

frontier

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'Where We Will Go Now?'

AS ISRAEL'S WAR WITH HAMAS ENTERS ITS THIRD MONTH Israeli Prime minister says 'it is the beginning of the end of Hamas'. Despite a huge humanitarian disaster, Hamas fighters are resisting the massive air strikes and ground operations by the Israeli Defence Forces—IDF. Hamas health Ministry says around 18,000 Palestinians have been killed with 49,500 injured so far and most of them are women and children. Even Israel's allies admit that too many innocent people have died in the conflict. At an emergency session of WHO's executive board, the organisation's director said that, 'Gaza's health system is on its knees and collapsing'. Only 14 of the enclave's 36 hospitals were even partly able to treat the sick and injured. The intensified fighting followed a UN vote demanding a permanent cease-fire in Gaza, which failed because the US vetoed it, albeit 13 members of the UN Security Council supported the Qatar-drafted resolution while Britain abstained. Russia, however, backed the resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire in the Gaza strip and said the United States was "complicit in Israel's brutal massacre". But its own record in Ukraine is not that rosy! Veto was not unexpected and UN Secretary General was a helpless onlooker. In truth UN is a paper tiger increasingly losing its relevance in international arena. It is now more like an agit-propaganda platform for the poor and aggrieved countries i.e. global south. The UN Chief vows to push for fresh resolution for permanent cease-fire but Qatar prime minister says chances of immediate cease-fire are sinking. Unless the big five of the UN Security Council agree not to disagree even for a temporary truce Israel's offensive will continue unabated and miseries of Palestinians will multiply with every passing day. It is now next to impossible for UN agencies to send aid materials—food, water, medicine—to starving Gaza as the IDF has stepped up their military campaign. People are struggling day and night to get some bread and water. 'Hunger is the base of all evils that destroy the social fabric of the communities. It is the second face of the war one sees in Gaza today'. But the world is not really listening!

Close on the heels of UN's failure to stop war, the Biden administration declared an emergency to expedite arms shipments to the Middle East, bypassing Congress to sell 13,000 rounds of tank ammunition to Israel. America has not fixed any time table to end the war. In other words more Palestinians will be homeless and rootless in the coming weeks.

As IDF orders more evacuations, Gazans in the South ask 'where we will go now?' No one and nowhere are safe in Gaza. They have moved from north to south and now Israel is asking them to leave south as well. Palestinians are fleeing from central and southern Gaza to Rafah, further south along the border of Egypt. But Cairo refuses to accept Palestinian refugees. They have mobilised troops and tanks at the border to stop influx of refugees. With Israel's deadly assault exodus of Palestinians into Egypt can hardly

be avoided. Another blood bath is in the making.

Nearly 85 percent of Gaza's 2.3 million people have been displaced within the besieged territory. Thomas White, the Gaza director for Palestinian refugees wrote on social media that roads leading to Rafah were 'clogged with cars and donkey carts packed with people and their meagre possessions'. Even in Rafah the sound of air-strikes punctuates the day though Israel said it had suspended military activities in the refugee camp in Rafah. The Pales-

tinian population has been pushed more and more into tinier and tinier pieces of land and there is no way that this piece of land will be able to accommodate such a high number of people. Many think Israel has a secret plan to make Gazans to be exiled in Egypt for the duration of war—augmenting Palestinian fears of a permanent expulsion.

At least 20 hostages are believed to have been killed after they were abducted according to Israeli government sources, heightening concerns for the fate of the rest. □□□ 11-12-2023

COMMENT

Voice of Gadchiroli

GADCHIROLI, A BACKWARD district in Maharashtra with predominantly tribal population is back in the news. This time it is not for Naxalite insurgency. Adivasis-tribals are protesting peacefully against mining giants and government authorities to protect their land and forests. Maoists have a substantial presence in this area. Many of their activists are behind bars because of their campaign against the authorities to save the lives and livelihoods of tribal population of Gadchiroli. For one thing one of the noted political prisoners Prof Sai Baba who has been in jail for long without proper trial and treatment was charged with a case in relation to Gadchiroli movement. The arrest of 21 tribal protesters on November 20, 2023 is a matter of great concern. They may be branded as naxalites anytime to terrorise the poor tribal people and incarcerate them under notorious detention laws.

The voices of the defenders of the forests are being suppressed using tools of police harassment and violence. For a long time now, Adivasi villagers have been resisting mining operations in Gadchiroli that threaten

their sacred forests and nature-based livelihoods.

In March 2023, the Madia-Gond Adivasi community under the banners of 'Damkondawahi Bachao Sangharsh Samiti' and 'Surjagarh Patti Paramparik Gotul Samiti' initiated anti-mining agitation that continued on a daily basis. In June 2023, 6 new mines, spanning 4,684 hectares, were proposed and leased to five companies: Omsairam Steels and Alloys Private Limited, JSW Steels Limited, Sunflag Iron and Steel Company Limited, Universal Industrial Equipment and Technical Services Private Limited, and Natural Resources Energy Private Limited. These mines fall within boundaries of traditional forest use and livelihoods. The existing and planned mines profoundly disrupt the Madia-Gond way of life that is deeply rooted in nature and livelihoods that are sustained by the forests and rivers.

In 2007, Lloyds Metals and Energy Private Limited were given clearance to begin mining for iron ore over an area of 348.09 hectares in Gadchiroli. The time period for mining was extended from 20 years to

50 years. These mining activities of Lloyds will have disastrous impact on the environment, including water pollution in nearby villages. A poignant image from within these villages is of rivers turning red from mining effluents. Water that was once drinkable can now no longer be used. Contamination in agricultural fields and waterways has raised health hazards in the villages. People have been reported to develop frequent swollen eyes, fever, and body aches as mining activity has commenced. The persons in power don't bother about the survival of the Madia-Gond community. They are interested in minting money.

Environmental and democratic movements and rights organisations from across India are demanding that the proposed 6 mines in Surjagarh as well as other proposed mines in the region are scrapped without delay. The approved crushing and processing Lloyd plant and mining lease expansion granted to Lloyds Metals and Energy Private Limited must also be cancelled immediately.

What is urgently needed is to force the police to drop all the false cases foisted against the Adivasi protesters and their right to democratic protest be upheld. The left parties do hardly raise the issue in

Parliament, legislative assembly or any other forum to expose the dubious design of the saffron government. What the citizens' groups are doing to highlight the plight of tribals is not enough.

The Forest Rights Act (FRA) and the Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas Act (PESA) must be fully implemented in the region and there must be no project approvals and work in violation of

these laws and the rights of Gram Sabhas in the Schedule V Adivasi areas.

As the world moves away from fossil fuels and extractive industries, revealing their disastrous implications, it is concerning that various state governments of India are unable to envision a better future that is possibly already here if they listen to the people. Voice of Gadchiroli must be heard. □□□

NOTE

COP28: Declaration on Climate and Health

Sagar Dhara writes:

INDIA REFRAINED FROM SIGNING the Declaration on Climate and Health, a document that was endorsed by 123 nations in the COP28 held in UAE in the first half of December 2023.

The declaration, aimed at addressing the critical intersection between climate change and global health, emphasises the need for swift and substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. It expresses “grave concern about the negative impacts of climate change on health”, and notes the benefits to health from deep, rapid, and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, including from just transitions, lower air pollution”.

To ensure better health outcomes including through the transformation of health systems to be climate-resilient, low-carbon, sustainable and equitable, the signatories of the declaration commit to promoting “steps to curb emissions and reduce waste in the health sector, such as by assessing the greenhouse gas emissions of health systems, and developing action plans, nationally determined decarbonization targets” and take health into account while “designing the next round of nationally determined contributions, long term

low greenhouse gas emission development strategies, national adaptation plans”.

Why did India not support this progressive declaration? One of the sticking points that India saw at the declaration's draft stage was its commitment to reduce greenhouse gases for cooling applications in the healthcare sector. India felt that it could not fulfil this commitment in the short run as it would hinder the current high growth rate that the pharmaceutical industry and health services enjoy.

Healthcare is one of India's largest sectors in terms of revenue and employment. With a public expenditure of 2.2% of India's GDP, the healthcare industry was estimated at Rs 30 lakh crore turnover in 2022. In the last 8 years, its turnover grew at 22% per annum, generating 5 lakh additional jobs per year. With per capita incomes on the rise, healthcare expenditure is expected to continue to grow at a rapid pace.

The Indian pharmaceutical industry is the third largest in the world and grew at over 9% per annum in the last decade. India is the largest global provider of generic drugs and accounts for more than 60% of all global vaccine manufac-

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ture and 20% of generic drug exports. The industry was valued at Rs 3.4 lakh crore in 2021 and is expected to treble that value by 2030.

Fossil fuels contribute 75% of India's total energy requirement and 58% of its power generation. The healthcare and pharmaceutical industries, including their cooling requirement, are completely dependent on India's carbon-intensive energy basket. Not wanting to disturb the high growth rate these two sectors are expected to have in the near future, India decided to refrain from endorsing the COP28 declaration on climate and health.

Ironically, the Indian delegation to COP28 did not consider the downside of fossil fuel use, particularly in power generation. Fossil fuel-based power plants, 85% of which use the dirtiest of fuels—coal, cause an estimated crop yield loss of Rs 1.5

For **Frontier Contact**

DHYANBINDU

COLLEGE SQUARE

lakh crore per annum. Studies estimate that the excess deaths attributable to fossil fuel power generation is about 50 per annum for every GW of installed capacity. With about 250 GW of installed capacity in fossil fuel generation, the number of

excess deaths per annum is approximately 12,500 persons. Other impacts that have not been adequately assessed are corrosion of soils and buildings, forest dieback, and acidification of water bodies.

The support to continued fossil

fuel use by the healthcare and pharma industries to make huge profits at the expense of human health, crop yield loss and other environmental injury due to fossil fuel-based power generation is ecocide and genocide. □□□

RADICALISM VS RATIONALISM

The Crux of Palestinian Politics

Ben Judah

RAMALLAH IS A DUSTY city built around a fort. This is the Mukataa, or the “headquarters”, separated from the streets by walls and watchtowers. Mandate officials, Jordanian officers and the IDF have all been based here—running prisons, courts and successive occupations.

Today, it is the sealed-off seat of the Palestinian Authority, and the only part one can see from the road is a mausoleum. Cubic, like the Kaaba in Mecca but in Jerusalem stone, this is Yasser Arafat’s tomb. Framed by glass, water and an honour guard, it is unremarkable for a Middle Eastern leader. Apart from one thing: the constant reminders, from the signs or guides, that this mausoleum is temporary. The entire edifice, facing Jerusalem, is built on train tracks, a symbolic reference to what is hoped will be Palestine’s eventual liberation and Arafat’s reburial on the holy mount.

This mausoleum was opened in 2007 by his successor Mahmoud Abbas, the second President of his half-state, the Palestinian Authority, and the fourth secretary of his movement, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation. Solemn, even surly, Abbas swore to the crowds that day that “we will continue the path of the martyred President Yasser Arafat to be reburied in Jerusalem, which he loved...”

But despite the commonality of

their aims, the contrast between how the two ran the Mukataa could not be greater. Arafat withered away in his besieged basement bunker between cans of gasoline and AK-47s, his intifada in ruins. Abbas, in his political twilight, uses it to greet a non-stop delegation of diplomats and NGOs. His Ramallah is uneasy, but MacBooks still open in its cafés, while Gaza is in ruins. Such disparity speaks to the biggest question in Palestinian politics. Is the way forward, as Arafat finally decided, one of violence—or that of Abbas, one of negotiation?

Initially, they had offered the same answer. When Abbas, a refugee from Galilee, first met Arafat in Qatar in 1961, the two were of one mind about revolutionary struggle: neither relying on Arab patrons nor swallowing their ideologies, the Palestinians themselves had to become the main force of their liberation. The museum in the Mukataa documents what happened next. Fatah, their party, entered the refugee camps, slowly at first, then rapidly as posters announced the resistance’s arrival. Despite the huge Arab defeats of 1967 and 1973, a myth emerged: that out of shame came honour, thanks to the PLO campaign, forcing Israel to accept it had to negotiate with the Palestinians themselves.

In 2000, as President Clinton fretted about his legacy and con-

vened the fateful Camp David summit between the parties, it seemed to Western diplomats as if Arafat and Abbas had almost won. Exiled to Tunis, after Ariel Sharon expelled the PLO from Lebanon, the legitimacy they had gathered and the revolt they had inspired in the First Intifada meant Israel had not only negotiated with them, but brought them back to run Gaza and the main towns of the West Bank. Arafat had triumphed in rebellion; Abbas, the architect of the secret talks and the Oslo Process, in negotiation. All they needed to do was sign on the dotted line.

But this was not how it looked to many Palestinian intellectuals, who feared the PLO had fallen into a trap. In New York, Edward Said denounced the Oslo Accords as “an instrument of Arab surrender”. In the territories themselves, the corruption and oppression the Mukataa was seen to personify meant Arafat was increasingly seen as a dictator rather than a defender. The Islamist Hamas started to gain on the nationalist Fatah, launching its own terror campaign to derail the peace process. Unrest stirred.

Recollections differ about what happened at Camp David. Israeli and American diplomats believe they presented a generous final offer to the Palestinian team, which Arafat vetoed, instead resorting to violence from the Mukataa. Palestinian negotiators such as Ghaif al-Omari claim that nothing approaching final terms was presented, with Arafat undecided and his team fissured between old and young. In this telling, Abbas

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and Ahmed Querei, the elders, became intransigent, suspicious that the juniors, such as Mohammed Dahlan, were trying to seal a deal and take the credit.

What is clear, however, is that in that moment of compromise, Arafat became obsessed with Jerusalem, insisting that Israel had no rights to the holy mount, as King Solomon's Temple was in Nablus. He rejected Clinton's essential proposal: that everything above ground (both Al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock) would be Palestinian, while everything below ground and the Wailing Wall would be Israeli.

His motivation is a matter of speculation. Was it the four years that Arafat spent in the Old City, living in the Israeli-bulldozed medieval warren of the Murghabi district under the golden glint of the Haram al-Sharif? Or a sense that, if he failed to liberate the third holiest site in Islam, he would always be viewed as a compromiser and not Saladin? Or, as Saeb Erekat, a Palestinian politician and negotiator at Camp David, believed, was it a moral claim—that Arafat simply could not accept Israel had any right to it?

The truth is that, whatever thoughts there were beneath his keffiyeh, there was nothing remarkable about Arafat's refusal to compromise. So central is the Temple Mount to Judaism that it is often overlooked how important what they call the Haram al-Sharif is for Palestinians, a people whose very essence of nationhood is bound to the idea of being the defenders of Al-Aqsa. But this intransigence shocked and infuriated the US President. "You are leading your people and the region to catastrophe," a frustrated Clinton is said to have exclaimed.

Camp David failed in July. That autumn, protesting Israeli Prime Minister Barak's willingness to trade it for peace, Arafat's old enemy

Ariel Sharon chose to visit what he called the Temple Mount. Rioting erupted. And very soon it was apparent these were more than days of rage. Even now, Palestinian officials remain divided about how the intifada truly exploded. One side stresses that Arafat was being overtaken by events—the visit of Sharon, the sudden riots, spontaneous lynching—and decided to go along with it, thinking a bit of violence would mean better terms, while others see him as more forcefully encouraging it once it began.

The reality, however, hardly mattered, given Arafat would soon decide to fight the intifada from the Mukataa. Instead of forcing a return to the negotiating table, his soldiers, such as Marwan Barghouti's Tanzim and the Al-Aqsa Martyr's Brigade, were soon launching suicide bombings inside Israel. First quietly then loudly, Abbas opposed this—viewing the war as a disaster for Palestine.

Dying in his bunker, Arafat was consumed with the idea that King Solomon's Kingdom was never in Palestine, but in Yemen. By 2003, it was obvious he had dug his political tomb. Yet few recognised he had also buried the Palestinian state for a generation, trapping the West Bank in the kind of "joint-rule" hawkish Israeli strategists always wanted. Nor was it clear that, by personifying the Palestinian resistance, only Arafat could have made peace.

Abbas is the inheritor of Arafat's tomb. That Abbas, the man who heroically denounced violence amid the disaster of the intifada and worked to end it with Israel and the United States, has not been able to escape his legacy. This applies both to Palestine's territory and its expansion. After all, Abbas is unable to agree a new proposal, because he knows that, unlike Arafat, he has had no legitimacy to sign one. Those by his side in 2005 remember a

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man overwhelmed, bunkering down.

And yet, there is a strand of continuity in the politics of Abbas, stretching back to the heady days of the PLO in Lebanon. From the mid-Seventies, Palestinian politics were divided between rationalists, who saw the future involving some kind of accommodation with Israel, and radicals, who would accept none. Arafat flitted and played with the two. But Abbas was squarely rationalist.

This remains true to this day. Rationally, he knows he never had the power to lead a successful intifada against Israel. Rationally, he knows he has never had the legitimacy to sign a peace accord, whose compromises vast swathes of the nation would see as a betrayal. And rationally, ever since he lost Gaza to Hamas in 2007, he has decided that the best course of action is to simply hold on.

This logic has turned the Mukataa from what was once a symbol of revolution into a symbol of an authoritarian Arab regime in miniature: a system tied together by corruption, where no elections have been held since 2005. Fatah, in turn, is now widely derided as an empty card-carrying shell—like the Ba'ath party in Syria or the old Eastern bloc.

Across the West Bank, the system is largely outright despised.

Abbas, in his twilight, has never been weaker but also never more central. At night in Ramallah, there are protests, but things are still quiet. At night in Gaza, there is the thunder of bombs. Never in Palestinian history has the contrast between violence and negotiation been so stark. No longer between Abbas and Arafat, the contrast is between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas. This appears hard to see from a distance, but October 7 was the start of a new war for Jerusalem, launched “in defence of the Al-Aqsa mosque”. Named “Operation Al Aqsa Floods”, Hamas’s massacre was only the latest offensive in what they see as an unending one, to stop the Jews “erecting their alleged temple on the ruins of the shrine of our Prophet Mohammed”.

Hamas sought, on October 7,

not only to start a war with Israel but to detonate the West Bank. Their leaders dreamed that with mass hostage-taking they could bring Israeli society to its knees and force the release of all Palestinian prisoners—grabbing in one jubilant swoop the ownership of the Palestinian cause from the PLO. Opinion is divided among Palestinian analysts over their successes. All agree Hamas’s popularity is soaring in the West Bank, with crowds chanting its slogans even in the heart of Ramallah. But opinions differ over whether or not tensions in the West Bank actually threaten the Mukataa.

Hamas has led the Palestinian people—with the destruction of Gaza City and now Khan Younis—into the greatest disaster of their history since 1948. Massacres are not new to the land, but never before has a city been levelled in the entire conflict. “Hamas entered a battle and

the result was the complete destruction of Gaza. To blindly follow slogans to satisfy an illusion and the result is the destruction of the Palestinian people.” These were the words of Abbas a decade ago, but they could have been said yesterday. “I am responsible for the people and I will not allow their destruction to happen again.”

Hamas believes only violence can force the liberation of Al-Aqsa. Abbas believes only negotiations and the international community can. Hamas sees him as a corrupt collaborator. Abbas sees himself as protecting his people from what Gazans call the Israeli “monster” and guarding the mechanism that will eventually deliver a Palestinian state. The tragedy, however, is that with the Palestinian people now so divided, the only man who could have made peace on behalf of all of them is buried in the Mukataa. □□□ [Source: UnHerd]

COP 28

Impact of Militarisation on Climate Change

Arun Mitra

IT IS WELCOME THAT OVER 80000 participants from around the globe have gathered in Dubai to deliberate on the strategies to mitigate the climate crisis which if not checked would be catastrophic. The event is happening at a time when just at a distance of 2600 km an appalling humanitarian crisis is unfolding as a result of bombing on the innocent civilians by the Israel in Gaza. This has killed over 18000 Palestinians of which 70% are women and children and it has caused total destruction of the infrastructure making the people homeless.

Any military activity adds to the climate crisis. It is by now well known that the military activity is estimated to contribute 5.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions. In the recent

years people have witnessed substantial increase in the military spending worldwide. Presently it is higher than ever. In 2022 world military expenditure rose to \$2240 billion out of which \$82.9 billion were spent on nuclear weapons alone.

The reporting on military expenditure by the governments is always a secret matter and there is no transparency in reporting the military related activities for the ‘security reasons’. Dr Stuart Parkinson and Linsey Cottrell of the Scientists for Global Responsibility and Conflict and the Environment Observatory respectively, in a study ‘Estimating the Military’s Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions’ point out that If the world’s militaries were a country, this figure would mean they have the fourth largest

national carbon footprint in the world – greater than that of Russia . Researchers found that the first 12 months of war in Ukraine accounted for 119 million tons of CO₂, as much as Belgium produced in the same period.

This emphasises the urgent need for concerted action to be taken both to robustly measure military emissions and to reduce the related carbon footprint – especially as these emissions are very likely to be growing in the wake of the war in Ukraine and Israeli aggression in Gaza.

It is therefore imperative that disarmament should have taken a front seat during the deliberations at COP28. The last COP27 failed to issue any statement on disarmament and it appears that similar end result will be there this time too. However this time some organisations including the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) made it a point to highlight

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this issue, if not in the main forum, at least on the side lines among the participants.

It is strange that a declaration was adopted at the COP28 calling upon the nations to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in health sector swiftly, sustainably and substantially. This has happened when as compared to 5.5% of total emissions by the military activity there is generation of 4.4% by the global health care sector. Whereas the military activity is meant to kill, the health care sector is to sustain life.

The IPPNW has further warned that continuation of wars could threaten the use of nuclear weapons which would be catastrophic (3). A study, "Climate Consequences of Regional Nuclear War" by Ira Helfand former Co-President International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and Alan Robock from the Department of Environmental Sciences, Rutgers University, USA has pointed out that the present nuclear weapons present on earth pose a serious risk to climate and thus risk to all life forms. A nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan using 100 Hiroshima size nuclear weapons would put two billion people at risk. Any Nuclear exchange between the major nuclear powers could be end of modern civilisation built through thousands years of human labour. Soot and debris injected into the atmosphere from the explosions and resulting fires would block sunlight from reaching the Earth, producing an average surface cooling of -1.25° C that would last for several years. Even 10 years out, there would be a persistent average surface cooling of -0.5° C. This will reduce rainfall globally by 10% and lead to crop failure further leading to starvation and deaths.

It is therefore important that the COP28 should give a call for complete abolition of nuclear weapons

and promote negotiations to encourage the nuclear weapons possessing countries to join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

When there are talks of shifting to non-fossil fuel sources of energy, there is a lobby within the COP28 which speaks on the importance of nuclear energy. This is a false and dangerous narrative. Nuclear power is no solution to climate change; it has serious health consequences and increases the risk of nuclear proliferation (4). Nuclear power is expensive and unreliable, is losing importance relative to overall electricity production, lags behind renewables in terms of cost-effectiveness and output and is hence out-dated. Therefore it is required that the world ceases the creation of new nuclear power plants, enact the rapid phase-out of nuclear energy generation, and shift to a just renewable energy transition.

It is necessary to cut emissions by half by 2030 to stay within the 1.5 degree limit and thereby ensure planetary and human health. UN Secretary General's video message on Glaciers from the Mount Everest Region "We must act now to protect people on the frontline and to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees, to avert the worst of climate chaos speaks of billions of peoples voice around the world who knowingly and unknowingly are being adversely affected as a result of climate crisis.

The global arms race threatens health and the climate. Disarmament and demilitarisation can help finance climate mitigation. Cooperation and human security should be at the centre of politics and decision-making. The COP28 should at least form a commission to discuss the issue in details for the COP29.

□□□

[Dr Arun Mitra is the President of Indian Doctors for Peace and Development (IDPD) www.idpd.org]

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WOMEN AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Feminist Climate Justice Approach

UN Women

UN WOMEN LAUNCHED its Feminist Climate Justice: A Framework for Action report on December 4 [Gender Day] in Dubai at the UN Climate Conference, COP 28.

By 2050, climate change will push up to 158 million more women and girls into poverty and lead to 236 million more women into hunger. The climate crisis fuels escalating conflict and forced migration, in a context of exclusionary, anti-rights political rhetoric targeting women, refugees, and other marginalised groups.

“Climate change is creating a downward spiral for women and girls”, said Sarah Hendriks, UN Women Deputy Executive Director : “We need to transform economies away from extraction and pollution and integrate women’s rights into all aspects of climate policy and financing. UN Women is calling for feminist climate justice, and a world in which everyone can enjoy their human rights, and flourish on a planet that is healthy and sustainable.”

Policy needs to prioritise the rights of women and other groups that

face discrimination, because it undermines their resilience to climate impacts. Women shoulder disproportionate unpaid care responsibilities, have fewer economic resources than men, and have lower levels of literacy and access to technology. These inequalities are further exacerbated by climate change.

Alongside scientific knowledge, decision-makers need to recognise the expertise that women, including indigenous, rural and young women have. Only if this knowledge is fully taken into consideration, will effective climate adaptation policies be developed and implemented.

Since women are already disadvantaged in economies, in terms of wage gaps, unequal access to jobs, land, technology and education, it is essential to prioritise gender equality in just transitions. Otherwise, women’s inequality will be further entrenched. Reversing climate change will require moving resources away from extractive and environmentally damaging activities, and towards policies that prioritise care for people and the planet.

Governments need to raise resources through progressive taxation on the wealthiest people and companies to pay for social welfare programmes to support women’s resilience.

For example, school-based food programmes are not only able to alleviate some of women’s unpaid care work by supplying children with nutritious food, but can further support feminist climate policy by sourcing meals from small-scale, environmentally friendly women farmers.

Women human rights defenders and feminist groups are pushing for

gender equality to be integrated into environmental policymaking at all levels. But they are often excluded from power.

Despite the fact that women have been at the forefront of environmental activism for decades, women make up only 15 percent of environment ministers at the national level.

While women’s participation in national delegations to the UN COP climate conferences rose from 30 to 35 percent from 2012 to 2022, the proportion of delegations headed by women declined slightly from 21 to 20 percent over the same period.

Financial commitments to fight climate change must focus on the people and countries most at risk. Since 1850, countries in the global north have been responsible for 92 percent of the world’s excess emissions, creating a huge climate debt.

To address that imbalance, the report calls on wealthy countries to meet their commitments to finance climate programmes and ensure that funds go to the most vulnerable countries and grassroots women’s organisations. Only 3 percent of climate development aid prioritises gender equality. Polluting corporations need to be taxed and regulated to prevent future harm to the climate.

The COP28 climate conference, which inaugurates the Global Stocktake, is a crucial milestone to make countries accountable for their climate action.

While a loss and damage fund was agreed upon at the COP27 in 2022, contributions are voluntary and no mechanism has been established to hold wealthy countries to account for historical environmental damage and its consequences, such as the loss of land, housing, and crops because of extreme weather events. Non-economic loss and damage, like

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rising levels of gender-based violence and unpaid care work, which are devastating consequences of climate change for women and girls also, need to be taken into account by the new fund.

At climate conferences, and in all other spaces where climate policies are discussed, leaders and policymakers must ensure that their responses to environmental challenges integrate the needs and rights

of the world's women and girls.

Maria Reyes, Representative of Fridays for Future MAPA and the Feminist Action for Climate Justice Action Coalition said, "as young people from the Global South we know what climate justice looks like, because apart from being at the frontlines of the climate crisis, we are also at the forefront of the solutions, building with our communities the systems that we cannot live without

as we dismantle the systems that we cannot live within. As we infiltrate institutional spaces like the COP28, we need to make use of data and research, like the Feminist Climate Justice Framework, as tools for transformative change". □□□

[UN Women is the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.]

FIGURES FOR FUN!

Labour Survey Report

Atanu Chakravarty

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS of the Central Government has released the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) for July 2022 to July 2023. This survey had claimed that the All India all person labour force participation rate (LFPR) jumped from 49.8 percent in 2017-18 (the year PLFS began) to 57.9 percent, a whopping 8.1 percent in five years. The worker population ratio (WPR), which measures the ratio of workers employed to the total workforce rose similarly from 46.8 percent in 2017-18 to 56 percent in 2022-23.

Now, the question arises— which sector has witnessed such a handsome growth?

The LPFR for males rose from 75.5 percent in 2017-18 to 75.8 percent in 2022-23, which is a slender increase. But surprisingly, on the other end, LPFR for females rose astoundingly from 23.3 percent in 2017-18 to 37 percent in 2022-23 an increase of about 60 percent! This statistical figure brings forth an intriguing female work force increase which should be examined at a proper perspective.

By perusing the figures, it becomes evident that the urban LFPR increased from 47.6 percent in 2017-

18 to 50.4 percent in 2022-23 i.e. by 2.8 percent. But the rural LFPR increased from 50.7 percent to 60.8 percent during this period, by an amazingly 10.1 percentage points. In rural areas, while the male LFPR increased from 76.4 percentage to 80.2 percentage, the female LFPR leaped massively from 24.6 percent to 41.5 percent. Where lies the riddle? What is the observation of CMIE?

Mahesh Vyas, Chief of CMIE said, India's workforce is not rising in relation to its increasing working age population and remains largely stagnant at a little over 400 million in the past five years.

A worrisome aspect of Indian economy is reflected in the share of employment in agriculture which is rising significantly from 42.5 percent of the total employed in 2018-19 to 45.6 percent in 2019-20 indicating an unusual, regressive trend of large scale movement of labour from industry or service sector to agriculture.

The PLFS provides details of ' employment—the nature of jobs, which are divided into three principal occupations—self-employed, regular wage/ salary, and casual. The self-employed are further divided into two classes, own account workers and unpaid helpers in household

enterprises. The survey shows a huge increase in the number of self-employed to an all time high which is 58 percent of the total employed in 2022-23! At this proportion in the total worker base of 580 million, 106 million are unpaid helpers in household enterprises in 2022-23. This wage-less group of workers grew by about 28 million between 2017-18 and 2022-23 and it is noteworthy that ALL of them are women. This self-employed workers, which includes unpaid helpers earned Rs 4,725 to Rs 5,071 in the last 30 days of survey period. The average casual female worker earned between Rs 259 to Rs 287 per day, or about Rs 7,098 for 26 days per working month. The labour force survey also shows the average regular monthly wages have diminished by over 20 percent in real terms between 2017-18 and 2022-23. For self-employed and casual categories also the real wages reflected a fall in real terms. Virtually, no growth in average wages in five years clearly reflects a worsening quality of employment and wage stagnation in the labour force survey largely represents the bottom 60 to 70 percent of the population.

The International Labour Organisation categorically mentioned that only those who are doing 'decent' jobs should be treated as employed. So it is evident, that unpaid workers in the self-employment cat-

egory which has risen dramatically from about 40 million in 2017-18 to 95 million in 2022-23 should not be treated as employed as per the methodology prescribed by ILO which is being followed by 92 countries.

A signature of Modinomics is

reverse flow of labour from industry to agriculture, when the latter is beset with multiple crises. An overwhelming number of India's workforce is engaged in unorganised sector which faced three major blows through demonetisation, GST, and

pandemic induced lockdown. The mirage of huge employment, the facade of fastest growing economy, the stark reality of falling or wage stagnation is the cruel new normal of Modi's India.

□□□

REVIEW ARTICLE

Yerawada Prison Diary

Joydip Ghosal

FROM PHANSI YARD, MY year with the Women of Yerawada by Sudha Bharadwaj, published by Juggernaut is a remarkable and poignant account of the world of women prisoners in Yerawada Jail in Pune. An early morning knock on her door took her into a world of incarceration, first at home and then in prison. This book tries to unravel many aspects of prison life which though harsh is not altogether bleak. She dedicated the book to all those, unjustly incarcerated and Maaysha, her daughter who suffered her absence most. In this book there are 76 impressionistic sketches of fellow prisoners she had an opportunity to watch during her stint in Yerawada Prison.

In the introduction part of the book she took resort to questionnaire format to make the perspective clear for the readers to understand. It was more suitable for her to compress the six decades of her life into that format. She was born on 1st November 1961 in Boston in the United States where her parents Krishna and Raghunath Bharadwaj were both post doctoral fellows in economics. Later her mother accepted the opportunity of a fellowship in Cambridge. Renowned economist and close associate of Antonio Gramsci, Piero Sraffa who was author of *Production of Commodities by Means of Commodities* invited her. So Sudha Bharadwaj spent her

childhood in the university town of Cambridge. When racism started rearing its diabolical head in that university town her mother decided to return back to India. Be Shankar Guha Niyogi apart, her mother remained a constant inspiration throughout her life. In truth her mother played a pivotal role in establishing Centre for Economic Studies and Planning in Jawaharlal Nehru University along with Sunanda Sen, Prabhat and Utsa Patnaik and Amit Bhaduri. Krishna Bharadwaj's pathbreaking book *Production Conditions in Indian Agriculture* still provides insight into the complexities and interplay of different aspects of agricultural systems. Apart from doing her five-year math degree at IIT Kanpur Sudha gradually became aware of socio-economic realities of the country.

During the Asian Games held in Delhi in 1982 the entire city was dug up. Migrant workers were being brought up from the marginalised areas of the country. Huge camps were built to house them. She along with her co-workers reached to the workers of Birla Mill, Delhi Cloth Mills. She interacted with the workers of Ballabgarh Industrial belt. Odia migrant workers poured their heart out to them about their plight, the repression they faced. She realised terrible conditions of bondage they were subjected to. She along with her friends brought out a hand-printed

wall magazine, *Meri Teri Uski Kahani*. It was named after novel penned by progressive Hindi writer Yashpal. In her own words: "This is when we began to understand the cruel power structure that underlies this misery". It was a revelation for her. She firmly believed in the words of Bertolt Brecht that one could not have a 'pass in the pocket' to leave these workers as per wish. It would shove them to more risk. She remained true to the ideal that trade unionism demanded a life-long commitment. Through the workers of textile mills she met Shankar Guha Niyogi around 1983-84. After he was incarcerated under National Security Act Sudha Bharadwaj and other students went to JNU and other Delhi University professors to collect signatures on a petition demanding his release. She gave up her US citizenship to work among the 'faceless multitudes'.

In this book in the introduction part Sudha Bharadwaj described her association with Chattisgarh Mukti Morcha (CMM). She worked among the contract workers in Bhilai. She categorically mentioned that they taught her perseverance and a lot about not thinking that one was supreme of the world. She touched upon her life in Bhilai, the assassination of Niyogi on 28 September, 1991, the savage police firing on rail-roko Satyagraha when seventeen workers lost their lives. Readers get to know the trajectory of workers' movement after Niyogi's martyrdom. After becoming a lawyer she moved to Labour camp in Jamul where a new phase of trade union life com-

menced. She was instrumental for the revival of PUCL in Chattisgarh after Dr Binayak Sen' arrest. Gradually the organisation grew in diversity and strength. Rajendra Sail, Ms Julaikha Jabeen, Dr Lakhan Singh and Sudha Bharadwaj gave their utmost effort to keep the human rights discourse alive. Unequivocally she declared in this book that as the secretary of Chattisgarh PUCL she was bound to face state's wrath.

In 2018 she was arrested along with several others—scholars, lawyers on the charge of inciting violence in Bhima Koregaon village in Maharashtra. She was put under house arrest. Then she was taken to

Pune and kept in police custody. Finally she was put behind the bars for more than three years.

First Yerawada Jail and after some time shifted to Byculla Jail. She was released on bail in December, 2021. As per the bail conditions she can not discuss the case or leave Mumbai.

This book (Courtesy Amartya Sen) is a testimony to the fact that she remained an unflinching observer of the harshness meted to the inmates and stark realities of prison's life. Throughout the book, her warmth compassion for her fellow prisoners was evident. She took a journey through the prison life weav-

ing portraits of the inmates, their children. In this granular account she tried to reflect on everything from children of the fellow prisoners to caste hierarchy. Even during Covid-19 she discussed the irrationality of quarantine procedure with jail physicians. She marvelled at the creativity of fellow prisoners and their zest for spirit of life.

In an interview she said that if one wishes to dissent she should brave such attacks. Arundhati Roy rightly said "It is a wonderful, kaleidoscopic sketch of prison life... It teaches us a great deal about this country of ours".

□□□

SAMARVEER SINGH COMMITTED SUICIDE

Plight of DU Ad-Hoc Teachers

Johanna Deeksha

SAMARVEER SINGH OFTEN dreamt of France. Rusham Sharma, who was Singh's student at Hindu College, Delhi, recounted that Singh would speak in class of sitting in cafes in the country, as philosophers like Jean Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir once did, and of imagining what their lives might have been like. Singh also loved making his students laugh. But, Sharma said, Singh was at his most spirited when he spoke about films and art.

Keshavi Sethi, another of Singh's students at the college, which is affiliated to Delhi University, said her fondest memory of Singh was of a time when he screened the film *12 Angry Men* to teach his students about critical thinking. Like Sharma, Sethi too recounted that every time there was a discussion in the class about films, Singh grew excited and animated. But otherwise, the students observed that he was largely a reserved person and that it always seemed like his mind was preoccupied.

The students were both eagerly looking forward to a film and art appreciation course that Singh was teaching in January 2023. "Because that is where his heart seemed to be", Sharma said. But Singh never taught that course. He missed his first few classes because he was occupied with administrative work, the students recalled. And then in February 2023, Singh was arbitrarily removed from his post as an assistant professor.

Singh had been hired as an ad-hoc teacher. This meant that unlike permanent faculty, who are eligible for several benefits and whose jobs cannot be terminated arbitrarily, he had to renew his contract every four months. The job was essentially an unstable one because the university could choose not to renew his contract any time it expired. Singh had taught in this capacity at Hindu College's philosophy department for seven-and-a-half years. During this time, he had attended many interviews at various colleges for perma-

nent positions. Students who knew him recounted that he felt hopeful about eventually securing a position as a permanent staff member at a college. Thus, his removal as an ad-hoc faculty came as a shock to him.

The turbulence in his professional life continued. In April, the college administration invited him to return as a guest lecturer—this was an even less secure arrangement, whereby he would be contracted and paid to teach one-hour classes. A few days later they terminated this engagement as well.

On April 26, Singh was found dead in his flat.

The students said that nobody from their department conveyed this news to them. They learnt of it through a social media post by a teacher from another college.

On the day after his death, Singh's students and a few of his colleagues organised a condolence meeting at the college. The college's fest was scheduled for the same day—it went ahead as planned. "The principal and other staffs were dancing at the fest", Sethi said. "Nobody considered cancelling it despite Samarveer sir's passing".

Scroll emailed queries about

Singh's death and the system of ad-hoc appointments to Delhi University—as of publication, the university had not responded.

In the days that followed, Sethi and Sharma learnt more about their professor from his family and former students. When they met his sister a few days later, she recalled that he would text her whenever he had had a great class. Singh's sister told Sethi that he had planned to invite his parents from Rajasthan to Delhi to visit him, and that he had intended to buy an air conditioner for his home before they arrived.

The students wondered whether he had grown withdrawn as a result of his professional instability.

Singh's suicide rekindled conversations around ad-hoc teacher appointments at Delhi University.

The system was devised in 2007

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as a plan to cope with teacher shortages at the university. According to a resolution passed that year by the university's academic council, ad-hoc teachers were permitted to be appointed for a period of between one and four months at the rank of assistant professors.

Teachers were to be appointed to these positions only in situations where there was a "sudden, unexpected and short vacancy" due to reasons such as a permanent teacher's illness or death.

According to the resolution, if the vacancy remained open for more than four months, it could be filled "on a temporary basis".

Although it sounds similar, a temporary appointment is fundamentally different from an ad-hoc one. While under the 2007 resolution, ad-hoc teachers have fixed contracts of four months, temporary teachers can be hired for longer durations. More significantly, during the terms of their contracts, temporary teachers are entitled to benefits such as earned leave, though they do not have other benefits that permanent teachers get, like medical insurance, dearness allowance and provident funds.

On the other hand, ad-hoc teachers have no benefits, are only allowed one day of earned leave and one day of half-pay leave every month. In effect, temporary teachers have less secure positions than permanent teachers, but more secure than ad-hoc faculty, who receive no benefits at all.

But although university rules state that when a vacancy arises for longer than four months, teachers have to be appointed at least as temporary faculty, the university currently has 4,500 ad-hoc teachers. Many, like Singh, spend years renewing their contracts every four months. They are typically given a day's break at the end of each contract before

being asked to sign new ones and resume their work. While Singh worked for more than seven years under these conditions, other teachers have spent as much as 15 and 20 years as ad-hoc faculty.

Over the past two years, ad-hoc teachers have been facing a new problem—the university has been filling up vacancies with permanent faculty; but long-time ad-hoc teachers argue that they have been overlooked in favour of less qualified and experienced candidates.

Vishal Pandey, who has been an ad-hoc teacher of commerce for 12 years, argued that the system of appointments is flawed because it gives no weightage to teachers' experience. Rather, candidates are assigned points based on qualifications and publications, and if they attain a minimum of 50 points, they are cleared to a final interview round.

Rajesh Jha, a member of Academics for Action and Development and Delhi Teachers' Association, noted that as a result of these processes, around 70% of ad-hoc teachers had been "displaced"—that is, they had lost their positions.

Pandey said, "I'm 44. It is too late to change my profession too. But I still have some hope in the judiciary."

Kavitha Bedi, an ad-hoc teacher who asked to be identified by a pseudonym for this story, said she had been displaced from her position after ten years. "A decade should mean something, right?" she said.

After she lost her work as an ad-hoc teacher, Bedi tried to find other opportunities. Her only option was to take up work as a guest lecturer. Guest lecturers are paid on an hourly basis

In May 2023, SK Sagar, the teacher-in-charge of the zoology department at Swami Shradhanand College, resigned from that position in support of ad-hoc teachers, who

he felt were being poorly treated. "They have been working for so many years and their work is highly appreciated," he noted in his resignation letter. "They deserved to continue rather than to face displacement from the college where they had been providing their services to the college with utmost dedication."

In September, the entire department of sociology of Indraprastha College for Women was displaced. The department comprised five ad-hoc teachers who had been working in the department for between three and four years. The five teachers were replaced with eight new permanent ones. Apoorvanand, a professor and public commentator, alleged that the appointed candidates had poorer qualifications, and that the appointments were made under the influence of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Many dis-

placed teachers made the same allegation.

This followed similar terminations at other colleges, such as Satyawati (Evening) College.

Sometimes they come to college at 9, and leave at 11.30 pm and be back at 8.30 the next day for classes. And all this without leaves.

The lack of leaves is particularly difficult for women who need maternity leave. In 2020, a survey by the Delhi University Teachers Association of 705 teachers found that 86% of those who had sought maternity leave had been denied it. The problem remains prevalent despite a court ruling in favour of the teachers—in 2020; the Delhi High Court quashed a termination notice issued by Aurobindo Evening College against an ad-hoc teacher who had ceased attending college during the term of

her contract because she was pregnant and needed maternity leave.

Ad-hoc teachers have also criticised the appointment in their place of candidates who they see as less qualified.

Over the last five years, the Delhi University Teachers Association has demanded a one-time absorption of ad-hoc teachers as permanent faculty. The union has organised protests that have included marches and letter-writing campaigns, to argue that ad-hoc teachers should be provided with the job security and other benefits available to permanent teachers. □□□

[Johanna Deeksha got her Masters in War and Human Rights Journalism from the University of Lincoln, UK, and has also received training from the Thomson Reuters Foundation on LGBT+ Rights Reporting. She has previously worked with Deccan Chronicle and New Indian Express. Courtesy: Scroll.in.]

A LEGACY IN SPEECHES

Mandela 10 Years After His Death

Ashley Montgomery

FORMER SOUTH AFRICAN President Nelson Mandela, actively protested apartheid for most of his life, and he is known for being one of the world's most famous political prisoners.

His anti-apartheid activism never faltered: He delivered speeches, wrote letters while imprisoned and, after his release, negotiated with South African government officials to end apartheid in the 1990s.

Here are excerpts from some of his most memorable speeches:

1964: Rivonia Trial

On April 20, 1964, Mandela stands on trial in Pretoria, South Africa.

He has been charged with sabotage and conspiracy to overthrow the state.

At 45 years old, Mandela is a part of the African National Con-

gress (ANC), a group advocating for Black rights. The ANC is considered the oldest liberation movement in Africa, and Mandela is a member of its armed wing.

As part of the ANC, Mandela has led protests and workers strikes, and now he's on trial. Mandela stands before the Supreme Court of South Africa during the Rivonia Trial and delivers an impassioned speech about a brutal system of legalised racism that's tearing his country apart.

"Whites tend to regard Africans as a separate breed. They do not look upon them as people with families of their own; they do not realise that we have emotions—that we fall in love like white people do; that we want to be with our wives and children like white people want to be with theirs; that we want to earn

money, enough money to support our families properly, to feed and clothe them and send them to school."

When the National Party assumed power in 1948, it marked the beginning of legalised racism in South Africa—apartheid. In addition to restrictions on where nonwhite South Africans could live and work, apartheid also made political protest against the government illegal.

Mandela talks for nearly four hours about the harsh restrictions of living under apartheid.

"Africans want to be paid a living wage. Africans want to perform work which they are capable of doing and not work which the government declares them to be capable of. We want to be allowed to live where we obtain work and not be endorsed out of an area because we were not born there."

Even as he faces life in prison, Mandela continues his cause for social justice in front of the court.

"We want to be allowed out after 11 o'clock at night and not to be confined to our rooms like little children. We want to be allowed to travel in our own country and to seek work where we want to and not where the Labour Bureau tells us to. We want a just share in the whole of South Africa; we want security and a stake in society."

This speech establishes Nelson Mandela as the voice of the anti-apartheid movement, with the most memorable line at the end:

"I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons will live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an idea for which I hope to live for and to see realised. But, my Lord, if it needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

Less than two months after his speech, Mandela and 19 others are convicted. Most of them are sent to Robben Island prison near Cape Town.

Mandela is sentenced to life. For years, he's kept in a tiny, 7-by-9-foot jail cell.

He does hard labour by day—crushing stones into gravel in a limestone quarry. And he spends time studying philosophy and political theory. Mandela writes letters about civil disobedience and pursues a University of London degree via correspondence.

Meanwhile, violence continues to escalate across South Africa—the nation's economy and reputation suffer. The United Nations leads the call for sanctions against the country. With the passing of the U S Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act in 1986, many multinational companies leave South Africa.

The white government does not allow photos of Mandela or recordings of his voice, yet his stature continues to grow while he remains behind bars. Protests against apartheid and Mandela's imprisonment are held across the world, in South Africa, the U.K. and the United

States. The apartheid system faces increasing international criticism, and South Africa grows more and more isolated.

1990: Cape Town's City Hall

On Feb. 11, 1990, after years-long government negotiations and spending time in two additional prisons, Mandela is released after 27 years.

Just hours after he is free, Mandela delivers his first public address at Cape Town's City Hall.

On Feb. 11, 1990, in Cape Town, South Africa, Mandela delivers his first public speech since his release from prison.

Mandela greets the packed crowd of over 100,000 Black South Africans: "Comrades and fellow South Africans, I greet you all in the name of peace, democracy and freedom. I stand here before you not as a prophet but as a humble servant of you the people."

At age 71, Mandela's hair is graying, and he's wearing his wife's large glasses because he accidentally left his own at the prison.

It has been almost three decades since he has delivered a speech like this, but his cause for his country remains the same.

"Today, the majority of South Africans, Black and white recognise that apartheid has no future. It has to be ended by our decisive mass action... We have waited too long for our freedom."

In addition to Mandela and his fellow ANC prisoners' release, the white government announces a package of reforms that include lifting the ban on the African National Congress and other Black groups.

1994: South Africa's presidential inauguration

Decades of activism, protests, boycotts and economic pressures dismantle the brutal apartheid regime in the early 1990s. For his negotiation efforts to end apartheid, Mandela shares the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize with National Party President F W de Klerk.

In 1994, South Africa holds its first democratic election.

The African National Congress wins over 62% of the vote.

Nelson Mandela is elected president of South Africa, the country's first Black president.

During his inaugural address, Mandela promises continued progress for the country.

"Never, never, and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world. The sun shall never set on so glorious a human achievement. Let freedom ring. God bless Africa."

1999: Final presidential address to South Africa's Parliament

Mandela serves as president for five years.

In his final presidential address to the South African Parliament, in March 1999, Mandela reflects on his country's fight for racial justice and reconciliation.

"To the extent that I have been able to take our country forward to this new era, it is because I am the product of the people of the world who have cherished the vision of a better life for all people everywhere. They insisted, in a spirit of self-sacrifice, that that vision should be realised in South Africa too. They gave us hope."

He decides not to run for a second term but supports the prosperity of the nation through the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

On Dec. 5, 2013—10 years ago—Nelson Mandela died from a prolonged lung infection.

Mourners around the world paid their respects. Mandela's memorial service was held on Dec. 10 in a soccer stadium in Johannesburg. More than 50,000 people gathered in the pouring rain.

People around the world still turn to Mandela's message of self-sacrifice and hope.

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LETTERS

The Unsung Heroes

In situations of deep crisis it is the poor and marginalised who take risks for the country. During the Kerala deluge of 2018 it was the coastal fishermen from Latin Catholic community who were the saviours. The Khalasis, a clan of weight lifting Muslims from Malappuram are the ultimate rescuers in accidents.

And in Silkayara it was the poor, marginalised miners who are the heroes.

Faizi S

US Veto for Continuing Genocide

The US has vetoed a UN Security Council resolution demanding immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza.

The resolution, drafted by the UAE and backed by more than 100 countries, gained support from 13 of the 15 Security Council members, with Britain abstaining on December 8.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres had invoked Article 99 of the UN Charter to urge the organisation's most powerful body to call for a ceasefire.

Article 99 states, "The Secretary General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security."

The text of the resolution called for an immediate halt of fighting between Hamas and Israel, and the protection of both Israeli and Palestinian civilians under international humanitarian law. It also demanded the "immediate and unconditional release of all hostages".

Palestine's ambassador to the United Nations, Riyad Mansour, told the council that the result of the vote was "disastrous," adding: "Millions of Palestinian lives hang in the balance. Every single one of them is sacred,

worth saving."

Rather than enabling the council to execute its charge by at least issuing a definitive appeal, after two months of mass killings and atrocities, "the war criminals are given more time to perpetrate their crimes.

"How can this be justified? How can anyone justify the slaughter of an entire people?" The US is responsible for the continuing bloodshed. What Israel is doing in Gaza is war crime. As per UN report, half of Palestinian people are starving because of Israeli blockade of aid trucks. Jews faced genocide in Nazi Germany but they are now recreating the same scenario in the Middle East against Palestinians.

A Reader

Human Rights Day

It has come to our organisation's (Progressive Lawyers Association) notice that Police has cancelled the permission for holding peaceful protest gathering on the occasion of International Human Rights Day at Jantar Mantar at 1 PM by Campaign Against State Repression (CASR). 'International Human Rights Day' is celebrated worldwide on 10th of December every year since the adoption of 'Universal Declaration Of Human Rights (UNDHR)' by the United Nations. It is pertinent to mention that the Indian state is not only transgressing from its duties to uphold international humanitarian law, as a signatory to UNDHR but also violating fundamental rights of the citizens through this arbitrary decision.

It is quite ironic that on the day of celebration of human rights, gross violation of human rights is being done in broad daylight by Delhi Police in the name of 'law & order'. Law & order is being used as a subterfuge for the state to suppress the human rights of the citizenry. It is needless to say that it goes against

the ethos of article 19 of Indian constitution which guarantees the fundamental right of peaceful assembly to its citizens. State always fears the collective might of citizens and it never leaves any chance to suppress the collective spirit of citizenry. In the past also, multiple democratic gatherings and in-door gatherings have been cancelled on the very pretext of 'law and order. There are a number of legal ways through which Delhi police has controlled the people's voice of their democratic rights. Delhi has been witnessing a rampant imposition of section 144 IPC to create an atmosphere of "so-called disturbance in public order". For the last one year, more than 300 times, Delhi police has used sec. 144 IPC on different places and occasions.

This is a concerning process of stifling democratic assertion and having grave ramifications for democratic aspirations of the people. Therefore, must oppose the unconstitutional cancellation of peaceful protest gathering by the Delhi Police in the name of 'Law & Order'.

Progressive Lawyers Association (PLA), December 10

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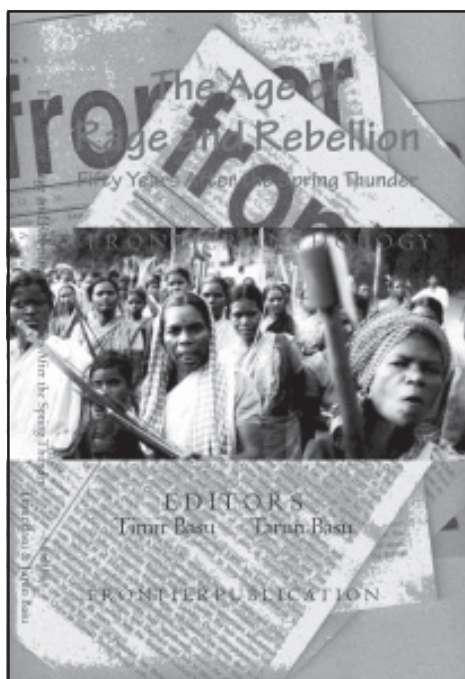
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