

spark

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Student Resistance

Long Live!



◆— UPDATES ON PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS —◆



Citizens protest against Trans Act (2026)

The month of March saw multiple protests across India against the Trans amendment Act 2026 that is now turned into an Act. It removes the right of individuals to self-determination and introduces mandatory medical examinations to recognize someone as 'trans'. Additionally, it aims to provide recognition only to members of a few trans communities while excluding others. Protestors demand the revocation of the act while asserting one's right to self-determination.

Protests erupt in response to the death of Iran's Supreme Leader

Following the death of Iran's leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, multiple protests erupted across Indian cities. The protesters raised anti-Israel and anti-USA slogans while demanding for an immediate stopping of the ongoing bombing by the USA and Israel. The protestors also raised slogans supporting Palestinian Liberation.

Protest against LPG crisis

In response to the shortage of LPG cylinders, multiple parts of India witnessed protests against the inadequate actions of the central government. With long lines and rising prices for cylinders, the protestors highlighted that the crisis augmented everyday hardships endured by people



Sanitation workers protest in Mandya

Sanitation workers staged a protest on March 23rd in Mandya zilla panchayat office demanding the implementation of increased wages, housing, and welfare benefits. They stated that despite a government order on May 2025 to increase wages to Rs. 21,501, they continued to receive only Rs. 12,000- 14,000. Additionally, provident funds, housing, extension of insurance coverage to family members, and other benefits have not been implemented.



Farmers and ASHA workers protests in Vikarabad

On 30th march, Farmers staged a protest at the collector's office in Vikarabad demanding the withdrawal of land acquisitions for building an Industrial Park in the region. Despite repeated appeals, the lack of response from authorities prompted the protest. Later, ASHA workers staged a protest at the collector's office, demanding an increase in their wages to Rs. 18,000 as promised by the Congress during elections. While initially planned as a rally up to Hyderabad, the arrest of multiple protestors by the police prompted protests at the collector's office too.



Farmers demand higher compensation for expressway

On 30th March, over a hundred farmers affected by the greenfield expressway protested at the office of the Madhya Pradesh Road Development corporation demanding higher compensation. They conducted a sit-in following which they locked the office shutting down operations. The Rs. 2418 crore Ujjain-Jawra greenfield expressway spans 102 km and cuts through 60 villages.



Protest against Trump in US

With an estimated 8 million people across the country, the USA saw the largest single-day protest against the Trump regime on March 28th. Titled as the 'No Kings Protest', participants raised slogans against the fascist onslaught of the Trump regime, particularly against the mass deportations by ICE and the ongoing military attacks on Iran.



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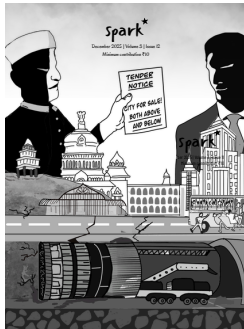
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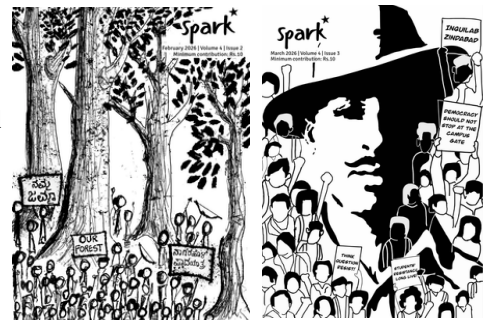
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Spark* is a monthly magazine run by students and youth.

Today, the state and the corporate-controlled media are constantly propagating fabricated news that suits their interests. This makes exposition of the truth an pressing task. Spark* aspires to provide an alternative perspective on issues that affect the masses. Please send your valuable opinion, comments, criticism, and articles to spark_karnataka@protonmail.com or call us at **8584056936**



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The ABCs Under Fascism

Historically it has been observed that fascism is engendered by an acute crisis of capitalism. It has some very evident markers like the dehumanisation of certain communities, crushing of communist organisations with an iron fist, critical shrinkage of spaces for unionising, passing of draconian laws, etc. However, there is also a more subtle way in which fascism always expresses itself— through a clampdown on education and educational institutes. India under the fascist RSS-BJP is no exception. The escalating attacks on students, particularly those speaking out against the excesses of the current regime, have to be seen in this context. The attack is not limited to targeting individuals, it is also directed towards existing curricula, affirmative action norms, democratic spaces left within campuses, and overall governmental thrust towards education.

Ever since the BJP came to power in 2014, there have been repeated efforts to change school syllabi, particularly for NCERT textbooks and state board books, wherever BJP has been in power. The forcefully introduced National Education Policy, 2020, has these curricular changes codified into it. There have been consistent efforts at removing the chapters on Mughal history, Tipu Sultan, and Delhi Sultanate from NCERT texts. Even science has not been spared, chapters on Darwin's theory of evolution, periodic table, gravitation, and climate change were quietly dropped in the name of rationalisation. Important political events like assassination of Gandhi, Babri Masjid demolition, and 2002 Godhra riots, events that the BJP has bloodied their hands in, were also dropped. As suggested by the NEP, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) focusing on the ideas of *dharma*, *karma*, *ahimsa*, *swachchhata*, etc., have been made part of the curriculum in many colleges, including colleges in Karnataka. Under the guise of IKS, promotion of Brahminical ideas including whitewashing of the caste system, have now become mainstream.

In continuation of that casteist narrative, it must be noted that the NEP 2020 does not talk about reservation, rather it combines Dalits, Adivasis, religious and gender minorities into one section called the Socio-economically Disadvantaged Group (SEDG). How this group would be connected with the existing reservation norms, is not mentioned anywhere. Even the skill-based curriculum to be introduced in schools under the NEP 2020 are meant to perpetuate caste-based vocations. With the provision of including 'local volunteers' in the day-to-day functioning of government schools, the NEP has paved the way for interference of RSS *pracharaks* in schools. Recently, the Supreme Court stayed the UGC equity guidelines aimed at addressing caste discrimination within campuses after protests from Savarna groups. The spate of caste-based harassment however has only intensified.

In the face of surrender of the highest court to Brahminical forces, student groups across India have risen in protest demanding implementation of the UGC equity guidelines. The



Students' march to UGC stopped by Delhi police

months of February and March saw massive mobilisation of students across campuses. There was counter mobilisation from ABVP as well in repeated attempts to crush whatever spaces to engage in dissent are left on campuses. They beat up students, heckled them, chanted casteist slogans, vandalised campuses, and engaged in incessant social media slander. From JNU to APU, nowhere were students spared. The police acted as silent bystanders in these cases, allowing the ABVP goons to terrorise their targets. The fascist RSS-BJP is leaving no stone unturned to ensure complete erasure of opposition to their institutional propaganda of Hindutva.

There have been policy-level attacks on student unions to make them toothless with elections being deliberately delayed by the administration. The root cause can be traced to the increasing privatisation of education to the extent where public funding on education is reduced to crumbs. This is creating the perfect environment for unbridled mushrooming of private universities. Even institutes like IITs, IISc, JNU, HCU, etc. are being forced to take loans from the Higher Education Funding Agency and hike fees to be able to pay back the loans. The worst sufferers are of course students coming from margins of the society. Historically, student unions have stood up as the first line of defence between the government imposing unjust policies on educational institutes. Dilution or outright scrapping of student unions is therefore in line with privatisation of the education sector. In this scenario, NEP 2020 was the final death knell in the coffin of public education. It must be treated as a tool for entrenchment of fascism, nothing less.

The reaction from the state machinery is also getting extreme with increasing desperation of the ruling classes. Acts well within constitutional bounds like social media posts, study circles, seminars, and peaceful protests are branded as anti-national activities. Detention of students and slapping of serious charges under the BNS are being normalised. The few student groups that talk about any kind of radical social change are being particularly targeted. Broader student masses have been systemically depoliticised wherein they fail to connect their individual issues with the broader socio-economic crisis, creating a gap that helps the ruling classes. It is to fill this very lacuna that spaces like Spark magazine and study circles are necessary and must be preserved.

The Bureaucratization of Gender in Ramrajya Through the Trans Act 2026

Acquilin and Tanvi

Existing as a visibly trans person in this country has never been easy. During British colonial rule, *eunuchs* (an outmoded term for *hijra*, *kinnar*, *intersex* people, feminine men, and gay men) were outlawed alongside tribal, *adivasi*, denotified tribes, and nomadic tribal communities under The Criminal Tribes Act of 1871. When the law was repealed in 1952, trans people emerged unbent, proving that criminalization alone cannot stop people from self-identifying with a gender not assigned at birth. That power will always reside with the individual.

Legal status aside, socio-culturally, transness and intersexness remained poorly understood, deeply stigmatized, and perpetually marginalized. The only exceptions, if you can even call it that, would be the socio-cultural communities that are allowed to participate in upper caste Hindu religious and cultural institutions. These are the ones that find mention in the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment act, 2026 as pre-identified trans people – the *hijra*, *kinnar*, *aravani*, *jogta*. Similar communities – the thirunambi and the thirunangai from Tamil Nadu, as well as the kothi, durani, nupi manbi, khwaja sira – have found themselves excluded from this act, perhaps because they do not slot quite so easily into the current regime’s Hindutva agenda.

The issue is not simply that some groups have been added while others have not. The malicious intent of this act, and of the powers behind it, is a bid to align certain sociocultural groups toward them politically - a plan which may have backfired in the short term. The act does this by conflating sociocultural communities with gender, which is like saying all Hindus are men. This begs the question - are there any Hindu women, and do they have rights? This is not a frivolous question; the act lays forth the path to marginalize any group within a wider body of previously protected individuals. If Hindu women think they are safe now and that the trans act does not apply to them, they are clearly not paying attention.

You can see this exclusion at play in the diverse groups that have specifically been left out in this act. Self-identified trans men, trans women, non-binaries, and genderqueer people no longer exist according to this act. They have to have undergone sex-reassignment surgeries BEFORE they can legally change their gender markers to either ‘Third Gender/Trans’ or the one opposite to their gender-assigned-at-birth. What a wild expectation from this administration - that people not live out their lives in terms of the gender they identify with, before undertaking surgical interventions that are expensive, excruciating, and sometimes dangerous or debilitating (such as bottom surgeries for trans men in India). The government will now dictate the direction and pace at which one is expected to modify one’s body, or at least this is



Protest against Trans Act (2026) at Freedom Park, Bengaluru the panic it is trying to create.

Do not misunderstand this act - this is a pro-surgery act. This Ramrajya wants everyone to undergo surgeries immediately, at unequipped and inept government hospitals, so that you can look the part. In the Ramrajya, if you say you are a woman, you better look like you have breasts and a vagina. In the Ramrajya, if you say you are a man, you better not be carrying a womb and vagina that can issue children, because then the government would want access to your reproductive labour instead. The issue with autonomous trans people is that they understand that gender-affirming care goes beyond surgeries. Even for binary trans people, their refusal to play the gender roles expected of them is part of the ungovernability that this regime finds particularly like a mote in their eye.

Wherever fascist regimes find ungovernability, they introduce increased bureaucracy and repression, both of which feature largely in this act. We could be quick to denounce the fact that The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment did not consult anybody from the National Council for Transgender Persons, or any NGOs, or the community at large. But it is important to understand that this act is not simply incompetent (which assumes benevolent intent from the government). No, this act is flawed by design. Even if consultations were made, this fascist state has shown that it is not a democratic republic. This is machinery run by brown *sahibs*.

Since 2014, with the NALSA judgement, magistrates had been defanged to some extent. Bureaucratic machinery remained dense as ever, but they could no longer outright deny trans people the right to choose between “T”, “M”, and “F” markers. The medico legal complex had also slowly, if begrudgingly, begun to grant trans people more choices. Society, in parts, had begun to move beyond selling transphobia and homophobia on screen. Privately, these stigmas still remained, but with the legal force of the Trans Act 2019, trans people now had certain freedoms and recourse within the system. With the new act, all this progress is now reversed. *Sahibs* sitting in some office, with no education or sensitization on the matter, will have more say on the matter of

an individual's gender at a legal level than the individual themselves. Medical boards set up in government hospitals comprising doctors who have never interacted with trans people nor learnt about trans healthcare, will determine the individual's gender at a medical level. All of these gatekeepers are sites of possible discrimination, humiliation, and traumatization.

If we know one thing, it is that sahibs will always take advantage of the historically vulnerable. So long as there is a chair of power somewhere (and this Act will enact many such chairs of power), trans people will be exploited financially, sexually, and physically. They will be pushed mentally to breaking points as the Act potentially criminalizes anybody who offers support to trans people during their transitioning journey, including queer/trans elders, trans partners, trans-affirming psychologists, and private trans medical care providers. Thankfully, resistance also seems to be coming from the latter two corners, not just the LGBTQIA+ communities.

Like with the Criminal Tribes Act, this law will eventually be struck down. Like Advocate Kanmani of the Thirunangai community herself said, "Trans people existed long before the NALSA judgment. They will continue to exist long after this Trans Amendment Act has come and gone."

In the interim, the lives of trans people will become harder than ever before. It is incumbent on Communist organizations to provide support to trans individuals and movements. It could be material support in the form of mutual aid drives; or encouraging discourse on the matter through discussions and campaigns; or joining protests in solidarity; or providing structures to help their organization efforts; or pushing for greater inclusion and visibility of trans and genderqueer folks within their ranks; or all of the above. It is vital that trans people see that Communists view the causes of gender minorities in the same vein as they view class struggles. Then and only then, will vulnerable communities feel safe enough to join with broader struggles.

Educate, Agitate, Organise



Ganga

April 11th and 14th respectively mark the birth anniversaries of two of India's most radical anti-caste thinkers: Jyotirao Phule and B.R. Ambedkar. Remembering them now is a necessity for all of us. Both challenged the foundations of caste society and dedicated their lives to the liberation of the oppressed. At a time when their legacies are often diluted or appropriated, revisiting their ideas becomes essential to reclaim their vision of equality, dignity, and justice.

Phule and Ambedkar were not merely social reformers; they were architects of a radical anti-caste politics rooted in material realities. Phule's Satyashodhak Samaj mobilised peasants, workers, and oppressed castes against Brahmanism and the exploitative "Shetji-Bhatji" nexus, linking caste oppression with economic exploitation. His politics was democratic, anti-feudal, and grounded in mass mobilisation.

Ambedkar carried this forward by organising Dalits into a political force. Through struggles like the Mahad Satyagraha and his leadership of the 'Depressed Classes', he transformed caste from a social issue into a political question. He identified Brahmanism and capitalism as twin enemies and argued that independence without social transformation would reproduce oppression. While engaging with constitutionalism, he remained committed to annihilating caste and securing rights for workers, women, and oppressed communities. Both saw liberation as a collective, structural process of resistance, not mere reform, which is how their thoughts have been diluted, by many.

On education:

For both Phule and Ambedkar, education was not a neutral institution; it was a site of power. Denied historically by Brahmanism to the oppressed, education functioned as a mechanism to sustain caste hierarchy. Their intervention lay in transforming it into a weapon of resistance.

Phule was among the first to recognise that caste domination was sustained not only through economic control but through ideological control: through religion, customs, and the monopoly over knowledge. He argued that oppressed communities were kept in 'mental slavery' by being denied access to education. For him, education was liberation: it enabled individuals to question authority, understand exploitation, and assert their rights. This is why he prioritised opening schools for girls and oppressed caste children, directly challenging Brahmanical restrictions on learning.

Importantly, Phule rejected the elitist notion that education would 'trickle down' from upper castes. He demanded universal and compulsory primary education, insisting that knowledge must reach the masses. He also emphasised practical education (skills, agriculture, and everyday knowledge) so that learning would directly improve material conditions. His advocacy for education in vernacular languages further reflected his commitment to accessibility. Representation, too, was central: he believed teachers must come from all castes so that marginalized communities could see themselves within educational spaces.

Ambedkar deepened this vision by placing education at the centre of political struggle. His slogan "Educate, Agitate, Organise" was not rhetorical, it was a strategic framework. Education, for him, created the consciousness necessary for agitation, which in turn enabled organisation. Without education, he argued, oppressed communities could neither understand their rights nor build collective power.

Ambedkar's own life embodied this belief. Despite severe caste discrimination, he pursued higher education and used it to analyse the caste system and expose its structural nature. He saw education as a means to develop rationality, scientific

temper, and critical thinking which are qualities necessary to dismantle oppressive traditions. He consistently opposed blind adherence to scriptures like the Manusmriti and instead promoted logical inquiry.

Institutionally, Ambedkar worked to expand access to education through hostels, scholarships, and organisations like the Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha and the Depressed Classes Educational Society. These initiatives addressed structural barriers such as poverty, exclusion, and lack of infrastructure that prevented Dalits from accessing education. He also fought for reservations, recognising that formal equality was insufficient in a deeply unequal society. For Ambedkar, education was also tied to dignity and self-respect. The struggles he led were as much about asserting equality as they were about access to resources. Education enabled oppressed communities to challenge humiliation and claim their place in society.

Both thinkers also linked education with broader social transformation. They understood that caste was intertwined with patriarchy and economic exploitation. Phule's emphasis on women's education and Ambedkar's advocacy for women's rights highlight their recognition of gender as central to caste oppression. Education, therefore, had to be inclusive and transformative, not merely technical.

Crucially, both opposed the commodification of education. Ambedkar argued that the state must invest in public education, ensuring that resources are redistributed to benefit the oppressed. Education, in their vision, was a public good, essential for democracy itself. Phule and Ambedkar redefined education as a radical, emancipatory force. It was not just about individual upliftment but about collective liberation. It was about creating a society based on equality, liberty, and fraternity.

Relevance today:

In the present moment, remembering Phule and Ambedkar requires moving from reflection to action. Students must organise because the structures they fought continue in today's society significantly. Identifying the primary enemies is crucial: feudal social relations, imperialism, and its Indian lackeys that promote privatisation and saffronisation of education.

Ambedkar's insight that imperialism cannot be fought without confronting its internal allies, landlords, capitalists, and dominant castes, remains relevant in today's neo-colonial context. While Ambedkar strategically engaged with colonial rule to secure rights for the oppressed, he remained critical of national elites who represented landlord and capitalist interests.

Today's ruling parties continue to collaborate with dominant caste and class forces to maintain status-quo. At the same time, figures like Ambedkar are appropriated by organisations such as the RSS to saffronise their radical legacy. Students must resist this appropriation and reclaim their ideas. Integrating the visions of Phule, Ambedkar, and Bhagat Singh points towards a broader struggle for both social and political justice, one that confronts caste and class together. The youth of today need to take up this task and march towards this goal.

The Need for a Rohith Act

Caste discrimination in India's higher education system is structural, persistent, and often invisible. Behind the facade of meritocracy lies a deeply unequal reality where students from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST) continue to face exclusion, humiliation, and institutional discrimination. The growing demand for a 'Rohith Act' in Karnataka emerges from this demand to recognise caste discrimination as systemic and address it through enforceable law.

The scale of the crisis is stark. Between 2014 and 2021, 122 students died by suicide in premier institutions such as IITs, IIMs, NITs, and central universities; 68 of them were from reserved categories. In the past five years alone, more than 13,500 SC/ST/OBC students have dropped out of these institutions. These figures mostly represent only the tip of the iceberg. Across both public and private institutions, students from marginalised communities face discrimination that pushes many out of higher education altogether.

The institutional murder of Rohith Vemula (a PhD scholar from University of Hyderabad) in 2016 marked a turning point, sparking nationwide protests and forcing caste discrimination in universities into public debate. Yet, similar tragedies continue. The deaths of students such as Darshan Solanki and Payal Tadvi expose the chasm in effective addressing of institutional casteism.

At the heart of the issue is not just access to education, but the conditions within it. While the hard-won affirmative action has enabled entry for many SC/ST students, institutions have largely failed to ensure inclusion, dignity, and equal opportunity. Discrimination operates not only through overt acts, but through everyday practices and institutional cultures.

Students report food-based segregation in hostels, derogatory comments from faculty, lack of representation in student bodies, denial of access to academic resources, and routine micro-aggressions. Social interactions are often mediated by caste markers, with surnames becoming a basis for exclusion. The narrative of meritocracy ignores structural inequalities, reinforcing marginalisation. The Brahmin-dominated faculty is often the root of these problems.

Sociologist Émile Durkheim's framework helps explain the psychological toll of such environments. 'Egoistic' suicide stems from a lack of social integration, producing isolation and insignificance. 'Fatalistic' suicide arises from a sense of being trapped within rigid structures, with little control over one's future. For many SC/ST students, caste prejudice creates precisely these conditions.

Despite the severity of the issue, existing legal and regulatory frameworks remain inadequate. While the Constitution guarantees affirmative action and the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act criminalises overt violence, much of contemporary caste discrimination operates in subtle, indirect ways. University-level mechanisms such as UGC regulations on grievance redressal and equity lack both specificity and

enforceability. Anti-ragging provisions, though expanded to include caste-based bullying, are limited to individual acts and fail to address systemic discrimination.

What emerges is a gap between formal equality and lived reality. Institutions may comply with the letter of the law while perpetuating exclusion through informal practices. Much of this discrimination functions as ‘discrimination by default’ that is routine, normalised behaviour creating inequality without explicit intent. Legal frameworks that focus only on deliberate acts are therefore insufficient.

This is where the demand for a Rohith Act becomes crucial. The proposed legislation seeks to address caste discrimination not as isolated incidents, but as a structural problem embedded within institutions. It aims to provide civil remedies, establish accountability mechanisms, and mandate institutional practices that foster inclusion and fraternity.

Importantly, the proposed law goes beyond punitive measures. It envisions a preventive and remedial framework, including Equity Committees within institutions and avenues for legal recourse. It recognises the need for systemic change through sensitisation, accountability, and enforceable standards rather than relying solely on punitive actions.

The constitutional basis for such a law is clear. Articles 14 and 15 guarantee equality and enable special provisions for the advancement of SC/ST communities. Article 21 affirms the right to life with dignity, including the right to an educational environment free from caste discrimination. Article 46 directs the State to promote the educational and economic interests of SC/STs and protect them from social injustice.

International developments further underscore the urgency of this issue. In 2023, Seattle became the first city in the United States to ban caste discrimination, while universities such as Harvard, Brown, and Columbia have recognised caste as a protected category. That India lags behind in legally addressing this issue is troubling.

In Karnataka, the demand for a Rohith Act reflects a growing recognition that policy measures alone are insufficient. The increasing corporatisation and privatisation of education, coupled with rising fees and declining public funding, has intensified exclusion. Without a robust legal framework, these trends risk further marginalising students from historically oppressed communities.

The Rohith Act is not merely about preventing discrimination; it is about redefining the purpose of higher education. Universities must be spaces of transformation, where students are not only admitted but allowed to thrive. This requires confronting caste as a lived reality shaping everyday experiences on campuses. The legacy of Rohith Vemula and the movements that followed is a reminder that silence in the face of injustice is itself a form of complicity. A law like the Rohith Act can help break that silence by naming caste discrimination, holding institutions accountable, and affirming the right of every student to dignity and belonging. The question is no longer whether caste discrimination exists in higher education, but whether we are willing to address it seriously enough. Karnataka has the opportunity to lead this effort. The time to act is now.

(Based on notes from the Campaign for Rohith Act- Karnataka)

Beyond Martyrdom: A Radical Reading of Bhagat Singh

Shashirekha



On 28th March, Inquilab: An Evening of Resistance was organised by All India Students’ Association and Spark*, in Bengaluru to commemorate the martyrdom of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru. It was not a routine act of remembrance but an evening of resistance, reflection and engagement. It brought together students, comrades, and listeners not merely to honour the sacrifice but to confront the social, political, and intellectual ideas that shape today’s idea of revolution. Rather than following the familiar script of patriotic tribute, the event created a space to revisit their legacy through songs of resistance, poems of revolution, with a more questioning lens. What does it mean to inherit such a legacy today? Whether remembrance without engagement risks the symbolism? The atmosphere itself signalled that it would not be a conventional homage, but an attempt to reclaim that Bhagat Singh is not just a symbol but was a foremost Marxist thinker.

Dr. Shamsul Islam joined the event as the guest speaker to deliver a lecture on the ideas of Bhagat Singh and the contrasting role played by propagators of Hindutva ideology. It was not about glorifying sacrifice or repeating familiar slogans. Instead, it felt like an attempt to disturb that comfort—to question what we think we know about Bhagat Singh.

One of the threads running through the talk was the idea that political freedom without economic justice is incomplete. Socialism was repeatedly emphasised, not as an abstract theory, but as something central to Bhagat Singh’s thinking. The argument was clear: there can be no real equality in a system structured by class inequality and exploitation. These were not seen as accidental problems, but as deeply embedded in the system itself.

The discussion on revolution stood out because it challenged a very common misunderstanding. The speaker rejected the narrow idea that revolution simply means violence. Bhagat Singh emphasised on the idea of revolution through not only guns and pistols, but also through equipping oneself with revolutionary theory. This insistence on rethinking revolution made it feel less romantic and far more demanding.

At one point, the speaker said something that stayed with me: “Organise yourself and get on your feet. Do not wait for others to organise.” This shifted responsibility directly onto individuals, especially students. There was also a line that echoed the spirit of revolutionary thought—“you have nothing to lose but your chains”—which reinforced the urgency of action and participation.

The lecture also connected Bhagat Singh’s ideas to present-day concerns around education and access. The speaker referred to figures like Kumar Mangalam Birla and Mukesh Ambani, arguing that certain policy directions and institutional decisions restrict higher education access for the poor and middle classes. This was presented as part of a broader concern about how inequality continues to reproduce itself through modern systems.

Another powerful intervention came through the ideas of Periyar E. V. Ramasamy, especially his critique of martyrdom. The lecture questioned blind hero worship and the emotional glorification of death. It pushed the audience to think: is remembering Bhagat Singh only about honouring his sacrifice, or about engaging with the ideas he stood for? The suggestion was clear—without the latter, remembrance becomes shallow.

There were also references to broader ideological traditions. The speaker pointed out that communism and socialism are older than the red flag itself, challenging the common association of the flag only with violence or bloodshed. Instead, the red flag was explained as a symbol of resistance and a refusal to surrender to injustice. That idea of not giving in felt more important than the imagery often attached to it. There were also references to communal politics and Bhagat Singh’s own understanding of it. What stood out more than the specifics was the larger concern about how identity and division continue to shape political narratives.

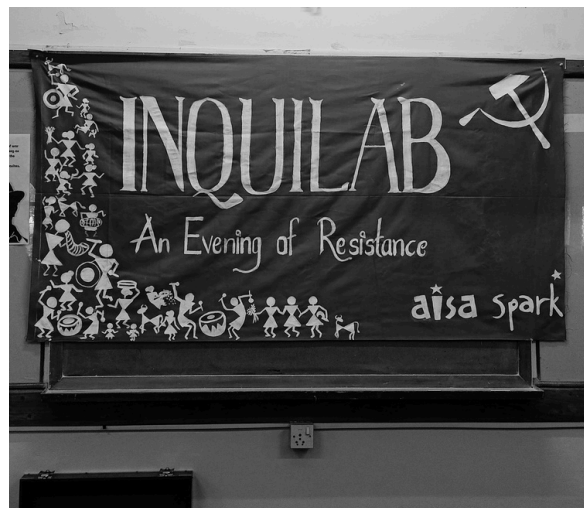
The lecture returned repeatedly to Bhagat Singh’s intellectual life. One striking detail was how, during his time in jail, he prioritised reading over comfort. Instead of asking for better food or small privileges, he asked for books. It was mentioned that he read extensively finishing hundreds of books across different traditions and countries within that limited period of imprisonment. Whether one remembers the exact numbers or not, the image is powerful: a revolutionary shaped as much by reading as by action.

This emphasis on learning came through strongly towards the end. The message was simple but forceful—learn, read, and keep learning. Revolution is not only about protest; it is also about developing the ability to think critically. There was also a reference to Marx and Lenin, suggesting that ideas must not just be followed, but creatively adapted and implemented.

Another moment that stood out was a reference to a recent incident involving abduction of student and trade union activists where the Delhi police labelled Bhagat Singh as a “terrorist” while torturing them in custody. In UP the memorial to martyrs Ramprasad Bismil, Ashfaqullah, and Roshan Singh was recently bulldozed to the ground by the government. These incidents have laid bare the ideological incompatibility between the Sangh and the legacy of the Hindustan Republican Association martyrs.

Towards the conclusion, the lecture seemed to move away from the idea of martyrdom altogether. It suggested that what matters is not the label of “martyr,” but whether the ideas survive. In that sense, Bhagat Singh’s legacy is not something to be preserved in memory alone, but something to be actively engaged with.

The overall impact of the lecture was not one of comfort or inspiration in a simple sense. Instead, it left behind a series of questions—about inequality, about responsibility, about how we understand revolution, and about whether we are willing to move beyond admiration into action.



On the Karnataka Education Budget 2026-27

Saniya

The Karnataka state budget for the financial year 2026-27 was presented by CM Siddaramaiah on March 6th, 2026 with a total outlay of around Rs. 4.49 lakh crore. Out of this, only around 10.5% has been allocated towards the education sector. Although this is a 0.5% increase compared to the previous year's budget in terms of, it is far from the recommended requirement of 25%. The budget allocation for education in the past few years has seen a declining trend, faring below the average allocation by states. The cuts in allocation are alarming and points to the fact that education is not being prioritized as a primary government responsibility, but rather commodified by bringing private players in. The BJP, while in power in Karnataka, implemented the NEP 2020 in 2021 that was scrapped by the Congress in 2023. A State Education Policy drafting committee was formed by the Congress in 2023 to make a policy tailored to the needs of the state. Although this draft is yet to be made public, leave alone implemented, the state is bringing about policy level changes in the education sector that conform to the NEP 2020. This attitude was also reflected in the budgetary promises.

One of the major announcements in the budget is the Rs. 3,900 crore allocation for the establishment of 800 Karnataka Public Schools (KPS). The KPS model faced backlash from progressive organizations as it could lead to the closure of over 40,000 government schools, leaving students, especially from marginalized communities, difficult to access education due to long distances and other barriers. The involvement of Asian Development Bank (ADB) loans in this also raises questions about the affordability and accessibility of these schools in the long run.

The government has allocated Rs. 790 crore for the construction of new classrooms, toilets, repair works, and other infrastructure and maintenance requirements in government schools and pre-university colleges. Firstly, this allocation is largely insufficient, keeping in mind the crumbling infrastructure in government schools. Secondly, when comparing it to the allocation towards the KPS scheme, the priority of the state towards selective flagship institutions becomes evident. The public education system is underfunded and systematically weakened in order to pave the way for private players to take over the sector and sell it to those who can afford it.

The 'Karnataka Higher Education Transformation Project' is being implemented at a cost of Rs. 2,500 crore. Among other things, this project aims to establish nine Centers of Excellence with ADB assistance. These centers are said to promote entrepreneurship and start-up culture among students. Additionally, new courses with "high demand and employment potential" are being introduced in government colleges. While these initiatives are framed as progressive, they reorient education towards market priorities and risk

reducing education to the passive acquisition of marketable skills, making it devoid of critical thinking.

Government educational institutions in Karnataka face a crisis of shortage of teachers, with over 45,000 posts vacant in government schools alone. Renowned state universities in Mysore, Dharwad, and Mangalore run on less than 30% of faculty requirement. Government First Grade Colleges heavily depend on underpaid guest lecturers without any job security, who are relieved and forced to reapply after every semester. In the backdrop of this, the plan to fill 15,000 vacant posts in both schools and colleges this year is highly inadequate. Additionally, instead of maximizing teacher recruitments and ensuring stable employment for teachers, the government plans to set up an AI-powered 'Personalized Self-Learning Digital Tutor' facility for students from Classes 8 to 12.

We can see a few positive developments in the budget as well. The government announced that it would enact the Rohith Vemula Act to prevent caste-based discrimination and atrocities on students across all government, private and deemed universities in the state. The reversal of the ban on student union elections in colleges and universities is a major win for progressive student organizations that have been fighting to restore democratic spaces on campuses. A committee has been formed for the implementation of the same. These promises are a result of a long period of struggle and advocacy by progressive groups and individuals across Karnataka. At a time when the public education sector is rapidly shrinking and decaying, the need to sustain and strengthen the struggle for universal, accessible and quality public education has never been more urgent.



Oppose the Imperialist US-Israel Aggression on Iran

Kamran and Sachin

Iran has been under attack by the imperialist US-Israel axis, not merely since 28th February of this year, but for over seven decades. This hostility did not emerge from some timeless cultural clash but as part of capitalist expansion. In 1953, the United States orchestrated the overthrow of Iran's democratically elected prime minister, Mohammad Mossadegh, after he dared to nationalize the country's oil industry. That act of sovereignty threatened the profit margins of Western oil monopolies, and so Washington restored the autocratic rule of the Shah monarchy, ensuring that Iranian resources remained plundered and its labour exploited. This is the essence of imperialism, the use of military and political violence to subordinate entire nations to the accumulation needs of the big bourgeoisie.

The present phase of aggression began on 28th February, when coordinated United States and Israeli air strikes targeted Iranian military installations, government infrastructure and civilian areas, marking a sharp escalation in the long history of intervention against Iran. In the days that followed, further strikes damaged schools, residential neighbourhoods, and public infrastructure, while Iran responded with missile and drone attacks on United States bases across West Asia. The conflict rapidly expanded beyond a limited confrontation into a regional military crisis involving multiple theatres and actors.

Imperialism, as comrade Lenin has taught us, is the highest stage of capitalism, a system in which international monopolies divide markets among themselves, and the world itself becomes territorially partitioned among the great powers. In such a system the domestic market can no longer absorb surplus capital, forcing the ruling class to seek foreign outlets for investment, raw materials, and captive markets. Every US military intervention of the past seventy years must be understood through this lens. The invasion of Grenada, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the destabilization of Venezuela, the continuing blockade of Cuba, and now the aggression against Iran are not aberrations or mistakes, this is the last straw for a declining empire. When the United States faces an economic crisis at home, which it perpetually does because capitalism's internal contradictions guarantee recurring cycles of



Protesters rally across the USA to protest against US-Israel war on Iran

overproduction and stagnation, it turns outward, bombing countries into submission so that its monopolies can continue to extract surplus value. The Trump administration's own words laid this bare: "We're

going to have our very large United States oil companies... go in, spend Actions of dollars... and start making money."

We must also question how the imperialist system enlists states to do its bidding. India, a proclaimed sovereign democracy, has shown repeatedly that it will suppress its own people in service of global capital. Protests emerged across India after Ali Khamenei was killed as a result of the air strikes carried out by the US and Israel. They were briefly tolerated and then crushed from Karnataka to Kashmir. In Kashmir mourners were met with lathi charges, tear gas, and the mass deployment of state and central forces. Cases were filed against protesters, including Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, a sitting Member of Parliament. This repression cannot be understood in isolation from India's changing position in the global imperialist order. Despite its formal claims to non-alignment, the Indian ruling class has steadily deepened military and strategic cooperation with the United States and Israel over the past four decades. Its silence on the bombing of Iranian cities and its crackdown on domestic protests reflect its attempt to consolidate its role as a regional power aligned with Western capital while maintaining access to Gulf energy corridors and defence partnerships. In this sense, the suppression of solidarity protests at home becomes part of India's external alignment abroad.

The consequences of this alignment are not limited to the suppression of protests alone. The escalation of war in West Asia has already begun to affect ordinary people across India through disruptions in LPG supply chains and rising fuel insecurity. Small factories, workshops, transport operators, street vendors, and working-class households dependent on LPG for cooking and production have faced shortages and uncertainty. In this way, the costs of imperialist conflict are once again being transferred onto workers, small and medium businesses, and the poor.

At the time of this writing, more than 26,000 civilians have been injured and over 2,000 civilians have been killed in Iran, among them more than 170 schoolgirls killed in a US-Israeli attack on a primary school; in neighbouring Lebanon, Israeli strikes have killed at least 1,200 people and injured more than 3,300, while over a million civilians have been displaced as the conflict widened across the region. Not merely the pilots who dropped the bombs, nor the politicians who signed the orders, but the entire capitalist system that commodifies human existence and treats the bodies of children as acceptable collateral damage is to be held accountable. They depend on our passivity and on the fragmentation of our solidarity into nationalism, sectarianism, and resignation. We have become accustomed to this behaviour, accustomed to watching governments crush dissent, accustomed to seeing images of dead children in faraway countries. That normalisation is the real victory of imperialism, for it convinces the exploited that no alternative exists.

We must hold a contradiction in our minds simultaneously. The Iranian state has committed

its own crimes most notoriously against women and against political dissenters. We do not excuse those crimes. But the US and Israel do not care about Iranian women; they weaponize human rights rhetoric as a cover for their true aim, which is to keep Iran weak, fragmented, and open to exploitation. They have no intention of delivering a democratic government that serves the Iranian people. Their goal, as always, is to install a comprador regime that will open the oil fields and market to the US. The defense of Iranian sovereignty against imperialist aggression is therefore not a defense of the Islamic Republic's internal policies; it is a defense of the principle that nations should be free from imperialist clutches.

This war must also be understood in a wider global context. Countries such as Cuba and Venezuela have long faced sanctions, destabilization attempts, and regime-change operations from the same imperialist forces. Their governments have condemned the strikes and expressed solidarity with the Iranian people because they recognize a familiar pattern: whenever a country attempts to control its own resources and pursue an independent path of development, it becomes a target. Across West Asia too the conflict is widening, drawing in multiple actors and threatening to destabilize the entire region. The attack on Iran is therefore not an isolated event but part of a broader strategy of maintaining imperial dominance over the world.

When Iran retaliated against these attacks, it was immediately accused of starting a regional war. This accusation is as shallow as the promises America and Israel have made to the Iranian people. The United States has spent decades building military bases across West Asia in Jordan, Kuwait, Bahrain, Syria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iraq, and the United Arab Emirates. It has ringed Iran with forward operating bases, fighter squadrons, and naval fleets. By any analysis, Iran is acting in self-defense. This conflict is capitalism's endless search for profitable outlets.

All students, workers, and democratic forces throughout the world must oppose imperialist war wherever it appears, resist attempts by our own governments to align with military aggression, defend the democratic right to protest against war, and build solidarity with people across the oppressed nations of Iran, Palestine, Cuba, Venezuela, who continue to resist domination. Only through international solidarity and organized resistance can an imperialist war be ended.

The Soviet Red Resistance to the Fascist Offensive

Sushant and Harish

Emergence of Fascism in Europe

Post-First World War Europe witnessed two starkly opposite phenomena: the glorious Russian Revolution, which established the first workers' state in the Soviet Union, and the emergence of Fascism, the most reactionary form of imperialism. The first was the result of workers' struggle that rejected chauvinism, opposed the imperialist war, and captured power to form the first Socialist state, while the other was the result of the war, economic crisis, and the inability of the capitalist states to reconstruct their economy without exploiting other nations. The post-war economic crisis led to widespread workers' movements across Europe. Supported by capitalists, Fascism emerged as a tool to suppress revolutionary workers' movements and divert workers' attention from their actual enemy, the capitalist system. The term Fascism was first popularized by Mussolini, who created a chauvinist movement to combat the growth of communism in Italy. It later reached new heights with the German Nazi regime led by Adolf Hitler. Fascist movements gained wide support in many countries, such as the United States of America, Britain, France, Spain, Norway, Belgium, Sweden, and Bulgaria, and fascist parties and regimes gained support from capitalists worldwide. Many Fascist regimes (e.g., Francisco Franco's dictatorship in Spain) were supported by the capitalist of different countries and their governments (e.g., USA) even after World War II.

Different Trends in the International Socialist Movement

The crisis of capitalism became evident at the beginning of the 20th century, and it led to the revolutionary upsurges aimed at establishing a true people's democracy. When this crisis led to the imperialist war (World War I), confusion emerged among the leaders of the international communist movement. Bolsheviks, led by Comrade Lenin, waged a bitter struggle against the existing opportunist and reformist trends within the then Second International. Thus, over the debate of reform or revolution, the Second International split, with the revolutionary sections forming communist parties and revolutionary trade unions, while the reformists remained as social democratic parties, participating in elections and increasingly collaborating with the bourgeoisie. These reformist social democrats later formed governments in many Western countries after the First World War, but the toiling masses grew increasingly disillusioned with reformism as it was unable to give an alternative. The disillusionment of the masses with liberal democracy, economic crisis, mass unemployment, rising chauvinism, and the failure of social democrats led to the rise of reactionary fascist parties.

United Front Against Fascism

While many bourgeois social scientists and social democrats (such as Otto Bauer and Brailsford) were unable to understand the rise of fascism and offered vague and fictitious definitions of fascism, the Communists studied the phenomenon by tracing its material roots and developed a scientific understanding of fascism.

At the 7th World Congress of the Communist International (Comintern) in 1935, Georgi Dimitrov defined fascism as "the open terrorist dictatorship of

the most reactionary, most chauvinistic, most imperialist elements of finance capital” and outlined the general characteristics of the inception and growth of the fascist phenomenon :

- Fascism is one of the two major forms of bourgeois class rule. The capitalist state exists either as bourgeois democracy, where the working class has partial freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and organization, or as fascism, where these rights are either completely suppressed or in the process of being eroded.
- Fascism arises during periods of capitalist crisis; this sharp accentuation leads the bourgeoisie to shift the entire burden of the crisis onto the workers and peasantry. This, in turn, leads to increased revolutionary tendencies and uprisings among the toiling masses. It is to suppress these movements and to facilitate capitalist exploitation that fascism emerges.
- Fascist parties and organizations come to power by exploiting the failures of social democratic governments. The vacuum created by the disillusionment and disorganization of the toiling masses with bourgeois democracy is effectively utilized by fascists, who offer false promises to gain support and ascend to power.

Since fascism thrives on the chauvinist propaganda among the toiling masses, the Comintern examined it from a more self-critical angle. It concluded that, had the Communists pursued tactical alliances with the Social Democrats, workers might not have been drawn towards fascist trade unions and fascism need not have grown to this degree. They were correct in identifying the Social Democrats (SPD) as a bourgeois party and in struggling against them in general; however, they were wrong in failing to recognize the importance of a temporary, broad tactical alliance in 1933 (including the SPD) as a means of preventing the Nazis from coming to power.

In response to sectarian trends within the communist parties, the Communist International put forward the idea of a “united front against fascism.” This united front called for communists to closely ally themselves with social democratic parties in order to reach the broadest sections of the masses and organise them in a broad political, social, economic, and ideological struggle against fascism. The aim was to ultimately culminate this struggle in the formation of an anti-fascist united front government, which would restore all democratic rights of the toiling masses and thereby intensify the struggle further, advancing it towards a socialist revolution.

Soviet Union’s Preparation to Defeat Fascism

Comrade Stalin was observing the rise of fascism and preparing the Soviet Union to defend itself against fascist attack. Sensing the danger created by the fascist bloc, the Soviet Union proposed a political alliance with Britain, France, and other European countries against fascist



Soviet World War II propaganda poster titled "Death to the Fascist Reptile!"

aggression. However, the European imperialist camp considered Bolshevism a far greater threat and tried to divert the ongoing war eastward by granting concessions to the Nazis, so that the Soviet Union would have to face the fury and devastation of the fascist war machine. Instead of collective resistance against fascism, they continued to trade with the fascist aggressors. The Soviet Union urged an anti-war conference with Britain, France, Poland, Romania, and Turkey, but these initiatives failed due to the lack of willingness of these imperialist powers to form an alliance with the Bolsheviks.

In the 18th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1938), Stalin pointed out that imperialist powers like the United States, Britain, and France, out of fear of proletarian revolution, gave concessions to the fascist camp and formed bourgeois unity in the name of the ‘Anti-Comintern Pact’.

In this situation, the Soviet Union proposed a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (1939), to protect Soviet sovereignty and to prepare for a decisive war. The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact not only saved Soviet territory from Nazi aggression but also succeeded in creating a rift within the fascist camp. Mussolini of Italy and Franco of Spain openly expressed their strong disagreement with this Nazi decision. At the same time, it was a severe blow to Japan, which had intended to launch a war against Soviet Russia on the Mongolian border. Stalin’s leadership, the planned economy, and the industrial base built through the five-year plans, and the unity of party and people were the decisive factors in the Soviet Union's victory. During this period, the Soviet Union changed the aim of the third five-year plan to prepare for an unprecedented war effort against a fascist attack. A vast military, industrial, and political mobilisation ultimately smashed the fascists.

Lights, Camera, Propaganda: Disseminate Hate and Eliminate the Truth

Sharanya

Why do we watch films? For entertainment? To learn? To critique? Whenever there is criticism on how certain movies in their depiction or narratives are oppressive to a certain group of people or could have negative connotations, there is always a group that dismisses these claims with responses such as “It’s just a film!”. Because many times the movies that glorify hatred or are blatantly problematic also have a template that caters to people that appreciate peppy music, cinematography, direction, background score, etc. and like to ignore the subtext. When ideology fails, ‘art’ takes it upon itself to ensure that covert or overt propaganda reaches the audience. Whether we like it or not, films have been shaping society in many ways. Even if the audience consumes a film for its sake, the ideology seeps in, causing real world impact.

A few years ago we saw an influx of films that adopted the ‘Good Muslim vs. Bad Muslim’ trope, a type of storytelling involves two types of Muslims, the first one is shown to be very liberal, patriotic, someone who is ready to go against the bad Muslims who are always extremists. This is Islamophobic in itself as it puts the burden on Muslims to ‘prove’ their goodness to fit into this binary narrative.

Coming to the plot of these films, use of relatability and ascribed attributes that people like to identify with, has become the implied blueprint used to attract the audience. These identities are used successfully to convince people into believing these narratives by employing half-truths and by conveniently omitting important contexts and perspectives. This manipulation tactic has worked very well, for example if I were to say that the film ‘Kashmir Files’ is propaganda, someone who has watched the film will ask me to prove that the exodus of the Kashmiri pandits is fake. The film whitewashes the fact that during the exodus, there was a BJP-supported government at the centre and uses the plight caused by the exodus to trump up Islamophobia.

The makers of movies like The Kerala story, Udaipur files, The Bengal files, The Sabarmati Report, Chhaava, Article 370, Bastar: The Naxal Story, often resort to the same defence of how the incidents shown in these films are based on true events. However, the scenes depicting these so-called true events are visually exaggerated and more often than not rely on false facts and narratives to sharpen the conflict. These films contain graphic scenes that act as emotional triggers to such an extent that any person watching these films even if slightly misinformed would resort to collective jingoism, anger, and even fear. So an average Hindu watching such films will relate to the Hindu identifiers the film uses and self-victimise.

What is concerning is that these films have given a pass to many closeted Sanghis to use these plots and stories to openly

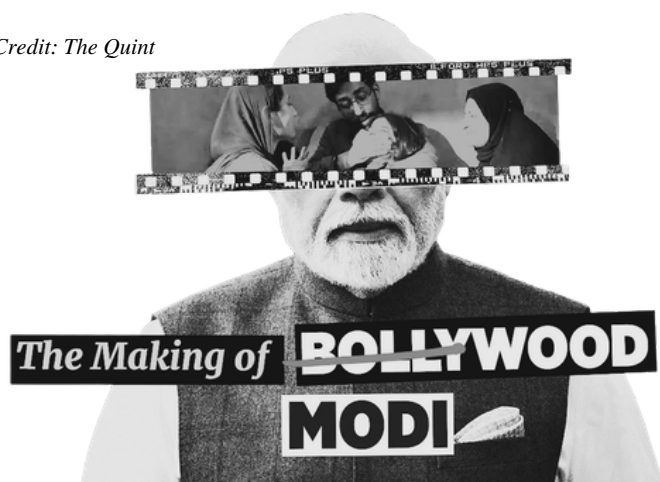
peddle the BJP narrative. These films only reinforce their ideologies and discussions that follow in support of these films later become echo chambers of hate that resort to targeting, stereotyping, and justifying exclusion of minorities and the marginalized.

Despite the court stays on the release of some of these films, they are always saved and have the government backing them up. Some of these films are promoted by the Prime Minister himself and screened at the Parliament. Recently the film ‘The Kerala Story-2’ was released in over 2,600 screens across India despite having a 15-day ban on release and ‘The Kerala Story’ was quoted by the Prime Minister in 2023 in one of his election campaigns.

While on one side the government loves promoting Hindutva agenda on the silver screen, the censor board that favours the ruling party is constantly censoring films that talk about social or economic injustice. The filmmakers that want to portray the truth often face serious censorship to make the truth palatable for the regime. Films like ‘Punjab ‘95’, ‘Da’lit Kids’, and ‘Santosh’ were not even allowed in film festivals. Even in a state like Tamil Nadu where the DMK is in power, the film Santosh was stopped from being screened at a film festival. Recently, the Indian release of ‘The Voice of Hind Rajab’, the Oscar-nominated Tunisian film about the death of a five-year-old girl during the genocide in Gaza, has been blocked by the censor board to avoid angering Modi’s fatherland, Israel.

During the time of Hitler, the radio was the most effective means of propaganda. Right now, film or any medium is not just a tool for entertainment, it is a propaganda machine, dictated by the needs of the ruling classes, alienated from the interests of the masses. Before we pay to watch a film, we need to understand the politics behind the film, who benefits from the narrative and who the film vilifies. We have to think of why films that clearly aim to whitewash the state get a free pass from the censor board while we barely hear about the rest that hold a mirror to society.

Credit: The Quint



Lenin is Young Again!

Harish

On 8th March 1887, five Russian students who were running a secret revolutionary study circle at St. Petersburg University were hanged by the Tsarist regime. The leader of the group, Alexander, had a younger brother who was only 17 years old at the time. Alexander's martyrdom deeply impacted this young man; however, instead of following a path of mindless revenge, he chose a different path. He would later grow up to become someone who would change the course of history forever. Looked up to by revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh, Charu Majumdar, and others, he was Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, known by his party name, Lenin.

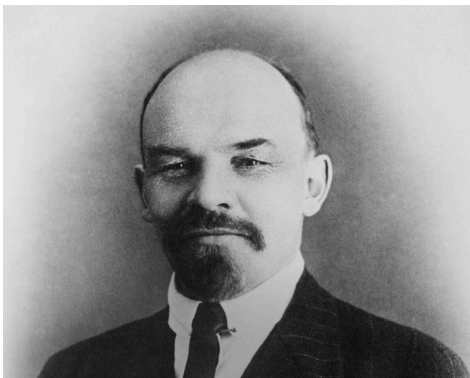
Comrade Lenin was born on 22nd April, 1870 in the city of Simbirsk, Russia. He was first attracted to Marxist ideas at the age of 18 through secret study circles at the University of Kazan. Due to his systematic method of study and steely discipline, within months he was capable of delivering lectures in illegal circles and went on to start a Marxist study circle of his own. Within a few years, Lenin moved to St. Petersburg, an industrial city of the toiling masses. There, he worked under the cover of an assistant lawyer while increasingly involving himself in revolutionary activities. He played a key role in persuading the study circles in St. Petersburg to take up mass agitation among the workers.

He later united these small study circles into the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) and pioneered the idea of a strong vanguard party, a close-knit group of professional revolutionaries armed with revolutionary theoretical knowledge and skilled in underground work, who would lead the broad masses through mass organizations. He also launched the party's propaganda newspaper *Iskra* (meaning spark).

Thus, even under severe repression, ranging from illegal study circles and secret poster distributions in factories and farms to militant general strikes and outright armed insurrections of workers and peasants, organisational work continued. Comrade Lenin led the Russian toiling masses to victory by establishing the world's first workers' state in 1917.

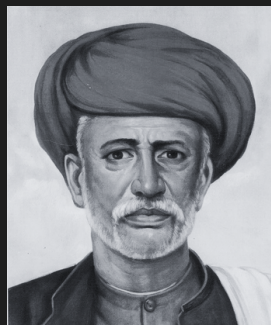
Comrade Lenin's other major contributions include theorizing imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism, or capitalism in decay. He also played a crucial role in combating empiricist, opportunist, and reformist tendencies that constantly arise within the revolutionary movement. From fighting the Menshevik reformists to opposing the renegades in the Second International,

Comrade Lenin demonstrated to revolutionaries of all generations that only through relentless struggle can true progress and the emancipation of the working class be achieved.



THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

April 4, 1968 - Martin Luther King Jr., the face of the civil rights movement in USA, was fatally shot at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. He fought for the equality of civil rights for Black Americans in the United States.



April 11, 1827 - Birthday of Mahtama Jyotirao Govindrao Phule. His work extended to many fields, including the eradication of untouchability, caste system, agricultural reforms, and in educating women and oppressed caste people.

April 13, 1919 - Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, also called Massacre of Amritsar, happened where British troops fired on a large crowd of unarmed Indians in an open space known as the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar in the Punjab region, killing several hundred people and wounding many hundreds more.

April 14, 1891 - marks the birthday of Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, a visionary Indian political leader, and social reformer, a champion of social justice for marginalised communities, especially, Dalits. He was also one of the architects of the Indian constitution.



April 17, 1961 - A U.S.-backed attempt to overthrow Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba failed disastrously in what became known as the Bay of Pigs fiasco. About 1,400 anti-Castro exiles invaded the island's southern coast along the Bay of Pigs but were overrun by 20,000 Cuban soldiers and jailed.

April 22, 1969 - The Naxalbari uprising led by Charu Majumdar's group within CPI(M) further exposed the divides between the party's centrist leadership and the revolutionary vision of its members. The ruling CPM in Bengal responded with state violence fueling further dissent within the party. This resulted in revolutionary communists breaking away from the CPI(M) and formally establishing the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) in 1969. The choice of Lenin's birth anniversary (22nd April) was symbolic.



◆— UPDATES ON STUDENT MOVEMENTS —◆

Students and youth protest in Kalaburagi Against

All Karnataka State Students Association staged a protest in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office in Kalaburagi on March 27 against growing unemployment, lakhs of vacancies across departments, lack of transparency in the recruitment process, and the poor condition of Prabuddha Academy, a coaching centre for unemployed students which incurred a cost Rs. 30 crore. The protest was joined by hundreds of unemployed youth who called the state government out for its tokenism and poor execution shown in its mismanagement of funds and poor planning of projects. They demanded the handover of recent appointments from Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) to Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), scholarships for students training for competitive exams, merit-based recruitment, and establishment of industries in Kalaburagi for sustainable employment. AKSSA warned of state-wide protests if the recruitment process is not initiated immediately.



Panjab University Students Protest Against Sangh-BJP Speakers on Campus

Student organisations at Panjab University gathered in protest on March 9th against the detention and manhandling of the students who protested against RSS and BJP-linked speakers being invited to an event titled “Sacrifice, Equality and Moral Authority: Sikh History, Guru Tegh Bahadur and the Panj Pyare in the Indian Civilisational Ethos.” They demanded a ban on RSS and BJP activities on campus, and action against the police personnel involved. Student organisations had demanded the cancellation of the event in advance, and proceeded with a march at the time of the event, when the police manhandled them, dislodging Sikh students' turbans and kirpans. The university claimed the detentions were a precautionary measure to prevent disruption on campus.

Sleep-in Protest at Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge Technologies After Death of Minor Student

Students of Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge Technologies (RGUKT) of Andhra Pradesh started a sleep-in protest in front of the vice-chancellor's office on March 17, demanding better medical facilities including basic amenities like diagnostic centres and adequate doctors and nursing staff on campus, and compensation for the parents of a 17-year-old student who died of leukaemia while undergoing treatment at Gandhi Hospital. The bereaved parents have also alleged negligence and poor response from the university. Stating that the death could have been prevented through an early diagnosis and adequate medical facilities, the students vowed to continue the protest until their demands are met. The university declared holidays for pre-university students from March 23 to ‘prevent disruption’.



Students Abducted by Delhi Police Special Cell Reveal Brutal Custodial Torture

The six students who were abducted by Delhi Police Special Cell have disclosed severe physical, psychological, sexual, caste-based, and Islamophobic abuse, including rape and death threats, being forced to record false statements, and sign blank papers and notices before being released. The student activists had been abducted by unidentified personnel in plain clothes between 12 and 14th March. Two labour rights activists and two anti-displacement activists were also abducted and tortured in a similar manner while in custody.



Protest at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Rohilkhand University by Students

Members of Samajwadi Chhatra Sabha staged a protest at the university in Bareilly on March 29, sought to meet the vice-chancellor regarding biased recruitment and violation of reservation policies, and submitted a memorandum to the registrar alleging violations of UGC 2018 regulations. Lack of facilities was also highlighted. They were informed that the vice-chancellor was out of station.