for teachers and students, if  
collected from the publisher.]

than they do in their own country. Eurostat data, from February to August, 2022, shows most EU states significantly increased imports from Russia; and only seven EU countries buying less from Russia and none of these seven are major economies in the EU. The sanctions are still standing as a malfunctioning tool. □□□

[Contributed]

### NOTE

## Sanctions against Syria

*Bharat Dogra writes:*

**E**VEN BEFORE THE TERRIBLE damage caused by earthquake in Syria and Turkey, there was a strong case for ending sanctions against Syria as the existing sanctions imposed by the USA and its close allies, continuing for several years, had already accentuated the humanitarian crisis greatly in Syria. Now in the post-earthquake situation, it would be nothing short of a crime against humanity if these sanctions against the Syrian people continue.

Of course the sanctions are im-

posed in the name of the Assad regime which is the target of many accusations by the sanction imposers, but the real consequences have to be borne by the people in the form of denial of food, denial of life-saving medical treatment and other essential needs in a country where over 80% of people are suffering from denial of some basic needs.

As far as the many accusations against the Assad regime are concerned, without even trying to come to the defence of this regime, it can be stated that there are more than

one sides of this narrative and what is stated by the USA and its allies cannot be accepted without listening to the other side of the more complex story. What concerns human rights activists more directly is that regardless of the details of these narratives, there is no case at all for the continuation of the sanctions which are only adding to the immense distress of the people of a war-ravaged country. This was very true even before the earthquake and this is even more true now.

Last year (2022) UN special Rapporteur Alena Douhan had stated in a report that sanctions against Syria were resulting in denying food, medicines, medical equipment and essential spare parts for infra-struct-

ture in a country in which nearly 90% of the people were living in poverty, where vast numbers suffered from food insecurity and where a very substantial part of infra-structure had been destroyed. In such a situation, the sanctions were creating suffocation, the report said, and their continuation amounted to a crime against humanity.

Here it may be pointed out that according to some estimates the number of people, particularly children, who died from the impact of sanctions in Iraq was even higher than the number of people who died in direct warfare, even though the number of people who died from very highly destructive weapons here was also

very high. One must keep in mind this highly distressing but entirely avoidable tragedy while considering the issue of Syrian sanctions.

The highly destructive nature of sanctions should be recognised. While there is an urgent need for ending all sanctions in Syria, there is also a wider need for the United Nations to issue an open declaration that in any part of world struck by a natural calamity, any sanctions which exist will cease to be operative and there will be no restrictions on sending relief supplies and equipment.

While both Turkey and Syria have suffered heavily in earthquake damage, Turkey is in a much better position to take care of the needs of its

people compared to Syria. In such a situation, it will be very improper for international relief and rescue teams to restrict themselves to quake affected areas in Turkey while those across the border in Syria may be in greater need of their help.

Hence keeping in view all these factors there should be a strong international campaign for ending the sanctions regime against Syria. In fact there is a wider strong case for ending highly unjust sanctions against several other countries as well. □□□

[The writer is Honorary Convener, Campaign for Saving Earth Now. His recent books include *A Day in 2071*, *Earth without Borders*, *Protecting Earth for Children*, and *Planet in Peril*.]

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#### MARX ON EXPLOITATION OF NATURE

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### ‘Robbing the Worker, Robbing the Soil’

*Chris Stewart*

*Keishia Taylor*

**I**N RECENT YEARS MILLIONS of young and working-class people have engaged in protests against the climate and ecological crisis as devastating wildfires, heat waves, droughts, hurricanes and floods have increased in regularity and intensity around the world. “System change, not climate change!” has become the main slogan, reflecting a sense that people need a fundamental transformation of society to avoid catastrophe.

It is no surprise that this has emerged alongside a renewed interest in the ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and their critique of capitalism. They argued that capitalism was based on exploitation; both of workers and of nature, and that it would inevitably provoke environmental crises. In particular, Marx’s theory that capitalism created a “metabolic rift” between human society and nature has re-emerged as an indispensable tool for

understanding the environmental crisis the world is facing today.

As a materialist, Marx’s starting point was that human society, having evolved from nature itself, was deeply connected to the natural conditions in which people live. “Man lives from nature”, Marx wrote in 1844, “and he must maintain a continuing dialogue with it if he is not to die”.

Studying the cutting edge of natural science at the time, Marx and Engels recognised that human society was dependent on the dynamic and complex systems of nature, made up of delicately balanced natural cycles and circular processes that sustain all life on Earth. These natural cycles have emerged and stabilised over Earth’s geological history. Human societies, have evolved through a “metabolic interaction” with these natural cycles and processes; deriving from them food, shelter, clothing, energy and heat and in turn having an effect on nature itself.

These cycles are the foundation on which all human society, production and culture develops. The carbon cycle between the atmosphere and the oceans plays a key role in regulating the temperature of the Earth. The nutrient cycle replenishes the soils, allowing plant life to continue to grow from which people derive food and other useful things. The circulation of water through the atmosphere is crucial to ensure freshwater is recycled through the Earth, without which no life could exist.

These are just some of the natural processes that have been crucial to the Earth’s biogeochemistry during the Holocene, the most recent geological epoch in which all of human civilisation has emerged. Recognising the importance of these natural processes, Marx argued that a sustainable relationship between humanity and nature was “prescribed by the natural laws of life itself”.

With the emergence of the capitalist mode of production a few hundred years ago, the way human society interacts with the natural world changed fundamentally. Even in the mid-19th century, Marx and Engels were able to see the growing



contradiction between capitalism and nature.

The emergence of industrial capitalism was associated with revolutionary scientific and technological developments that massively increased human productivity. Marx and Engels recognised this system as historically progressive in relation to the feudal system that had come before it. At the same time, however, they identified a number of contradictions at the heart of the system that meant it would quickly become a block on further development—creating social, economic and environmental crises.

Capitalism is based on the private ownership of the wealth and resources of the planet by a small number of corporations and super-wealthy individuals. While capitalism has created a global division of labour, bringing together the combined efforts and skills of workers all across the world, these workers have no control over how things are produced. Instead, capitalists direct production based solely on the maximisation of profits.

Profit is made by exploiting the labour power of workers (paying them less than the value they produce) and extracting resources from nature. Under this system nature is treated as a “free gift” (Marx) to business that has no value in its own right until it is turned into raw materials for production.

Because capitalists are locked in competition with one another on the market they are compelled to expand, disrupt, extract and exploit, endlessly commodifying every aspect of human lives. The environment is not viewed as having inherent natural boundaries and limits within which humans must live, but as an inexhaustible source of profits, and the system’s growth requires a constantly rising stream of raw materials and fossil fuels.

The intensity of competition means that companies have to function on short-term profit cycles. Companies that cannot keep the profit taps flowing will be beaten out by competitors and go bust. This means the system is inherently short-sighted, not able to see past the immediate drive to increase profits.

But this short-sighted drive for profits comes into conflict with the ability of nature to replenish itself. Engels argued that capitalists tended to ignore or externalise the environmental impact of production, treating the environment as an endless source of materials to be depleted and a waste ground to be polluted.

He was clear that this would inevitably provoke environmental crises as the pursuit of profit sets off chain-reactions in nature, undermining the natural source of wealth.

In recent years there has been renewed interest in Marx’s writings on capitalist agriculture, in which he explained that capitalism’s constant drive to accumulate profits was disrupting the life-sustaining cycles of nature. This was creating a “rift” in the metabolism between human society and the natural world which, he argued, threatened the very basis of human society.

He came to this conclusion through the work of German chemist Justus Von Liebig, who warned that industrial agriculture in Europe was disrupting the Earth’s nutrient cycle as nutrients in food were transported from the countryside to the cities and later washed into the sea as pollution, resulting in the depletion of the soil and a build-up of waste, and an explosion of disease in urban areas. The overuse of chemical fertiliser to compensate for this was destroying “the lasting source of fertility” in the soil, i.e. its organic complexity.

Modern agribusiness with its commodification of food has replicated on a global scale the kind of

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metabolic disruption that Marx observed in the 19th century. In the neocolonial world, capitalist agriculture has been one of the key drivers of deforestation and land-use change, creating vast landscapes of monocultures such as palm oil plantations or giant cattle farms for companies like McDonalds. This is triggering extreme drought through impacts on the water-cycle, especially in the Amazon where agricultural deforestation is also threatening to release a vast store of ancient sequestered carbon, exacerbating climate change.

The era of capitalist globalisation forced many countries to prioritise growing cash crops such as coffee or cotton for export on the world market, even where the climate is ill-suited to their growth. This has destroyed self-sufficiency, led to increased food insecurity, and has been a key driver of soil degradation.

Major advances in crop breeding technologies in the 50s and 60s raised wheat yields by two-thirds and rice yields by about one-third in the space of ten years, but did so on the basis of a massive expansion of fertiliser and pesticide use. This effort was led by U.S. agribusiness multinationals as they sought to create spiralling dependencies on their products. Intensively promoted in India, Mexico and other neo-colonial countries, these methods have led to a collapse in natural fertility, creating a total dependency on huge quantities of synthetic fertilisers. Now, disruptions in the supply chain of such fertilisers are contributing to a global food crisis.

Synthetic fertilisers are not only harmful, but also limited as a resource. The Earth's store of phosphorus—nearly 90% of which is used in the global food supply chain, most

of it in crop fertilisers—is being depleted at an alarming rate. At current consumption levels it is estimated known phosphorus reserves will run out in around 80 years. Capitalism has merely kicked the problem of soil exhaustion down the road, deepening the crisis at every stage.

The same global processes have driven small and medium farmers all over the world into debt, due to rising costs of fertilisers and pesticides. This has forced many out of business and pushed them into ever-expanding city slums—a major factor behind the huge protests of farmers in India in recent years.

As Marx said: “all progress in capitalist agriculture is a progress in the art, not only of robbing the worker, but of robbing the soil.”

Control of the world's food is becoming increasingly concentrated into the hands of a small number of multinationals. For example, four corporations control around 90% of the global grain trade, and just ten companies control every large food and beverage brand in the world. The food sector is also becoming tightly coupled to the financial sector. This is making it more susceptible to cascading failure, which would have absolutely catastrophic effects for human life worldwide.

Under this system food is not produced primarily to be nourishing, but to turn a profit. This means that millions of people go hungry despite the productive forces existing to comfortably feed everyone. For example, today 828 million people are malnourished and 44 states experience “alarming” levels of hunger, but at the same time wheat is piling up in U.S. and Russian grain silos as speculators are unable to make money amid volatile markets.

Factory farming of animals is also massively wasteful of resources, including grain and water, and produces 18% of total greenhouse gas emis-

sions. The commodification of animals requires the most brutal conditions aimed at increasing efficiency. Animals are raised in tightly-packed barns in cruel and barbaric conditions. They are selectively bred for the most profitable traits, producing almost genetically identical animals that are dosed full of growth hormones so they reach maturity as quickly as possible to increase turnover. All of this means factory farms are also huge reservoirs for viruses that can develop and spillover to humans—a particularly gruesome metabolic rift that capitalism has created.

Capitalism is destroying the earth's ecosystems. Minerals, nutrients and other raw materials have been vacuumed up from nature while pollution has been vomited back out into the ground, sea, and air. In recent decades as capitalism has expanded into every corner of the globe it has turned 50% of the earth's land into agriculture, cities, roads, and other infrastructure, driving land-use change that accounts for 14% of all greenhouse gas emissions.

This has driven a collapse in the planet's biodiversity. Capitalism has wiped out almost 70% of mammal, bird, amphibian, fish, and reptile populations since 1970 and half of all insect populations are disappearing (leading to a decline in pollinators and, in turn, food production). Biodiversity is dialectically linked to the conditions of the climate—a stable climate has created the conditions for life to develop and diversify, but the diversity of life has also stabilised the earth system. Without it, the life-sustaining natural processes of the planet will be thrown into crisis.

The capitalist market is totally incapable of dealing with the ecological crisis that it has created. On the basis of private ownership of the wealth, resources and industries of society, a planned transition to sustainable production is impossible.

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Short-sighted profiteering will only make the crisis worse as it unfolds, as was seen with the Covid-19 crisis and countless extreme weather events.

In a planned economy, free from

the grip of massive corporations and financial speculators, the state could feed more people more efficiently using sustainable farming techniques and technologies; matching crops

with local climates and ecosystems, using fewer resources, providing quality jobs and eliminating waste. □□□

*[Courtesy: Socialist Alternative, a socialist organisation in Canada]*

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## ELITES AND THEIR GATEKEEPERS

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### Yale, Oxford in India

*Kancha Ilaiah Shepherd*

THE NARENDRA MODI government just opened India's doors for foreign universities—Yale, Harvard, Princeton—to set up campuses in the country. The announcement was made at a press conference on 5 January held by University Grants Commission chairperson M Jagadesh Kumar. According to media reports, “a foreign university intending to set up its campus in India should have secured a position within the top 500 in overall/subject global rankings”. It means that all these top universities of different countries will now eye new campuses on Indian soil. Obviously, courses will be taught in English with a globally competitive syllabus.

Isn't it surprising that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government has allowed universities to teach courses of their choice in English?

The same government has been repeatedly saying that Hindi should be made the medium of instruction in higher educational institutions and the syllabus based more on India's culture and heritage. The Centre is trying to force Vedic and Puranic studies into university syllabi.

The moot question is: Who will study at Indian universities in Hindi and who at foreign universities in English? Will foreign universities teach in Hindi with Vedic science, mathematics, and humanities as 'global' civilisational sources?

“The foreign university/HEI [higher education institution] will have to give the undertaking that

the quality of education imparted by it at its Indian campus will be at par with that of the main campus in the country of origin, and the qualifications awarded to the students in the Indian campus will be recognised and treated as equivalent to the corresponding qualifications awarded by the foreign HEIs in the main campus for all purposes, including higher education and employment,” UGC chairperson Kumar added.

He also stressed on the autonomy that foreign universities would enjoy in India. “We are focusing on providing as much autonomy as possible. So there is not going to be any interference at all from the UGC from the operations point of view of setting up a campus in India, other than in terms of academic programmes and infrastructure in the campus,” Kumar said.

What about the quality of education in Indian universities and the employability of graduates? If the Modi government wants to further divide the country on caste and class lines with its 'national' versus global education, India will go back to a dark past. Shudras, Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Dalits, and Adivasis will be unable to access modern educational institutions. The benefits of reservation will amount to nothing. For the children of the productive classes, the Union government has Vidya Bharati—the network of schools run by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). With such an education model, the RSS

and BJP want Indians to become followers of the 'great' ancient civilisation and see advanced production, modern science, distribution of resources, and equality as 'un-Bharatiya'. Varna-centred human relations and living in ashrams will become the ideals of society.

Meanwhile, foreign and Indian private schools and universities will educate the children of the elites and ruling class in English with Harvard, Oxford, and Yale syllabi that would connect them to the West and beyond. They will become the real vishwagurus or world leaders. Union Home Minister Amit Shah is the face of this 'Hindutva nationalist' education for India's poor agrarian youth and Jagadesh Kumar that of global education for the country's ruling class.

The secular and liberal Dvijas (twice-borns) do not lose much in this dichotomy. All of them know that their children would not be taught the Hindi-medium Vidya Bharati syllabus. Their criticism of teaching methods and pedagogy will remain vague—with no focus on the language and content—but they will talk about 'quality' education. What that quality would be, nobody will know.

Congress educationalists will not fight this model because they are responsible for formulating poor educational policies in the past—one reason why there are fewer English-educated intellectuals among the Shudras, OBCs, Dalits, and Adivasis.

For Muslim and Christian minority intellectuals, this educational divide may not be a bigger problem considering that a large number of Muslim students study in madrasas and Christian students in missionary

schools, though they are dying. Even the Shudras and OBCs, who have been denied educational opportunities, aren't bothered about the issue—a large number of them are hoping that Modi will deliver them from historical bondage as he is reportedly the first OBC prime minister with a Hindu samrat image.

India's regional parties, too, do not take English-medium education for the masses seriously as that may go against their own linguistic chauvinism. OBC and Dalit organisations are more concerned about their share of reservation than the quality of education.

The systematic backward push of the rural agrarian masses with the hypocritical education system of the

RSS-BJP would have to be checked only by equalising school education in terms of both language and content. English-language instruction in all government schools with a superior and modern global syllabus alone will address the inequality that the Modi government's education system will create.

The agrarian masses won a small victory by forcing the government to withdraw the draconian 2020 farm laws but never realised that their children are in greater danger with the RSS-BJP education conspiracy. Most of these foreign universities are likely to buy off the masses' lands to set up their campuses without ensuring that their children get enrolled into them.

The ruling dispensation is planning to dismantle the educational potential of farmers' children who would have a bleaker future due to its policies. Those from reserved categories who remain in government sector will suffer from inferiority complex once privatisation comes into full force.

The RSS and BJP will turn India into an Indralok where the elites will enjoy the benefits of global education and the Hindi-educated rural youth will become its gatekeepers. □ [Kancha Ilaiah Shepherd is a political theorist, social activist, and writer. He has been campaigning for English medium education in rural and urban government schools of India since the last thirty years.]

[Courtesy: The Print]

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## LIES AND LIES

# America Sabotaged the Nord Stream Pipe Lines

**Farooque Chowdhury**

**T**HE EXPOSURE HAS BEEN denied by the Empire. But does anyone believe the denial? Not today, none. People across the world have come across such denials many times, and each time all the denials turned out as lies.

The latest denial is related to the incident of explosion in the Nord Stream pipelines.

Seymour Hersh, the famous journalist, found:

The US destroyed the Nord Stream pipelines in the Baltic Sea in a covert operation.

Citing a source with direct knowledge of the planning of the operation, the legendary investigative reporter, said in an article:

Explosives were planted at the pipelines in June 2022. It was planted by US Navy divers. The job of planting explosives was carried on under the guise of a NATO exercise named BALTOPS22.

Hersh presented the findings in an article posted on February 8, 2023 in

his blog Substack (<https://seymourhersh.substack.com/p/how-america-took-out-the-nord-stream>)

The reporter's findings said:

The explosives were detonated on September 26, 2022. It was detonated with signal from a sonar buoy, which was dropped by surveillance plane of the Norwegian Navy. It was dropped near the pipelines.

The planning for the job was initiated in December 2021. A task force was set up, in which Jake Sullivan, National Security Advisor, participated.

The Pulitzer prize-winning reporter said he had reached out to the White House and the CIA, seeking comments on his finding. Both firmly rejected Hersh's findings. The finding was termed "completely and utterly false", and "false and complete fiction".

Hersh, famous for his exposure of the 1968 Mai Lai Massacre by the US soldiers in Vietnam that brought him the Pulitzer in 1970, said in the article:

"As long as Europe remained dependent on the pipelines for cheap natural gas, Washington was afraid that countries like Germany would be reluctant to supply Ukraine with money and weapons it needed to defeat Russia."

He wrote: US President Joe Biden's Administration was focused on jeopardising the Nord Stream. First, it was through sanctions; and then, sabotage. The Nord Stream appeared as a key to swaying Europe to its cause amid then-looming conflict in Ukraine.

Hersh, famous for exposure of other political scandals including US' covert bombing of Cambodia, the CIA's illegal domestic spying, and the US military's torture and abuse of prisoners in a prison in Iraq, detailed the sabotage operation including its planning and consideration of options for the sabotage of the pipeline between the White House, the US military and the CIA. A major part of the planning was wiping out signs of the US' involvement.

The sabotage operation's stake was high—that was clear to all involved with the operation.

According to the journalist's



source, the operation was actually an act of war, and some officials were in favour of dropping the idea of sabotage.

The Nord Stream's possible role in Europe was clear to all including the Empire. It was opposed by the Empire from the very beginning of the project. Any way Russia completed setting up of the significant pipelines. It was not possible for the Empire to let the pipeline function. Russia pointed out this part of the explosion incident: Who benefits from failure of the pipelines?

A few developments after the Nord Stream explosion are well reported. These include SMS from Ms Liz Truss, then PM of the UK: "It's done". Another was one official's saying: The US was doing everything possible to stop Nord Stream. After completion of setting up of the pipeline, it was also told: We're going to get rid of it.

What was done? What step was taken to stop the pipeline? The questions lead to actors intolerant with the pipeline.

After the exposure by Hersh, Snowden, the famous whistleblower, in a tweet briefly mentioned the Bay of Pigs incident.

Snowden referred to a 1961-news report, in which Dean Rusk, then US secretary of state, denied that the Bay of Pigs incident was staged from

the US soil. But later, it was exposed that the Bay of Pigs operation was a CIA organised operation to overthrow Fidel's revolutionary government in Cuba.

There're other famous lies by the empire. These include the Saddam-poison-vial story—Saddam Hussain is having lethal chemical weapons; and this was told on UN podium showing a vial as proof of the chemical weapon. There're lies related to the Empire's Vietnam War.

After these practices, the Empire calls upon all to follow rules-based world order, and have trust on its words. But who shall believe the Empire?

Even, the Empire's proxies do not trust their master. They know the Empire shall dump them at opportune moment—when the Empire's necessity demands. This was found in many countries including South Vietnam.

The Nord Stream sabotage exposure again exposes the mainstream media. The report exposing the sabotage has been ignored by the MSM, although, immediately after the explosion, the MSM put blame on Russia.

Shall it be possible to hush facts if further exposures of the sabotage follow? Shall not the denials erode trust further? Powerful propaganda with participation of the MSM will not be able to stop this erosion of trust.

**As Timir Basu is still seriously ill, he is not in a position to communicate with contributors and subscribers. Please bear with us. —Fr.**

Following the sabotage exposure, Russia has demanded an international investigation of the incident. But, it is assumed that this demand will go unheeded. After the explosion, Russia pointed to involvement of the US-UK with the explosion. That went unheeded.

With this world order, the imperialist practice of marketing of lies shall continue until it's challenged. People, especially peoples in lands destroyed by imperialism, will not believe these lies, as their experiences always question statements imperialism markets.

The Nord Stream sabotage shows a dangerous aspect: A powerful actor can sabotage any other initiative by any country if the initiative is considered harmful to the powerful actor's interest. All countries will think over this aspect, as none feels safe whenever they try to go away from the Empire's orbit. It's a characteristic of this world order.

However, it will be questioned: Is this the rules-based world order? It's, no doubt, a rules-based order, but the rule is the Empire's rule, and the order is the empire order. □□□

*[Farooque Chowdhury writes from Dhaka, Bangladesh]*

## INDIAN BAIL SYSTEM

### “Helpless Prisoners”

*I Mallikarjuna Sharma*

**I**N THE COMMENT “HELPLESS Prisoners” [Frontier, January 22-28, 2023 issue] it was mentioned that one "Jai Prakash, 47, a resident of Uttar Pradesh's Chaundali district, reportedly had to spend over 22 years in judicial custody without a trial because there was none to furnish a surety bond of Rs 30,000. How many Jai Prakashs are languishing behind

bars as under-trials and pre-trials is anybody's guess".

For one thing the Supreme Court (vide Bhagwati J's judgment in Hussainara Khatoon case, 12 February 1979, (AIR 1979 SC 1360, 1979 SCR (3) 169) had taken care of such situations and directed that such persons should be released on personal bond. Some excerpts:

"One reason why our legal and judicial system continually denies justice to the poor by keeping them for long years in pretrial detention is the highly unsatisfactory bail system, which suffers from a property oriented approach. It proceeds on the erroneous assumption that risk of monetary loss is the only deterrent against fleeing from justice. Even after its re-enactment, the Code of Criminal Procedure continues to adopt the same antiquated approach. Where an accused is to be released on his personal bond, it insists that the bond should

contain a monetary obligation requiring the accused to pay a sum of money in case he fails to appear at the trial. Moreover, as if this were not sufficient deterrent to the poor, the courts mechanically and as a matter of course insist that the accused should produce sureties who will stand bail for him and these sureties must again establish their solvency to be able to pay the amount of bail in case the accused fails to appear to answer the charge. [174 E-G]

This system of bails operates very harshly against the poor and it is only the non-poor who are able to take advantage of it by getting them released on bail. The poor find it difficult to furnish bail even without sureties because very often the amount of the bail fixed by the Court is so unrealistically excessive that in a majority of cases the poor are unable to satisfy the police or the Magistrate about their solvency for the amount of the bail and where the bail is with sureties, as is usually the case, it becomes an almost impossible task for the poor to find persons sufficiently solvent to stand as sureties. The result is that either they are

fleece by the police and revenue

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officials or by touts and professional sureties and sometimes they have even to incur debts for securing their release or, being unable to obtain release, they have to remain in jail until such time as the court is able to take up their cases for trial, leading to grave consequences, namely, (1) though presumed innocent, they are subjected to psychological and physical deprivations of jail life, (2) they are prevented from contributing to the preparation of their defence and (3) they lose their job, if they have one, and are deprived of an opportunity to work to support themselves and their family members with the result that the burden of their detention almost invariably falls heavily on the innocent members of the family. [174 G-175 D]

The bail system, as it operates today, is thus a source of great hardship to the poor and if the civil effects of poverty are to be eliminated and a fair and just treatment assured to the poor in the administration of justice, it is imperative that the bail system should be thoroughly reformed so that it should be possible for the poor, as easily as the rich, to obtain pre-trial release without jeopardizing the interest of justice. [177 C-D]

Risk of monetary loss is not the only deterrent against fleeing from justice. There are also other factors which act as equal deterrents against fleeing. Therefore, the courts, even under the law as it stands today, must abandon the antiquated concept under which pre-trial release is ordered only against bail with sureties. If the court is satisfied, after taking into account, on the basis of information placed before it, that the accused has his roots in the community and is not likely to abscond, it can safely release the accused on his personal bond. [177 E, G, H]

To determine whether the accused has his roots in the community which would deter him from fleeing, the court should take into account the

following factors concerning the accused: (1) The length of his residence in the community, (2) his employment status, history and his financial condition, (3) his family ties and relationships, (4) his reputation, character and monetary conditions, (5) his prior criminal record including any record of prior release on recognizance or on bail, (6) the identity of responsible members of the community who would vouch for his reliability, (7) the nature of the offence charged and the apparent probability of conviction and the likely sentence in so far as these factors are relevant to the risk of non-appearance, and (8) any other factors indicating the ties of the accused to the community or bearing on the risk of willful failure to appear. [178 A-E]

If the court is satisfied on a consideration of the relevant factors that the accused has his ties in the community and there is no substantial risk of non-appearance, the accused may, as far as possible, be released on his personal bond. If facts are brought to the notice of the court showing that, having regard to the condition and back-ground of the accused, his previous record and the nature and circumstances of the offence, there may be a substantial risk of his non-appearance at the trial, as for example, where the accused is a notorious bad character or a confirmed criminal or the offence is serious, the court may not release the accused on his personal bond and may insist on bail with sureties. But in the majority of cases, considerations like family ties and relationship, roots in the community, employment status etc. may prevail with the court in releasing the accused on his personal bond and particularly in cases where the offence is not grave and the accused is poor or belongs to a weaker section of the community, release on personal bond could, as far as possible, be preferred. But even while releasing the accused on personal bond it is necessary to caution

the court that the amount of the bond which it fixes should not be based merely on the nature of the charge. The decision as regards the amount of the bond should be an individualised decision depending on the individual financial circumstances of the accused and the probability of his absconding. The amount of the bond should be determined having regard to these relevant factors and

should not be fixed mechanically according to a schedule keyed to the nature of the charge. Otherwise, it would be difficult for the accused to secure his release even by executing a personal bond, it would be very harsh and oppressive if he is required to satisfy the court—and what is said in regard to the court must apply equally in relation to the police while granting bail—that he is solvent enough to pay

the amount of the bond if he fails to appear at the trial and in consequence the bond is forfeited. The inquiry into the solvency of the accused can become a source of great harassment to him and often result in denial of bail and deprivation of liberty and should not, therefore, be insisted upon as a condition of acceptance of the personal bond. [178 F-179D]". □□□

*[emphases in bold by the author]*

## A BAND-AID BUDGET

### Nine Years of Stagnation

**M K Venu**

**A**FTER A DECADE-LONG lull in the growth of private investment and employment, Budget 2023-24 makes a last-ditch attempt to boost capital expenditure and consumption demand by putting more money in the hands of the middle class via personal income tax concessions. There will be no tax for income up to Rs 7 lakh annually. This may barely ensure the recovery of real incomes of the middle class, which are already eroded by inflation. The government has also increased its capital expenditure budget by 33% to Rs 10 lakh crore. But will all this turn the economy around in a meaningful way? Government capex growth alone is not a panacea, as people have seen in recent years.

In truth Budget 2023-24 is at best a holding operation, against the backdrop of the world economy facing the prospect of a recession, and the developed world preoccupied with fighting high inflation with unusually tight monetary policy. India is hardly immune from the IMF forecasts of the global growth rate dropping from 3.4% in 2022 to 2.9% in 2023. India's GDP growth is projected at 6.1% for 2023-24, down from 6.8% the previous fiscal.

If one goes by this framework the Indian budget, Modi's last before the 2024 general elections, has limited headroom to make any significant progress on growth and employment.

The reality is that the nine years of the Modi government have been marked by stagnation in private investment and employment. The government is now openly admitting that private investment has not been forthcoming, in spite of myriad tax and other incentives given since 2019. After the release of the Economic Survey, NITI Aayog vice chairman Suman Berry conceded that government-driven capital expenditure growth has become imperative, with corporates reluctant to invest. However, history tells that growth and employment cannot fully recover without private investment taking off meaningfully. Public investment alone would not suffice. Essentially, this has been the story of Modinomics in the last nine years. It has been a lost decade for private manufacturing investment.

Consequently, employment too has been stagnant. CMIE data clearly shows that total employment in the economy has been stagnant in the range of 405-410 million every fiscal year since 2019-20. Only the COVID-19 year of 2020-21 saw a big dip to about 386 million and after that, there has been some recovery in total employment, but it remains below the 2019-20 level. This stagnation does not bode well for the economy. The Modi government has tried to give huge supply side incentives to corporates to boost manufacturing

and employment, but the private sector has not invested because it felt that demand was not growing across the board. For instance, the volume of two-wheeler sales is more or less the same as it was five to six years ago. If people's incomes at the bottom of the pyramid is stagnant, how will demand pick up? If demand doesn't grow, why would the private sector invest? The government has been caught in this Catch-22 situation for many years. Post-COVID-19, incomes of the bottom 70% of the population suffered even more.

Whatever hype budgets may create, the legacy of Modi's nine years in power has been a stagnation in manufacturing, private investment and employment. In recent times, high inflation has become an additional problem. Government spending on infrastructure, though substantial, has not been even remotely able to counter the near-absence of private investment growth. Governments can only do so much, given the resource constraints in a low middle income country.

Consequently, India faces this great paradox where the government boasts it is the fastest growing economy, and yet it is compelled to provide free rations to over 81 crore people! Additionally, the government is having to keep reasonably high budget allocations for legislated employment guarantee programmes, which the prime minister had described as a symbol of the failure of the Congress's economic policies. This contradiction is structural and needs to be studied closely, instead of re-

sorting to unceasing hyperbole about India having arrived as the fastest growing economy. There is a lot of work to be done.

It is convenient to enter 'Amrit

Kaal', invoked frequently in the Budget speech, in the 10th year of this government. All promises are now put off for the next 25 years, as the president's address to the joint parlia-

ment session suggested. The previous nine years' record of private investment and employment may not be even a footnote in 'Amrit Kaal'. □□□

[Source: *thewire*]

## REMEMBERING MARTIN LUTHER KING

### "Walk to Freedom"

*Abayomi Azikiwe*

ON JANUARY 16 IN THE United States, the 94th birthday of Dr Martin Luther King, Jr was commemorated as a federal holiday.

Since 1986, the third Monday of January has been designated in tribute to the martyred Civil Rights and Anti-war leader who was born on January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr King was assassinated on April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee during the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's (SCLC) intervention in support of the sanitation workers' strike for recognition from the racist city government of Henry Loeb. African American sanitation workers were subjected to near slave-like conditions despite the passage of legislation such as the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts of 1964-1965.

The mass Civil Rights Movement in the US had gained momentum in the aftermath of the brutal lynching of Emmett Till in Mississippi in August 1955. Mamie Till Bradley Mobley, the mother of Emmett, militantly condemned the racist lynching of her son prompting mass rallies in several cities such as Detroit.

Later on December 1 in Montgomery, Ms Rosa Parks, a longtime labour and civil rights activist, was arrested for violating the segregation laws of the State of Alabama. Parks refused to give up her seat on a public bus to a white passenger. Several days later the African American community embarked upon a year-long boycott of the city buses. They defied the threats and intimidations by the racist city administration. Dr King and other leaders were subjected to unjustified arrests and the bombings of their homes.

The case against segregation in Alabama was appealed all the way to the US Supreme Court resulting in a victory in November 1956. After the highest court confirmed the unconstitutionality of the segregated bus system, the boycott was called off by the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA).

According to a source on the historic ruling by the Supreme Court:

"Aurelia S Browder v William A Gayle challenged the Alabama state statutes and Montgomery, Alabama, city ordinances requiring segregation on Montgomery buses. Filed by Fred Gray and Charles D Langford on behalf of four African American women who had been mistreated on city buses, the case made its way to the US Supreme Court, which upheld a district court ruling that the statute was unconstitutional. Gray and Langford filed the federal district court petition that became *Browder v Gayle* on 1 February 1956, two days after segregationists bombed King's house. The original plaintiffs in the case were Aurelia S Browder, Susie McDonald, Claudette Colvin, Mary Louise Smith, and Jeanatta Reese, but outside pressure convinced Reese to withdraw from the case in February. Gray made the decision not to include Rosa Parks in the case to avoid the perception that they were seeking to circumvent her prosecution on other charges."

After the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the movement accelerated. In 1960, African American college and university students began the mass sit-in struggles throughout the South including Greensboro, North Carolina and Nashville, Tennessee. In April 1960, the Student Nonviolent Coord-

inating Committee (SNCC) was formed while the following year, the freedom rides commenced resulting in additional legal victories outlawing segregation in interstate travel.

Despite these victories beginning with the *Brown v Topeka* case of May 1954, where segregated K-12 public schools were deemed unconstitutional, to the Montgomery campaign, the sit-ins and freedom rides, the overall objective for the total elimination of Jim Crow was stalled by 1963. Then President John F Kennedy had an image of being sympathetic to the plight of African Americans, yet his administration had not initiated a comprehensive Civil Rights Bill to nullify the draconian state and municipal laws enacted after the failure of Reconstruction in the late 19th century.

In Birmingham, the SCLC opened up a campaign to force the desegregation of the most industrialised city in the South. The Birmingham movement resulted in the arrest of several thousand youth who refused to halt their demonstrations in the city. Police Commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor became the public face of the intolerant institutional racists who refused to integrate public facilities, businesses and schools.

A split between the outgoing and incoming segregationist municipal administrations in Birmingham led to a political vacuum where Connor was able to take administrative control of the efforts to halt the demonstrations during April and May 1963. These dynamics proved the opening for the business leaders in Birmingham to speak directly with the SCLC and other organizations where they reached a settlement to end the protests. Thousands were released from detention along with the reinstatement of African American students expelled from schools due to their involvement in the Civil Rights Movement.

During this same period, demon-



strations erupted in numerous cities across the US. In Cambridge, Maryland, the struggle to desegregate the city led to mass militant protests and a rebellion. National Guard troops were ordered into Cambridge where they remained for over a year, representing the longest military occupation of a city since the Civil War.

Other municipalities impacted included Somerville, Tennessee; Danville, Virginia; Greensboro, North Carolina; and northern cities such as Chicago and Detroit where youth and workers took to the streets to protest the monumental injustices related to housing, police brutality and substandard education. In 1963, there were at least two cities where the demonstrations turned violent, providing a preview of the urban rebellions that became the focus of the Black struggle after 1964. In Cambridge, arson attacks and other forms of property damage occurred after many people became frustrated with the repressive tactics of the police. In Birmingham, there were occasions where youth and workers utilized unconventional methods to resist the brutality of Bull Connor's law-enforcement agents.

On June 11, there was the historic admission of two African American students to the segregated University of Alabama, where then Governor George Wallace symbolically stood at the administration building to block the entrance. The admission of the two students had been authorized through a federal court decision which was supported by the Kennedy administration. These events and a speech by Kennedy suggesting he would introduce a Civil Rights Bill for deliberations in Congress, outraged segregationists in the South.

The following evening on June 12, Medgar Evers, a longtime Field Secretary for the NAACP in Mississippi, was assassinated outside his home in the capital of Jackson. The murder of Evers by a well-known racist businessman who boasted about committing the execution, infuriated people across the country.

In Detroit, a mass demonstration

took place just two weeks later on June 23, representing a major departure for the overall movement for racial justice. This march known as the "Walk to Freedom" attracted hundreds of thousands of people within the city. The manifestation was led by Dr King and the Rev C L Franklin, a nationally-renowned minister based in Detroit and the father of the later designated "Queen of Soul" Aretha Franklin. This demonstration culminated at Cobo Arena where Dr King delivered an early iteration of his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, over two months prior to the March on Washington. The speech was captured by Motown Records and released as a recording, the first of LPs featuring Dr King.

Although the Detroit Walk to Freedom was an overwhelming success attracting the participation of then UAW President Walter Reuther and liberal Democratic Mayor Jerome Cavanaugh, less than two weeks later, a 24-year-old African American woman, Cynthia Scott, was gunned down by two police bullets in her back during the early morning hours of July 5. Scott was walking on the street in the lower eastside when she was accosted by two white police officers. They demanded that she get into a police cruiser and when she refused, one of the officers shot her in the back while Scott walked away.

This incident mobilised the African American community in Detroit. The Wayne County Prosecutor and the Recorder's Court refused to indict the officer who killed Scott. Thousands of people marched to police headquarters to protest the killing. Later a civil suit filed by Attorney Milton Henry was dismissed by the courts. A public rally was held at the Central Congregational Church attracted 700 people demanding justice for Cynthia Scott.

The corporate press during this period in Detroit attempted to criminalise Scott after her murder, citing previous arrests. The police claimed Scott had attacked them with a knife. Nonetheless, eyewitnesses to the killing gave statements

to the police and the press saying that the shooting of Scott was completely unprovoked.

It would take another four years for the African American community to erupt in Detroit on July 23, 1967, with the largest urban rebellion in US history. These events led to the election of the first African American mayor, Coleman A Young, a decade after the Walk to Freedom and the police murder of Cynthia Scott, in 1973.

Today in 2023, there are no local or national elections for this year, therefore leaving the African American people largely abandoned by politicians who are not compelled to seek their votes. As in 1963, some six decades earlier, a Democratic administration will be in office which could not have been elected three years before without the electoral support of African Americans.

Similarly, as in 1963, the reformist programme adopted by the Democratic National Convention in 2020 has not been fulfilled. African Americans are still suffering from police misconduct, impoverishment and unequal educational opportunities and increasing environmental degradation.

The Pentagon war budget and the subsidisation of the ruling class by the US government continues to hamper the capacity of the state to meet the immediate needs of the masses of people. Dr King in early 1967 began to speak out forcefully against the US intervention in Vietnam demanding that the troops be withdrawn from Southeast Asia. He viewed the imperialist war machine as an enemy of the poor and oppressed. □□□

*[Abayomi Azikiwe is the editor of Pan-African News Wire, an international electronic press service designed to foster intelligent discussion on the affairs of African people throughout the continent and the world. The press agency was founded in January of 1998 and has published thousands of articles and dispatches in newspapers, magazines, journals, research reports, blogs and websites throughout the world. The PANW represents the only daily international news source on pan-African and global affairs.]*

*[Courtesy: Pan-African News Wire]*

## LETTERS

**Buried under the Rubble**

There are few words to adequately describe the heartbreaking scenes that have unfolded across Turkey and Syria after two major earthquakes. The first was of magnitude 7.8, and struck on February 6, in the early hours of the morning, as young and old alike slept in their beds. The second was a magnitude of 7.6, and happened in less than 12 hours later.

Thousands died in places like Antakya, Gaziantep, Kahramanmaraş, Diyarbakir, Idlib, Aleppo and Hama. The sheer size of the area affected, hundreds of kms apart, reveals the power of what were two of the largest earthquakes by magnitude in the 21st century. Cities across the region are, without any form of exaggeration, devastated, as these before-and-after satellite pictures reveal.

Rescue workers have found it impossible to access some areas after roads became difficult to travel on, and airports were forced to close. The workers who do get through simply don't have the numbers or the equipment to clear every collapsed building, and are forced to make the horrible choice of what pile of rubble to prioritise, listening for the faintest sound, signalling that someone is still alive. Even days on, people have been rescued, pulled out of the rubble, greeted by tears and cheers of joy from the crowds that have gathered. One, a newborn baby, was still attached by an umbilical cord to her dead mother. But with plummeting temperatures, and time cruelly passing, the hope of finding more survivors is fading.

In Turkey, there is growing anger from some at what they see as a slow response by the government, with authorities saying they're doing the best they can given the extreme circumstances. Then there's the question of whether the contractors who built the multi-storey buildings that collapsed had actually followed building codes introduced after previous earthquakes.

In Syria, it has been a further calamity for a people who have faced the horrors of a war that's lasted almost 12 years. The opposition-held northwest is no stranger to demolished buildings, a result of years of bombing by the Syrian government and Russia. But even for people in this often forgotten corner of Syria, the destruction is unprecedented. And the reality in both countries is that, buried under the rubble, there are almost certainly thousands more people who have died.

**Abubakr Al-Shamahi**  
**Danylo Hawaleshka**  
*Al Jazeera*

**What is Marxism?**

We have come across different readings of Marxism in its long history. Very recently, an English translation of the eminent French Marxist thinker, Henri Lefebvre's seminal book, bearing the title *Marxism* (1948), has been published from Kolkata (translated by Runjhun Verma, Sampark, 2023). Lefebvre's book has explored the uniqueness of Marxism as a worldview in contrast to other dominant worldviews—the Christian worldview and the individualist worldview, which corresponds to liberalism.

Lefebvre's reading offers valuable insights for our understanding of Marxism: "Marxism" was the result of real collective work in which Marx's own genius flourishes. The contribution of Frederic Engels to Marxism cannot be silenced and pushed into the background. In fact, it was Engels who drew Karl Marx's attention to the importance of economic facts, to the situation of the proletariat, etc.

Lefebvre's conclusion projects Marxism as a living critical tradition. To put it in his own words: "...Marx analysed capital; capitalisms remained and still remain to be analysed, in the different countries of the world, with their particular structures, their concrete characteristics, their degree of development, their

different sectors, and the forms of State, etc. It also remains to analyse, in the present situation, the crisis of capitalism, ...announced by Marx but whose concrete modalities he was not able to describe and understand..."

Lefebvre's insights and observations place Marxism in the proper perspective and liberate it from the Eurocentric and orthodox frameworks.

**Arup Kumar Sen, Kolkata**  
**Shanti Bhushan**

Tributes to respected Shanti Bhushan-ji, a tall lawyer, great teacher and humble leader! Instrumental in dethroning Indira Gandhi, gathering of forces for the post-Emergency Janata Party and bringing AAP and Kejriwal to the political forefront. I remember his surprise appearance for me in the Operation Bluestar Report—bail matter in the district Court of Tis Hazari, when I was unconditionally set free. A senior advocate appearing in the district court was very rare. He was my first senior and mentor before I joined the bar, when I used to visit him at his NOIDA residence every afternoon. He had assigned me the special task of looking through the case law and selecting the relevant judgments to be presented before the court the next day. He was strong in intent but gentle in speech and mannerisms. Come to think of it, I was so fortunate for he was my first teacher for law training. Shanti Bhushan-ji took meticulous interest in the cases I brought before him each day. My heartfelt gratitude. My deepest condolences to my friend Prashant, and the family. We will miss you Shanti Bhushan-ji. You will live in our hearts.

**Aurobindo Ghose**, Lawyer,  
Writer and Human Rights Activist  
g\_aurobindo@yahoo.com

**In Solidarity**

In the early hours of 6 February, a major earthquake struck ten provinces in south-eastern Turkey and even in Syria. More than ten thousand buildings were destroyed or damaged and tens of thousands of people

February 26-March 4, 2023

FRONTIER

15

were trapped under the collapsed buildings. The death toll from the rubble now exceeds thirteen thousand. Unfortunately, this number will increase in the coming days, as not even five per cent of the rubble has been removed.

The one-man administration of Erdogan, which only seeks to maintain its power, has done nothing to prepare for the earthquake. Almost half of Turkey is an earthquake zone and scientists have been warning the government for a long time about the possibility of an earthquake in the region where the disaster occurred on February 6. Roads leading to the earthquake zone were closed due to snow and traffic congestion. On the third day, sufficient rescue teams and vehicles had still not reached the region. In many city and towns and particularly villages where no rescue team reached, the earthquake victims were completely alone with their fate. Some areas were snowy, others rainy and the temperature was below zero. On the third day of the earthquake, survivors are still deprived of shelter and warmth and are hungry and thirsty with no food. Telephones work intermittently or not at all.

Due to the time and weather conditions, the possibility of rescuing people alive from the rubble is getting weaker and weaker.

The government declared a State of Emergency in ten provinces, citing the earthquake as an excuse. However, the last State of Emergency experience has shown that the State of Emergency targets Erdogan's opponents, not the needs of the people. It will not be surprising that this time it will also work to suppress the voices of the people who are angry with the government for not receiving aid.

The people of Turkey need international solidarity and aid. The government has centralised the delivery of aid, does not allow anyone to help outside its control and is not trustworthy because of its reputation for corruption. Aid to the people must therefore be in the form of material

aid and delivered to non-governmental organisations. The need for cold-resistant clothing, hygiene materials, barracks and cold-resistant tents, as well as financial aid to meet the needs of the earthquake victims.

As the Coordination Committee, we send our condolences to the working class and labouring people of Turkey for their losses, health for their wounded, and success in their work to the sister Labour Party, whose provincial buildings in Malatya and Iskenderun were destroyed and who suffered losses, and we convey our feelings of solidarity.

**CIPOML**

### **Coordination Committee 26,000 Martyrs**

Soldiers are revered in India. And yet India doesn't have a grand war memorial to honour the sacrifice of 26,000 soldiers from the Indian National Army (INA), who laid down their lives for the freedom of the country. It's not too late if the government takes action in 2022 - the year of 125th birth anniversary of a great soul called Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

Had the iconic Netaji been alive today he would have most earnestly wished for the construction of a grand War Memorial for the martyrs of the INA. The Indian National Army (INA) had a strength of 60,000. Out of these a staggering 26,000 laid down their lives to free India. This amounts to 44% of the force—an unprecedented scale of sacrifice with few parallels in global military history.

The present National War Memorial today has a total of 26,466 names of all martyrs since 1947. This is from a total strength of 1.3 million men of the Army, Navy and Air Force. This helps to place in context the colossal scale of sacrifice made by the INA for India's freedom.

In July 1945 Netaji had laid the foundation stone of the INA War Memorial in Singapore. This was completed in August 1945. The war ended thereafter with the Allied Nuclear bombing of Japan. In Sep-

tember 1945 Lord Mountbatten came to Singapore. He ordered his army engineers to blow up the INA War Memorial with explosives.

In 1996 the Indian origin citizens of Singapore contributed money and built another memorial for the INA. Tragically even 75 years after independence, there is not one war memorial to honour the 26,000 martyrs of the INA in the whole of India.

Since the proclaimed objective of the INA was the Red Fort and also the INA trials were held there, one suggestion would be to erect it in the vacant plot near the car park at the corner of the Red Fort wall. Should that not be possible for any reason it should be constructed at any suitable location which is easily accessible to the common people.

**Maj. Gen. (Dr.)**

**G.D Bakshi (Retd) SM, VSM**

### **It's doomsday in Turkey and Syria**

Over 12,000 people are dead—and thousands are trapped under mountains of rubble after two thumping earthquakes. And in Syria nearly 300,000 are displaced.

The next few days are critical for rescue efforts—but while a massive rescue operation is underway in Turkey... in war-torn Syria it's a totally different situation.

After a decade of all-out war, millions are almost completely cut off from international aid, and hospitals are thoroughly devastated. Sanctions imposed by America and western countries are actually killing thousands of Syrians, particularly elderly and children.

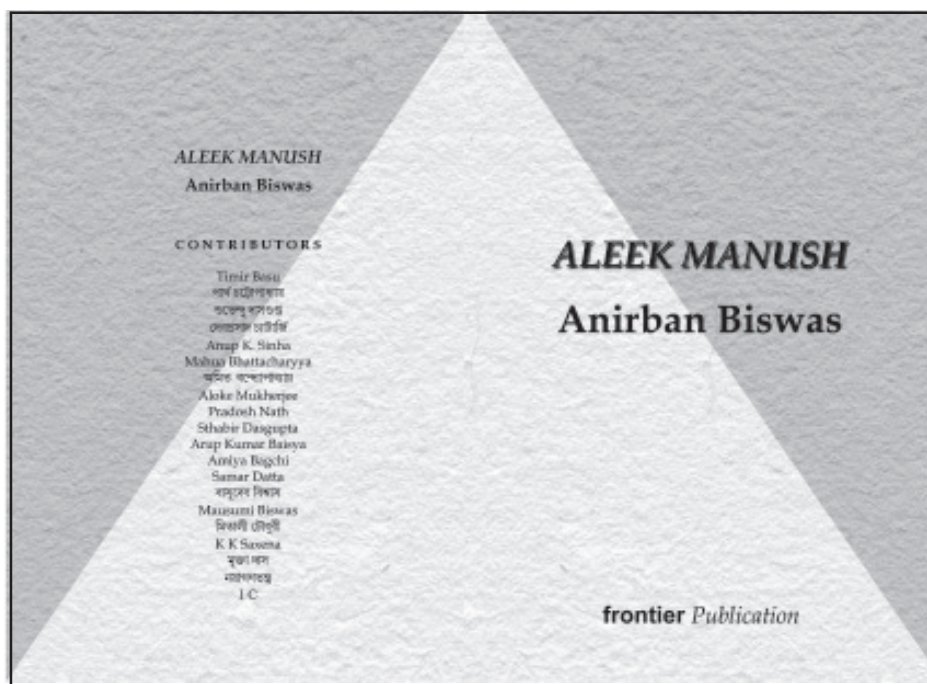
But one brave group of Syrian volunteers is already responding, literally digging people out of the rubble with their bare hands. The White Helmets are the best hope for people in parts of Syria. They are crying out for rescue supplies, fuel, and emergency shelter. When the bombs fall, they're the people who haul babies and bodies from the rubble.

**Wissam, Antonia, Kaitlin,  
Adela, Mike, Bert Avaz**



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## **ALEEK MANUSH**

**Anirban Biswas**

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**Contribution: INR 100**