

frontier

Vol. 58 : No. 10 | August 31-September 6, 2025 | RNI No 16516/1968 | PR KOL RMS/019/2025-2027 Price: Rs. 10

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Owner Germinal Publications Pvt. Ltd. of 44, Baram Dey Street, Kolkata-700006. Published by Sharmistha Dutta from 44, Baram Dey Street, Kolkata-700006, West Bengal. Printed by Abhijit Goswami at Laser Aid, 35A/3, Biplobi Barin Ghosh Sarani, Kolkata-700067, West Bengal.

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

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80 Years Later

AUGUST 6 COMES, AUGUST 6 GOES. AND PEACE-LOVING people across the world routinely commemorate the Hiroshima Day. This year Japanese observed the 80th anniversary of atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The *hibakusha*—the Japanese term for atomic bomb survivors—will not be on the planet for much longer. Their testimony should continue to be diligently and accurately recorded while it is still available.

When on August 6 and 9, 1945 the United States killed 200-300 thousand innocent Japanese civilians with atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they did so intentionally. It was an act of sinister state terrorism, unprecedented by the nature of the weapons but not by the slaughter. The American terror bombings of Japanese cities that preceded the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—led by the infamous Major General Curtis LeMay—were also intentionally aimed at Japanese civilians and killed hundreds of thousands of them.

In Tokyo alone more than 100,000 Japanese civilians were burnt to death by cluster bombs of napalm. All this killing was deliberate. Only five Japanese cities were spared such bombing. Sixty-seven cities were fire-bombed. There was no Picasso to create another *Guernica*. On April 26, 1937, during the Spanish civil war, the Nazis tested their new air force on the Basque town of Guernica in northern Spain. One-third of Guernica's 5,000 inhabitants were killed or wounded. Pablo Picasso exposed the horror of the bombing in his famous anti-war painting called *Guernica*.

In truth this bombing was a dress rehearsal. The August 1945 atomic bombings were an intentional holocaust, not to end the war, as the historical record amply demonstrates, but to send a message to the Soviet Union that Americans could do to them what they did to the people of Japan. President Truman made certain that the Japanese willingness to surrender in May 1945 was made unacceptable because he and his Secretary-of-State James Byrnes had a plan to wipe the Soviet Union off the map as per revelation of a secret Pentagon document. Then Japan, not Germany, was chosen as a testing ground, because Japanese were not white. Had it not been the American project to destroy the Soviet Union, neither Russia nor China would have developed nuclear weapons. There wouldn't have been a nuclear arms race. Today with 9 declared nuclear states, many in military confrontation with one another, the world is at a dangerous crossroads.

The children of Hiroshima and Nagasaki who died under American bombs on August 6 and 9, 1945 didn't get to grow up. They couldn't hide. They just went under. Ameri-

cans put them under. Or they were left to smoulder for decades in pain and then die. But that it was necessary to save American lives is the biggest lie.

There is a straight line from the nuclear bombing of Japan to the arrant US support for Israel's genocide of the Palestinians.

□□□

COMMENT

Judicial Outreach?

FROM THE COURTROOMS TO legal campaigns for public good, the tradition of judicial activism and legal outreach by the courts in India is well documented. The Supreme Court, High Courts, and even lower courts have earned public respect for their integrity and independence in delivering justice and implementing the law in both letter and spirit, despite the limitations of evidence-based empirical legal practice. This public trust in the judiciary enables the Indian state and its legal systems to ensure the government's constitutional accountability to the people of India.

Democratic politics thrives under the rule of law, where justice is not only a path and product but also a process and a destination. Therefore, the rule of law (*Niti or policies*) cannot be separated from justice (*Nyaya*). This integrated judicial framework was shaped not only by the struggles of working people against British colonialism, Indian feudal-

ism, and patriarchy, but also by the public's frequent celebration of judicial activism and court outreach as means to hold those in power accountable.

However, the very integrity and independence that once gave the courts in India their legitimacy is now declining in the public eye. Increasingly, people are questioning the judiciary's ability to hold the powerful accountable. Perceived biases among judges—particularly those favouring the ruling or non-ruling elite classes—are accelerating the erosion of public trust in the courts. Any form of open judicial discrimination or ideological bias in favour of the ruling class and those in power has long been considered anathema to legal practice, driven by the need to protect and preserve public legitimacy of courts, legal systems and processes. Without public legitimacy, equality, and the freedom to express democratic dissent, justice becomes an empty legal formality.

Justice B R Gavai and Justice A G Masih's questioning of the fundamental purpose and legitimacy of government welfare programmes for urban homeless people, along with Justice Dipankar Datta's remarks on Rahul Gandhi's political statements and his perception of Chinese aggression and occupation of Indian territory as "unpatriotic," add to the growing body of concerns regarding bias in the Supreme Court, High Courts, and lower courts in India.

Similarly, the Bombay High Court bench of Justices Ravindra Ghuge and Gautam Ankhad opposed the organisation of a solidarity march by the left parties in support of Palestine and against the occupation and suffering of people in Gaza, characterising it as an unpatriotic act. Their order stated: "*You are looking at issues in Gaza and Palestine. Look at your own country. Be patriots. This is not patriotism*".

Indian patriotism is rooted in the anti-colonial, anti-capitalist, anti-feudal, and anti-patriarchal struggles of the working people. These struggles were not only nationalistic but also inherently internationalist in both letter and spirit, inspiring anti-colonial, anti-racist, and anti-apartheid movements in various parts of the world.

The struggle for an independent judiciary—free from political, social, economic, cultural, class, caste, gender, and sexual bias—is inseparable from the broader struggle for working-class emancipation from a capitalist system. This system has commercialised culture within the judiciary and marketised legal processes, where power and authority are too often equated with justice. Such a framework amounts to a denial of justice to the masses and obstructs their liberation from an exploitative and inherently unequal society sustained by patriarchal capitalism in India. True bias-free justice is possible only in a world free from capitalism; there is no other path to achieving absolute justice grounded in equality and individual liberty enshrined in the Constitution of India.

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[Contributed by Bhabani Shankar Nayak]

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NOTE

Remembering Chalasani Prasad

Harsh Thakor writes:

JULY 25, COMMUNIST REVOLUTIONARIES across the country commemorated the 10th death anniversary of revolutionary poet and writer, Chalasani Prasad who left an indelible stamp on the revolutionary movement in Telengana and Andhra Pradesh. Chalasani Prasad's memories remain forever, like an inextinguishable lamp. Remembering someone like Chalasani Prasad, who even at eighty-three years of age made his life so meaningful, is like reading an epic novel. 'CP' was a mascot of the communist philosophical ideology that has been shaping Telugu society since before the partition of the country. Joining and working in the early generation of communist groups in Krishna district, writing songs while supporting the struggles of the poor people at a young age, losing family members in the Telangana armed struggle, was a testament to his unflinching quest to liberate humanity. Irrespective of several setbacks and countless deaths of loved ones he never wavered from his revolutionary commitment and orchestrated people's rebellion. He would emerge successful in overcoming the gravest setbacks to re-

invigorate revolutionary fervour. Prasad's life journey symbolised the very soul of revolutionary poetry and literature.

Prasad was born on December 8th, 1932, in Batlapenumarru village in Krishna district. He studied at Challapli high school till matriculation and graduated in political Science from Andhra University.

Prasad emerged as a student leader during his school days. His brother Vasudeva Rao was killed in the Telengana Armed Struggle while his son was assassinated in the Srikakulam struggle.

He played an integral part in the Srikakulam armed Struggle, that fortified the Naxalbari Struggle. Prasad was instrumental in the formation of Virasam, with well reputed poets and writers, Kodavatiganti Kutumba Rao alias Koku, Sri Sri, Krishnabhai and Ramana Reddy.

During the emergency Prasad was arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act and imprisoned with well-known poet and lawyer Raavi Sastry and politicians Tenneti Vishwanatham and GooutuLacchan.

He was one of the architects of the Jana Natya Mandali with revolutionary balladeers Gaddar and Vangapunda in North Andhra.

He was the editor for *Mahakavi* Sri Sri's *Anantam*, whole range of works by *Mahakavi*. He was responsible for the publication of collected works of another literary colossus Kodavatiganti Kutumba Rao.

He unwaveringly condemned the state when police killed tribal leaders branding them as Maoists. He raised his voice against the brutal killing of Ganti Prasadam.

State repression haunted him like a shadow—arresting him, raiding his premises on several occasions.

Chalasani Prasad was in Visakhapatnam when the Srikakulam tribal struggle took place. He personally felt its impact. Although the struggle took place in the tribal areas within their borders, its centre of influence was Visakhapatnam. His home became a centre of the revolutionary movement. He was a revolutionary activist who protected and fortified the Visakhapatnam base for almost five decades. Till his last breath, he waved the banner of Maoism and left no stone unturned in defending the armed movement in Dandkaranya. □□□

[Harsh Thakor is a freelance journalist.

Thanks to Andhra Jyothy and The Times of India for information.]

TARIFF WAR

Cost of Hobnobbing with Yankee Imperialism

Bhabani Shankar Nayak

THE COMBINED TARIFF OF fifty percent on Indian exports to the United States imposed by President Donald Trump should not come as a surprise, despite India's undefined and direc-

tionless strategic partnership with the US. Indian liberals and their right-wing counterparts had celebrated this so-called strategic partnership with the United States. However, from technological embargoes to trade

barriers, this steep tariff reflects a historical continuity of anti-India foreign policy pursued by the US. America was never, is not, and likely will never be a true friend to a developed and sovereign India. It has consistently pursued various forms of strategic foreign policy aimed at undermining India's strength and independence. American racial capitalism and its ruling elites are fundamentally opposed to the idea of an independent and developed India.

Modi built a brand, and it is cracking. Personal chemistry cannot be a substitute for alignments based on shared perspectives. Focusing exclusively on showcasing Modi as a global statesman has resulted in repeated shocks to India. The malaise lies in mistaken belief that the personal charisma of a leader is sufficient to shape India's relationship with the world.

Even the much-touted food aid under US Public Law 480 (PL-480)—ironically referred to as “American 420 food supply” by some—while it helped alleviate food shortages in India during the 1950s, was also strategically designed to undermine India's food sovereignty. By initially dumping surplus American agricultural products, it aimed to create a dependency and eventually open up India as a market for US food exports. India's response, however, came through the establishment of a universal and integrated Public Distribution System (PDS). This system not only laid the foundation for the Green Revolution but also strengthened the country's food sovereignty, particularly with the rise of Food Corporation of India (FCI) storehouses. It played a major role for the production, storage and consistent supply for food to poor and ensuring food security for all. The PDS ensured a minimum support

price for producers, incentivised foodgrain production, and guaranteed a steady food supply to consumers, thereby promoting long-term food security. This state-led intervention ultimately countered the U.S. strategy that sought to make India dependent on American agriculture and food corporations.

The 1991 New Economic Reform programmes initiated by the Congress Party were further deepened by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), weakening both agriculture and food security in India by revamping and targeting the Public Distribution System (PDS). The rural agrarian crisis that India is experiencing today is a direct outcome of these reform measures implemented by both the Congress and the BJP. The fifty percent tariff on Indian exports is a bullying tactic by the American ruling class, intended to pressure India into further liberalising its agricultural sector. This would open up the internal food market to American food corporations, thereby strengthening US agriculture at the expense of India's agrarian economy and the livelihoods of its farmers and agricultural workers. So, the opposition to this American strategy is therefore essential to safeguarding the interests of the Indian working people.

American ruling classes have consistently supported illiberal and reactionary forces in Asia to undermine anti-colonial, anti-imperialist, and anti-capitalist movements, ultimately curbing the foundations of democracy in the region. It has formed alliances with authoritarian and undemocratic regimes to protect and advance its own strategic interests. The current strategy of weakening India is not new; the United States has pursued similar policies since Indian independence. American foreign policy has long aimed to destabilise Asia by promoting conflicts between nations—

India and Pakistan, India and China, and even India and Bangladesh. From manufacturing terrorism and destabilising Afghanistan to backing the Pakistani military—which has repeatedly dismantled democracy within Pakistan and fuelled terrorism and hostilities with India—these actions are rooted in American imperialism. The recent imposition of tariffs reflects America's broader intent to contain the rise of India, China, and a peaceful, cooperative, and harmonious Asia. Also, the emergence of BRICS is a thorn in American flesh.

The American alibi of justifying the imposition of higher tariff and criticising India's friendship with Russia—particularly its purchase of Russian oil and military equipment—is a strategic move aimed at subjugating India. This is despite the fact that the US itself imported goods worth approximately US\$3.27 billion from Russia in 2024. While preaching that India and other nations should stop purchasing Russian goods in the name of not funding the war in Ukraine, the US continues to engage in trade with Russia when it suits its own interests. EU too is doing the same thing.

In reality, India has opposed the conflict in uncertain terms and has consistently called for a diplomatic and peaceful resolution between Russia and Ukraine. However, the Yankee imperialists in Europe, led by the United States, seem intent on prolonging the war—not to defend Ukraine, but to destroy Russia and suppress civil liberties across Europe by invoking a perpetual “extraordinary situation” caused by the conflict. Ironically, President Donald Trump, who once promised to end the war during his election campaign, is now fuelling it further to revive America's defence industry. The American ruling elite is dragging India into this project by pressuring it to purchase US defence equip-

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ment. The imposition of higher tariffs on Indian exports is part of this arm-twisting strategy, aimed at disrupting the historic and time-tested Indo-Russian partnership, which Washington views as a threat to its global dominance.

Similarly, the United States is attempting to escalate the limited border conflict between India and China by promoting the idea of an "Asian NATO" under the guise of advancing the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD). While presented as a strategy to contain China, this framework ultimately aims to control and constrain India as well. It is crucial to expose such American imperialist strategies, in which US interests remain paramount in all strategic engagements and partnerships, often at the expense of regional peace, autonomy and sovereignty. India must recognise these tactics and consider bold steps—including reducing dependency on American trade and mobilising its own internal resources and diversifying its international trade—to safeguard its economic and mili-

tary sovereignty, which is increasingly under threat from American geopolitical manoeuvring. What is more important is to expand internal market as China has done.

The fall of Soviet Union and weakening of Non Allied Movement (NAM) are two defining events that allows American imperialism to continue its unchecked hegemony which has destroyed stable countries, secular societies and viable economic systems in Middle East, Africa, Asia, Americas and Europe to protect US interests. The worldwide failure of capitalism and decline of American imperialism makes American ruling elites to fall on their time tested strategy of fuelling global crisis by promoting regional conflicts, terrorism and economic warfare to reestablish itself as unchallenged global police. African, Asian, and Latin American countries are increasingly challenging American hegemony. In response, the United States is resorting to aggressive trade policies and tariff barriers to contain their economic rise. India must recognise and

expose these regional strategies pursued by the US while working to build anti-imperialist global alliances. Such alliances are essential not only to protect India's own people and national interests but also to support freedom-loving, peace-seeking democratic populations across the world.

From agriculture, industry to technology, India has the capacity to mobilise its own internal resources, strengthen regional partnerships, and diversify its international business, trade and economic relations to recover from the strategic missteps and costs of aligning too closely with Yankee imperialism under the guise of a "strategic partnership." Any compromise or surrender to American pressure will not only undermine India's sovereignty and development but also weaken the broader global movement toward democratisation and multipolarity of world politics and economy. Therefore, India must stand firm and uphold its historic anti-imperialist legacy to protect and promote universal peace, justice, and harmony. □□□

IN MODI'S INDIA

Make in India or Making India

*Bhaskar Majumder**

THERE WAS A TIME IMMEDIATELY post-1947 when products, whether or not internally produced, were branded as 'Made in India'. Time changed and import more of white goods that included electronic goods came to show different foreign brands probably because of consumer's choice. Most of the goods at the bottom like rice-fish-vegetables did not need either home branding or foreign branding—the immediate implication was goods that required advertisement also required branding.

It was, of course, not manifest if nationalism-patriotism was associ-

ated with 'Made in India'. Now post-2014 in 'New India' the slogan 'Make in India' has replaced 'Made in India'. While 1956-1966 essentially characterised import-substitution, the slogan 'Make in India' did not occupy place of prominence. It seems when the state is uncertain about the credibility of the product, the slogan gets a new Avatar.

In the simplest of terms, Indians make use-value understood as consumer goods and capital goods that aim at trade sovereignty in the sense of attaining self-reliance. The ratio between home production and imports of goods rises gradually in

import-substitution with several implications like increasing employment of manpower, expanding home market and so on.

Conventional idea is that resources are limited in any economy—limited because people need more than what quantity of resources can be transformed to satisfy their need. This need is not static; there are inter-class variations in need. The question, thus, is relevant on what is to be made in 'Made in India' or in 'Make in India'. Outside material needs there are service needs that are not readily cardinal and hence difficult to be seen as 'Made in India' or 'Make in India'.

What are to be made in India are the following though the population did not reveal it. Something concealed does not necessarily im-

ply that that did not exist—obstructed choice is one such possibility.

Man does not live by bread alone; but bread is the basic need for both—rich and poor. People at the bottom talk about 'Roji-Roti'; hence, Roji or employment is also a basic need—they are not for begging-stealing-borrowing. The other needs are corollaries like non-dispossession, non-deprivation, non-marginalisation. Once these are understood at the level of the nation, the core questions come as following:

Gender Question

Whether or not acknowledged, gender is a major issue for 'Making India' for women at least as home-makers have a respectable position in upbringing children through education-culture that is they have an inter-generational effect. A nation is made when children are made. Unfortunately, women across ages have remained victims because of domestic violence, honour killing, trafficking, rape, gang-rape, disappearance and so on.

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Democracy Question

India practices Parliamentary Democracy. She has an esteemed Constitution. People cast votes once every five years. Democracy in reality is more than casting votes—it is based on consensus arrived at voluntary participation of people for all activities that affect them or what may be called decentralised democracy. There are Panchayati Raj institutions that got delayed to be set up; however, the caste-class often obstructs people at the bottom to participate to express their voice in these institutions. Making India is everybody's India—hence, consensus in decision-making is the pedestal for 'Making India'. If hegemon-consensus is taken as 'majority-consensus' and ultimately interpreted as 'general consensus', then that type of consensus may be spurious. Even if it is non-spurious, the decision-making from bottom by voluntary participation is the way.

Dignity Question

Dignity of man is non-negotiable and non-transferable. The concept of dignity may also differ by sections of people across regions. The most important factor that determines human dignity is education. In case the core state is adamant to destroy the public educational institutions or go for privatisation based on donation of huge money, the country will only claim 'Make in India' for all wrong reasons.

Making India

Making India is a process—it is in her continuity. People make it. This India is in her civilisation that started from pre-history because of her oral tradition. This history is in myth-mythology. Science as knowledge base and technology as praxis remodeled the idea of India but the civilization is now where it was centuries ago.

Most of the people in India are less ambitious and more religious.

Family is the centre for living in spite of migration-mobility. Women had respect though understood as constrained by 'Lakshmanrekha'. Some of these are not to be measured by some specified rights like right to cast votes. Even the most dominant coloniser had no provision of women casting votes till 1928. Socio-cultural atrocities, of course, polluted the right of women to live with dignity that may be understood from *Satidaha* in undivided Bengal or elsewhere in disguised form and *Devdasi* system on the long coastal states of India along the Bay of Bengal. India will remain in 'unmaking' if women are not allowed entry in the public domain with voice. In India's Epic, Draupadi had the voice to question the King (officiating) after she was dragged to the courtyard.

India will remain in 'unmaking' if money determines merit and voice of political power suppresses voice of the sane-wise persons. India will remain in unmaking if the public educational institutions are maligned. India will remain in unmaking if duopoly is protected-glorified at the cost of people. Unmaking India is much easier than making India for power to destroy is easy.

Essence of Making India

The essence lies in social justice, equitable distribution of whatever is made in India, respect for elderly and women in family and in public, caste-neutrality, truth, honesty, fraternity, love and care for children and the people of different ability. The essence lies in hunger-free India, shelter for all India. The essence lies in freedom of speech as different from despotism or anarchy. The responsibility of making India rests more on the state for reasons obvious. The essence rests on educational institutions.

It seems extremely difficult to be a part of 'Making India' as it requires commitment-honesty, as it is

based on voluntary participation based on equality, as it respects diversity by regions and languages, as it is not based on force. Honesty itself is a difficult proposition for power and honesty follow divergent trajectories. In India's epic, Yudhishtira had to pay a heavy price for his honesty and it was not clear if his participation in the game of chess second time was voluntary

or not, but it was commitment for sure. Being part of 'Making India' is more difficult because the willing person may find doors shut in rooms where decisions are taken and/or allowed to enter to keep mum.

The major mishap in 'Making India' is the imposition of force by the majoritarian political party in a political society as most of India shows. Dysfunctional democracy is

difficult to understand for it camouflages many of the measures kept in secret box. False images are also manufactured through inclusion-exclusion mechanism in which situations the 'Nation-making India' gets perplexed. People need to be convinced that the nation comes first that is more than the state. This nation is the people. □□□

[*Professor of Economics (Retd.), G.B.Pant Social Science Institute, Allahabad-211019]

DIVIDE AND DOMINATE

India's Defiance and Washington's Displeasure

Junaid S Ahmad

THE AMERICAN EMPIRE IS not built on friendship—it is built on leverage. It rewards submission, punishes defiance, and sustains itself by exploiting regional tensions, manufacturing crises, and cultivating willing enforcers. Under Trump, this game has become unusually transparent, even clumsy. In the heart of South Asia, the US is executing a ruthless strategy: keep two nuclear-armed rivals, India and Pakistan, locked in a state of calculated instability. Play them off each other. Extract strategic concessions. Undermine their sovereignty—and all the while, maintain a covert but unrelenting grip on the direction of the region.

India and Pakistan are not simply regional powers—they are case studies in how the American national security state disciplines nations that flirt with autonomy. While India pushes back subtly through multilateralism and energy independence, Pakistan plays the opposite role: a hollowed-out client state run by a militarised elite willing to lease out sovereignty to prolong its internal dominance. Both are being managed. One is being cajoled. The other is being rewarded for submission.

India, under the BJP's aggressive

majoritarianism, is often depicted in the Western imagination as a natural ally in containing China. It is courted as part of the QUAD, hailed for its market size, and praised for its democratic façade. But the American empire has grown increasingly uneasy with India's stubborn desire to act independently. Its ongoing economic and military relationship with Russia is the most visible expression of that discomfort.

Despite the avalanche of Western sanctions, India continues to buy Russian oil at scale, refusing to fold under pressure. This isn't simply about cheap energy—it's about strategic autonomy. India's calculus is clear: It will not surrender its economic or geopolitical leverage just to win favour in Washington. It wants multipolarity, not alignment. That places it squarely at odds with a US that still believes in unipolar dominance dressed up in the language of "rules-based order."

New Delhi is fully aware that it is being courted primarily to counter-balance Beijing. And it resents it. India does not want to be a pawn in America's China containment strategy. It views itself as a civilisational state, a sub-imperial power in its own right. It leads in BRICS, it

takes initiative in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and it sees its neighbourhood as a sphere of influence—not as a battlefield for great power rivalry. The fact that India continues to assert this role, while still participating in QUAD meetings and joint military drills with the US, reflects the delicate tight-rope it walks. It is trying to gain from both sides without surrendering to either.

But Washington is losing patience. India's refusal to adopt Western narratives on Russia, its reluctance to isolate Iran, and its quiet resistance to US diktats have made it increasingly suspect. Tariff threats, passive-aggressive diplomacy, and subtle economic punishment have all emerged as tools to remind India of its place. The message is clear: the price of defiance is pain, and no amount of cultural affinity or democratic rhetoric will shield you from empire's wrath.

On the other side of the border, Pakistan is playing a far more familiar role: the loyal enforcer, the ever-available subcontractor of imperial agendas. But today's Pakistan is not what it was a decade ago. It has morphed into a security state run almost entirely by a military elite that trades national sovereignty for regime stability.

The current army leadership has handed Washington exactly what it wants. Secret drone bases? Approved. Access to rare earth miner-

als? Granted. Quiet corridors for US Special Forces and intelligence contractors? Already operational. The transactional nature of the relationship has never been so blatant. Empire wants footprints, logistical routes, and silence. Pakistan's military leadership wants legitimacy, protection, and foreign patronage. The deal is simple—and disturbingly effective.

At the centre of this alliance is the army chief, a figure who has concentrated power to unprecedented levels. His role is no longer just military—it is political, economic, and even symbolic. He functions as a regional viceroy, maintaining internal order with an iron fist while allowing foreign interests to extract and operate with impunity. This isn't sovereignty—it's occupation by invitation.

The American embrace of Pakistan's army chief sends a powerful signal to India, and to others in the region: you can be a brutal autocrat, crush dissent, and sell off your country's future—but as long as you serve the empire's needs, you will be protected and even praised. It is a message that resonates across many corners of the developing world. Compliance, not democracy, is the currency of imperial favour.

India watches this unfolding with thinly veiled rage. While it is pres-

sured over trade, lectured on human rights, and penalised for not adopting US policy priorities, its neighbouring rival is rewarded for authoritarianism and compliance. Pakistan, a country lurching from crisis to crisis, is treated as a valued partner simply because its military is willing to sign away sovereignty in exchange for elite survival.

This dynamic deepens Indian scepticism toward American intentions. The message it receives is that submission is more valuable than strength. That obedient dysfunction is preferable to strategic independence. This is not the partnership of equals that India has long envisioned. It is a hierarchy, and India is being reminded of its place.

Yet India is not ready to break with the West either. It still craves investment, technology transfers, and the geopolitical benefits of being seen as a responsible counterweight to China. It is stuck in an uncomfortable middle ground: too independent to be embraced, too useful to be discarded. This ambiguity may serve India's interests in the short term, but over time, the contradictions will sharpen. The more America rewards Pakistan's submission, the more India may feel compelled to assert its independence with greater clarity.

Meanwhile, within the Pakistani diaspora, particularly among sections of the professional and managerial elite, a strange form of complicity has taken root. Many rallied behind Trump, believing—or pretending to believe—that his supposed admiration for a jailed populist leader would translate into action. They mobilised votes, orchestrated campaigns, and painted the former president as a potential liberator.

But they remained eerily silent on matters far graver. The genocidal assault on Gaza, the deepening alliance between empire and Zionism,

the broader architecture of imperial oppression—none of these featured in their political calculus. The transactional nature of their engagement was as cynical as it was narrow: free our man, and we'll give you our votes.

What they ignored—or wilfully overlooked—was that Trump's embrace of Pakistan's military had nothing to do with popular sentiment. It was a cold strategic calculation. The generals offered more than any populist leader ever could: bases, minerals, silence, and obedience. The diaspora's faith in Trump was not only misplaced—it was irrelevant.

This failure to engage morally, to stand up not just for domestic political figures but for international justice, reveals a deep rot. The diaspora elite, like the generals they seek favour from, have chosen expediency over principle. They have prioritised elite access over ethical clarity.

Empire has always relied on division to maintain control. By rewarding Pakistan and punishing India, the US ensures that both remain preoccupied with each other rather than united against external manipulation. By fuelling paranoia in New Delhi and dependency in Islamabad, it maintains its privileged role as mediator, arms dealer, and ultimate arbiter.

But this game, though clever, is not sustainable. The contradictions are piling up. India's patience is wearing thin. Pakistan's military is overextended and increasingly isolated domestically. And the broader region is becoming more multipolar, more assertive, and less willing to play by Washington's rules.

The American empire believes it is playing 4D chess. In reality, it is managing decline through increasingly desperate moves. Propping up generals, threatening allies, and leasing out coercive power may provide

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short-term gains—but they reveal a deep strategic insecurity. The US cannot tolerate independence; even from those it calls partners. Its vision of order requires not just cooperation, but submission.

India and Pakistan are not just rivals—they are instruments in a broader imperial strategy of containment and control. But history has shown, time and again, that such games eventually implode. The

empire's clever gambit may buy time, but it cannot buy legitimacy.

When an empire rewards the dictator and penalises the defiant, it tells the world more about itself than its targets. This isn't diplomacy. It's coercion in a tailored suit. And as the gap widens between imperial ambition and global reality, even the most carefully managed chessboard may one day be flipped by the very pawns it seeks to control.

[Prof. Junaid S. Ahmad teaches Law, Religion, and Global Politics and is the Director of the Center for the Study of Islam and Decolonization (CSID), Islamabad, Pakistan. He is a member of the International Movement for a Just World' (JUST—<https://just-international.org/>), Movement for Liberation from Nakba (MLN—<https://nakbaliberation.com/>), and Saving Humanity and Planet Earth (SHAPE—<https://www.theshapeproject.com/>). <https://countercurrents.org/2025/08/divide-dominate-extract-the-american-blueprint-for-india-and-pakistan/>]

PLIGHT OF BANK EMPLOYEES

Burnout, Suicides & Systemic Failures

Kurian Mathew

INDIA'S BANKING SECTOR will not thrive on profitability metrics alone. It will succeed only when the people at its heart—its employees—are respected, supported, and heard.

A silent crisis is unfolding in India's public sector banks (PSBs). It's not about toxic assets or cyber fraud—but burnout. Behind the counters of these institutions, employees are exhausted, overburdened, and chronically understaffed. Branches that once operated with six or seven staff members are now often reduced to three or four, despite a sharp rise in workload. The result is not only operational stress but a growing human toll.

In recent years, multiple cases of suicides among bank employees have sent shock-waves through the sector. These are not isolated tragedies. They reflect an alarming pattern: an institutional environment marked by neglect, excessive workload, and psychological strain. What began as a management issue has now become a matter of human rights—an instance of systemic violence through institutional apathy.

Public sector banks have been foundational to India's economic infrastructure. They reach under-

served regions, disburse pensions, facilitate crop insurance, support rural entrepreneurs with MUDRA loans, and enable financial inclusion through Jan Dhan accounts. However, while their mandates have expanded, the workforce that carries out these responsibilities has thinned.

A combination of retirements, hiring freezes, and over-reliance on contractual workers has eroded permanent staff strength. Over the last decade, PSBs have experienced a net decline in employee numbers, even as customer accounts have multiplied. Clerks who previously handled 50 transactions a day now process double or more, on top of handling insurance sales, loan applications, KYC compliance, and digital onboarding.

While digital tools have streamlined some processes, they have also raised expectations. Customers now demand speed, accuracy, and 24/7 service. In many branches, one officer is left juggling multiple queues, resolving IT issues, attending compliance calls, handling audits, redressing grievances—and in some cases, even cleaning the floors when support staff are absent.

Once seen as a stable, aspirational career, public sector

banking has become a high-pressure environment where many employees feel abandoned. Toxic workloads, lack of support, and indifferent management have eroded morale. Far too often, the human cost is hidden in plain sight.

Over the past ten years, India has seen more than 500 suicides among bank employees, according to union estimates. In many of these cases, victims cited unbearable stress, unrealistic targets, workplace harassment, or lack of support. On July 17, 2025, a Chief Manager died by suicide—just days before the bank was to celebrate its 118th foundation day. These are not anomalies. They are signals of a deep-rooted structural malaise.

Institutional responses have been troublingly inadequate. Internal inquiries often dismiss allegations of harassment or overwork. There is little accountability for managerial misconduct. Whistle-blowing is discouraged. Union concerns are too often misconstrued as resistance to change rather than legitimate alarms over collapsing employee welfare.

This crisis has also deeply affected morale. Employees are no longer treated as professionals but as disposable instruments of productivity. One day, they are expected to be sales executives; the next, they are expected to be IT trouble-shooters or financial advisors—all without proper training or compensation.

Targets rule everything. Branch managers face relentless pressure to meet sales and recovery benchmarks. Failure invites humiliation, poor performance ratings, or punitive transfers. Even success goes unrecognised. A single procedural misstep can lead to vigilance inquiries, regardless of whether it arose from ambiguous instructions or sheer exhaustion. Many employees now work in fear of being scapegoated for systemic failures.

Burnout under these circumstances is inevitable. Mental health issues—ranging from anxiety and insomnia to clinical depression and post-traumatic stress—are becoming endemic. Yet institutional recognition of this psychological toll is virtually nonexistent. There are no employee help-lines, mental health support systems or functioning grievance redressal mechanisms. The stigma around mental health further

discourages many from seeking help.

India cannot afford to let its public sector banking system crumble under the weight of such internal dysfunction. Banks are not just financial intermediaries; they are instruments of social and economic justice. However, this mission cannot be sustained without protecting the dignity and well-being of those who serve it.

Urgent action is needed:

- Fill critical vacancies: As per a statement by the Union Finance Minister in December 2021, over 41,000 posts were vacant across PSBs. These must be filled, especially at the clerical and officer levels. Contractual appointments are not a long-term solution.
- Provide mental health support: Establish counseling services, employee help-lines, and internal support mechanisms. Promote a workplace culture that encour-

ages employees to seek help without fear of stigma or reprisal.

- Align workload with staffing: Staffing norms must be tailored to the size and function of branches. Arbitrary multitasking must be eliminated.
- Ensure managerial accountability: Create transparent systems to address abuse of power. Disciplinary mechanisms should be impartial, fair, and open.
- Broaden performance metrics: Move beyond numeric targets. Reward quality of service, compassion, teamwork, and resilience.

The current crisis is not just about numbers; it is about people pushed beyond their limits.

The people behind the counters deserve more than customers' transactions—they deserve their trust, their attention, and above all, their care.

□□□

[Courtesy: *Madras Courier*]

MALEGAON BLAST JUDGEMENT

Crime and (No) Punishment

Ram Puniyani

THE LONG-AWAITED VERdict on the Malegaon blast of 2008 was delivered by a special court in Mumbai. The judgement has acquitted all seven accused in the Malegaon blasts case, which came as a blow to the victims and celebrations to the Hindutva camp. Many were anticipating this type of verdict and it was no surprise to them as during the period of last 17 years the investigating agencies did change the track, particularly after 2014. The blast was carried by a group which used a motor-cycle. The RDX used in the bomb blew up at a time when the gathering of Muslims was there and killed six people and injured over one hundred people. This happened in the

month of Ramadan. Former BJP MP from Bhopal Pragya Singh Thakur, the serving army officer Lt. Colonel Prasad Shrikant Purohit, Retd Major Ramesh Upadhyay were among the seven accused who were named arrested.

Initially the Malegaon blasts case was with the Maharashtra Anti-terrorism squad. Later National Investigation Agency took it over in 2011. The court observed that there is a strong suspicion about the accused being involved but prosecution has not been able to prove it beyond doubt, so all the accused are acquitted. There was a strong appreciation of the judgment from Hindu Right; they also accused the Congress for setting the narrative for saffron ter-

ror the result of which was this accusation of various people from the right wing.

There are some points of the trajectory of investigation which need to be kept in mind while making an opinion on this. Hemant Karkare, who investigated the case, began with the Motor Cycle of Sadhvi Pragya Thakur, an Ex ABVP-activist. The trail led to these accused and they were arrested.

One of the early blasts in the area was the one which happened in Nanded in April 2006. In the house of Rajkondawar, a bomb exploded. The reason was that in the house a bomb was being assembled and due to some mishandling, it exploded. The incident was investigated by a Citizens inquiry team under the leadership of Ex Rashtra Seva Dal President, Dr Suresh Khairnar. Two youths, Himanshu Panse (27) and Naresh Rajkondwar

(26), died on the spot and three, Yogesh Deshpande (24), Maruti Wagh (23) and Gururaj Tuptewar (25), were badly injured. The flag of Bajrang Dal was flying over the house. At the site, fake beard and moustache and pajama Kurta were also seen.

Around this time some explosions also took place in Parbhani, Panvel and Jalna. In case of Malegaon 2008 blast as Karkare was doing meticulous investigation and arresting the accused, the ally of BJP, the united Shiv Sena Chief Bal Thackeray in his paper Saamana wrote that, 'we spit on Karkare' for his anti-Hindu activity. Lal Krishna Advani, the then leader of opposition said that the accused are being tortured.

In the 26/11 2008 Mumbai terror attack, Hemant Karkare was killed, after which Narendra Modi who was then Chief Minister of Gujarat rushed to Mumbai with a cheque of one Crore to Karkare's widow, who politely declined to accept it. Same Modi had called Karkare as doing things against national interests as he had arrested Pragya Thakur and company, now Karkare started being presented as a martyr after he was killed. As he was investigating this; due to such comments coming from different Hindutva quarters, he went to Julio Ribbeiro, his peer, an up-right professional. Mr Ribeiro appreciated his forthright work and asked him to continue his work in a professional manner.

After the tragic death of Karkare, Pragya Thakur had her own version of the story. Applauded by leaders of the BJP who surrounded her during a press-conference..., Thakur described Karkare as "anti-national" and "dharmvirudh" (anti-religion).

In the other cases of terror blasts (Ajmer, Mecca Masjid and Samjhauta Express) Swami Aseemanand was arrested. After his arrest he confessed

to his crimes in front of a metropolitan Magistrate. The confession was voluntary and was recorded under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code before Metropolitan Magistrate at Tis Hazari courts on December 18. Swami's statement was recorded after 48 hours of judicial custody, to ensure that no sort of pressure or intimidation is working on the mind of the confessor. In this statement he confessed that he and other Hindu activists were involved in bombings at Muslim religious places because they wanted to answer every Islamist terror act with "a bomb for bomb" policy.

A bit later he retracted the statement saying that this was given under coercion. It came as a lot of surprise as one knows that the statements given in front of police authorities can be under pressure or coercion but in front of a judge it is another matter. His 48 hours judicial custody was a time enough to consider all aspects of the issues involved. It seems more of a turning around, an afterthought to protect his associates and the parent organization. Swami, after accepting the legal assistance; retracted the statement.

These confessions were published in Caravan and a lot of turmoil was created. Immediately Swami went on to retract the content of the interviews he gave to the reporter of Caravan. The reporter and the editor of Magazine have stood by their version and have also released the parts of the audio tapes to authenticate the interview's contents. This Caravan story not only reconfirmed most of what Swami had confessed in the Court but added other dimensions also).

The other major verdict in recent times was that related to train blasts in Mumbai. In this the Muslim accused were released, declared non-guilty and the Government immediately appealed against judgement.

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In the Nanded judgement case there is a wide celebration in the right-wing camp and no talk of appealing against it by the Government. Interestingly just before the date of judge-

ment Home Minister Amit Shah declared that a Hindu can never be a terrorist, thereby associating terrorism to religion. He deliberately forgot Godse (Mahatma's Killer), Dhanu

(Rajiv Gandhi's killer) and so many other terrorists whose religion is Hindu. But surely terrorism has nothing to do with any religion.

□□□

UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES

How the Global South Suffers

Bharat Dogra

IN THE YEARS FOLLOWING World War 2, in the changed circumstances there was a decline of leading colonial powers of Europe. As a result of this and the growing strength of various freedom movements, many former colonies started emerging as free countries one after another. However, obstinately refusing to see the writing on the wall, some colonial powers persisted in fighting very bloody wars to delay their departure, resulting in the avoidable cruel killing of several hundred thousand more people, while others presided over creating artificial boundaries and divisions at the time of their departure, killing many more people and leaving behind a legacy of future hostilities and wars.

Subsequently other efforts were made by the former colonial powers to perpetuate their grip on unfair distribution of economic power, maintain unfair trade practices and retain or even expand the powerful grip of their multinational companies. In countries like Iran, Congo and Chile the old colonial powers and the USA even went to the extent of killing or ousting democratically elected popular leaders and overthrowing the regimes led by them, just to safeguard their eco-

nomic interests, often represented by their powerful corporate entities eager to retain or expand their control over lucrative natural resources.

Nevertheless, despite the continuation of a highly unjust system in the form of neo-colonialism, there was at least a place in the discourse on development and trade (and subsequently in later years on climate change) for the acceptance of the historical injustice caused to global south and hence at least a hesitant acceptance of the need for some actions and steps for at least partially undoing some of the injustices and disadvantages. Some of the United Nations agencies and leading scholars also contributed in significant ways to the recognition of this reality.

Thus one finds that the injustice caused to the people of the global south remained an important part of the discourse for several years. The richest countries never gave up their pursuit of self-interest of course, but none among the representatives of the richest countries was so aggressive or crude or unreasonable as to say or suggest that the global south was responsible for the problems faced by the richest countries.

It is only in times of Trump that people hear the richest and most powerful country telling increasing numbers of poorer countries that it is they who are responsible for the problems faced by the richest country by keeping their tariffs high or refusing some favours to the richest country.

The entire discourse based on

acceptance of the historic as well as recent injustices suffered by the global south has been rudely pushed aside and instead it is the rich who are blaming the poor. The idea behind changing the entire discourse so rudely is to discourage any preferential treatment for the global south, or even any talk of this, while rudely imposing higher tariffs and other injustices and hazards on the countries and people of the global south. This is a reflection of the changing discourse in several other development areas also.

In the context of this fast changing situation, it is useful and interesting to recall some of the earlier discourse on international trade, particularly the aspects relating to the recognition that this should be fair to countries of the global south most of whom had earlier suffered so heavily during colonial times (and also later) and certainly need fairer trade terms to emerge from the long period of heavy disadvantages and exploitation suffered by them. As this writer too was earlier a participant in some of the campaigns for fair and justice-based trade, he can assert from his experience that there was fairly widespread support for this, even in some western countries and campaigns widely used the literature produced by Oxfam and UN agencies which was supportive of justice for global South in the context of trade.

The UNDP Human Development Report (HDR) had brought out a special issue on international trade. This HDR particularly indicted those unfair trade policies that undermine the livelihood of small farmers of global south. A big problem relates

For Frontier Contact

Central News Agency

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to huge agricultural and related subsidies in most rich countries. This report said, "Rich countries spend over \$1 billion A YEAR as aid to developing country agriculture and just under \$1 billion A DAY supporting their own agricultural systems."

These heavy subsidies, this report pointed out, hurt rural communities in developing countries. "Subsidised exports undercut them in global and local markets, driving down the proceeds received by farmers and the wages received by agricultural labourers. Meanwhile producers seeking access to industrial country markets have to scale some of the highest tariff peaks in the world." Within rich countries the benefits go mostly to big businesses and bigger farmers. HDR concluded, "It would be hard to design a more regressive—or less efficient—system of financial transfers than currently provided through agricultural subsidies...Industrial countries are locked into a system that wastes money at home and destroys livelihoods."

Further this report said, "When it comes to world agricultural trade, market success is determined not by comparative advantage but by comparative access to subsidies—an area

in which producers in poor countries are unable to compete."

At that time, as this report pointed out, cotton farmers in the USA received subsidy equal to the market value of the crop, enabling US big farmers and companies to dominate world market, while as a result of this, poverty in a country like Benin increased from 37% to 59%. Around the same time, rice grown in the USA at a cost of \$415 a tonne was exported at \$274 a tonne, with the result that in countries like Ghana and Haiti rice farmers were pushed out of their national markets. In the European Union, farmers and processors were paid four times the world market price for sugar, generating a 4 million tonne surplus, which was marketed with the help of huge subsidies given mainly to big processors, in turn resulting in ruin of farmers and small processors in some developing countries.

A study report by Oxfam titled 'Rigged Rules and Double Standards' revealed that in many cases the USA and the European Union were exporting at prices more than one-third lower than the costs of production, devastating small farmers in several developing countries.

The reason for quoting from these reports is to establish that till just a

short while ago there was widespread and well-established recognition that the existing international trade was functioning unjustly towards the people of the global south, and one main concern, perhaps the most basic concern, was to remedy this injustice. Such a discourse has been changed drastically recently with the Trump-driven discourse shouting only about the injustice suffered by the USA under the existing systems. What is more, instead of such a claim being rigorously examined in terms of any evidence that can support this, the new situation is that anything shouted at the top of the voice by the more powerful persons must be accepted. Hence a situation is arising in which the most important concerns, evidence, facts are going to be neglected leading to highly unjust situations emerging. In such a situation it becomes very important to focus attention on the reality, on real concerns and facts, and this should get the priority attention of more scholars and organisations. The UN should play an important role in presenting the real situation in the present context. □□□

[The writer is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include Planet in Peril, Earth without Borders, Man over Machine and A Day in 2071]

"ILLUSION OF FREEDOM"

Solo Show by Maumita Basu

Atanu Basu

MAUMITA BASU, A MIDDLE-aged person and a professional Lawyer, appears to have said good-bye to her profession and delve deep into the world of color-canvas-brush and devoted herself very seriously and almost exclusively into her other world. She might have been a very successful professional, delivering judgements, yet she left the confines of that arena and stepped into the world of

art. In her objective for showcasing her art, she addressed her viewers by declaring that, "colorful world of painting and creativity is the driving force of mine to live life form in joyful manner, different techniques, colors, style, medium, experimental creative works inspire me every day. Life and nature surprises me always. Little things, small incidents, human emotions fascinate me to choose my subject in my paintings. I just

love to challenge myself to further my knowledge and enhance my creativity by doing experimental works."

The second solo show of Maumita Basu has recently been held in *Charubasan's Chittaprasad Gallery*. For the last 35 years or so, she is engaged in drawings and paintings. In between, she was into Boutique business, which she started in the year 2000 and continued till 2008. She was a disciple of many stalwarts in the area of painting, yet she always tried to evolve her own style and to create her own school of thought. In her solo exhibition, "Illusion of Freedom" one encounters

drawings, paintings in tempera, mixed media, oil, pen and ink and other media. The exhibits in this exhibition was dominated by the live study of human figures, moments from daily lives to animal, flowers, scenery. All the exhibits were centered on realism and depicted her own world sublimed within her soul.

Her brush-strokes are excellent—particularly her sense of mixing of colors. Her prowess as a painter is revealed when one confronts her exhibits displaying a surreal moment, pain suffered by human beings, or for that matter, a definite feeling charged with emotion. Sometimes, she generated a boutique effect by using round shapes in her drawings. Many of her experimental works were dominated by the Indian traditional

techniques and styles. Her compositions were remarkably poised, balanced delicately with the arrangements of pieces. She was always conscious, especially as regards the choice of subjects, space and most importantly, about the selection colours.

There is no doubt about the fact that in her entire range of exhibits in the exhibition, there is an implicit theme of freedom; but one is hard put to finding even a glimpse of “illusion”. Like poets, she may have a theme of her own about the kernel of what constitutes an illusion. Nevertheless, this particular exhibition of Maumita Basu would leave a deep impression and would be remembered for a long time.

The grooming that a serious art-

ist ought to go through, as a practising artist Maumita went through all these crucial steps as meticulously as the craft demanded. As she was immersed in the apprenticeship, her love for art, passion, honesty and loyalty towards the values that art stood for, generated the dedication and ability to work in challenging situation confers a smooth navigation for an artist.

As a member of the Artists’ Forum, she had consistently taken part. Her work sprang from the daily experiences she gathered, the encounters with diverse objects around her; she reshaped them, giving them a psychological twist and then portrayed the objects in her own unique way. Visiting this exhibition comes as a welcome relief after quite some time. □□□

LETTERS

Shibu Soren

Shibu Soren passed away on August 4, at a Delhi hospital after prolonged illness.

Born on January 11, 1944, in Nemra village, then in Bihar (now in Jharkhand), Shibu Soren belonged to the Santhal tribal community. A lifelong advocate for tribal rights, he began his activism at the age of 18 by founding the Santhal Navyuvak Sangh, which focused on land and tribal issues.

In 1972, he co-founded the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) along with A.K. Roy and Binod Bihari Mahato, leading the charge for a separate Jharkhand state and the empowerment of tribal communities.

He served as the General Secretary of the JMM and played a pivotal role in the movement that eventually led to the formation of Jharkhand in 2000.

Soren served as Chief Minister of Jharkhand three times. Though his tenures were short due to coalition complexities, his impact on state politics and tribal advocacy was long-lasting.

Known affectionately as “Dishom Guru”, Shibu Soren was revered in tribal regions for his commitment to justice and upliftment of marginalised communities.

Soren leaves behind a legacy of struggle, determination and hope. This was perhaps pre-ordained, arriving as he did on the scene of Adivasi suffering in Jharkhand and the leading it to statehood.

A Reader

Charging for Salt

It is ironic! Trump’s slapping tariffs on India is like inviting someone to dinner and charging him for the salt!

T S Karthik, Chennai

Evyatar is Digging his own Grave

This should have been on the front page of every major media outlet in the country.

Recently, Hamas released a horrifying video of Evyatar David, 24, that shows his deliberate, prolonged starvation and severe abuse.

The images are chillingly reminiscent of the Holocaust. In the video, Evyatar (24) is shown being forced to

dig his own grave. He has been held captive in Gaza for 670 days.

As the global advocacy organisation for the Jewish people, American Jewish Committee (AJC) will not stand by as major media outlets neglect to bring worldwide attention to Hamas’ atrocities. Their selective coverage of the Israel-Hamas War is a complete moral failure..

American Jewish Committee
[AJC]

“Caste is acquired by Birth”

The Himachal Pradesh High Court has clarified in an important order that caste is determined by birth and cannot change after marriage. This order has come in a case where a non-Dalit woman had described herself as a member of the Dalit community after marrying a Dalit man. Rejecting this argument, the court has ordered to restart the case going on against her under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

The case began when the accused Sarojini was booked under Sections 451, 323, 504, 506 of the IPC and Section 3(1)(s) of the SC/ST Act for having an affair with a Dalit

man. The trial court had acquitted her on the ground that she had married a Dalit man and was thus now a member of the Dalit community herself. The High Court completely rejected this argument.

The bench of Justice Rakesh Kainthala made it clear in its judgment that “caste is an innate identity which does not change throughout life”. The court said that if caste change is allowed after marriage, it would undermine the basic purpose of the SC/ST Act. The court cited the Supreme Court’s Valsamma Paul case (1996) in this matter. Justice Kainthala quoted the Bombay High Court’s observation: “The misery of a person born in a Scheduled Caste does not end by marrying a person from an upper caste. The label attached at birth persists irrespective of the marital relationship.”

The court particularly emphasised that a non-Dalit person cannot enter the Dalit community through marriage. If this is held, it will promote caste discrimination in society.

This has made it clear that caste identity is not something that a person can change as per his convenience. The court clarified that its decision is only to clarify the legal position and it is not a comment on the merit of the case. Now the hearing of this case will start again in the trial court.

Geetha Sunil Pillai

How many people were killed by the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

The only instances of atomic weapons being used against a civilian population occurred in 1945 at the tail end of World War II. On August 6, 1945, “Little Boy” was detonated above the Japanese city of Hiroshima. Three days later, “Fat Man” was detonated above Nagasaki. The aftermath of the bombings was the complete devastation of both cities in which countless numbers of people lost their lives. In 2020, nuclear historian Alex Wellerstein published origi-

nal research with the Bulletin, describing the challenges of tabulating the casualties of the bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Without accurate records of the population prior to the bombings, Allied forces and the Japanese government relied on proxy figures to come up with their estimates. Decades later, those estimates were revisited to account for information that was excluded at the time. The result is a recognition that people may never be able to fully account for the devastation of one of the world’s deadliest weapons.

Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists Targeting Kerala Nuns

The arrest and continued judicial custody of two Catholic nuns from Kerala, Sister Preety Mary and Sister Vandana Francis, along with Sukaman Mandavi, by the Chhattisgarh Police in Durg on 25th July is yet another incident of how minorities are being targeted. The trio has been falsely accused of “forcible conversion” and human trafficking involving three women from Narayanpur. An FIR has been filed against them under provisions of the Chhattisgarh Religious Freedom Act and the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, reportedly based on a tip-off by a Bajrang Dal member—a Hindu right-wing organisation.

This disturbing report underscores a growing pattern where the state appears to be complicit with Hindu right-wing vigilante groups in oppressing religious minorities, particularly Muslims and Christians.

This case must also be viewed in the broader context of increasing state-backed campaigns aimed at the identification and eviction of so-called “illegal Bangladeshi migrants.” In Gurugram, Haryana, and Delhi, the administration of these states have launched a drive to identify undocumented migrants—specifically targeting Indian Bengali-speaking labourers from the states of West Bengal and Assam—accusing them of being

Bangladeshi or Rohingya. Even though there is no reason to suspect their nationality, and despite possessing multiple valid documents proving their Indian citizenship, like Aadhaar cards, many of these labourers have been arbitrarily and illegally detained, interrogated, beaten severely and harassed. The purported police come in plain clothes and in vehicles without registration number plates and even extort money from the poor labourers. As a result, hundreds of families have fled from Delhi and Haryana in fear and insecurity.

In the interest of justice and rule of law, we, undersigned urge the Delhi High Court, Haryana High Court, the Supreme Court of India, the National Commission of Minorities, and the National Human Rights Commission to take cognisance of this systematic violation of human rights of minorities and issue summons to the police and hold them accountable.

Dr Ram Puniyani, Adv. Irfan Engineer, Neha Dabhade Pastor Devdan D. Tribhuvan, Stanley Fernandez, Adv. Lara Jesani, Urmi Chanda, Shweta Damle, Mayur Yewle

Remove Word Caste

Removing the word ‘caste’ from job and college application forms is essential for fostering a progressive society. Let us keep only ‘nationality’ against which applicant will write ‘Indian’, which will promote unity, equality, and inclusivity, paving the way for a stronger, more harmonious nation which people shall build together!

TSK, Chennai

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DHYANBINDU

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By Ashok Nag

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Subhas Chandra Ganguly

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Subhas got arrested for his political activities. After coming out from jail he, Sanjay and others organised APDR [Association for the Protection of Democratic Rights]. He translated Romila Thapar's book on Ancient Indian History into Bengali. —T Vijayendra

'I am very sorry to hear that he has passed away. I do indeed remember him and our exchanges in the course of his translating my book. Please convey my condolences and sincerest sympathies to his family'
—Romila Thapar

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Aleek Manush Anirban Biswas

Compiled by

Timir Basu, Arup Sen, Nabinananda Sen, Tarun Basu

Paperback, Rs 100

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