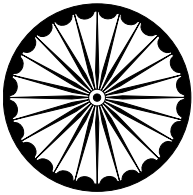
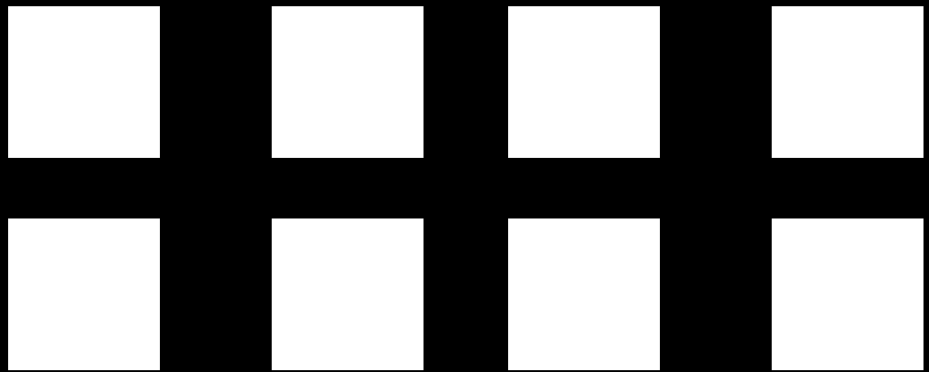


February 2023 | Issue 2

Suggested contribution Rs. 10



HOSTEL



spark<sup>★</sup>

# UPDATES ON STUDENT MOVEMENTS

"The world is yours, as well as ours, but in the last analysis, it is yours. You young people, full of vigor and vitality, are in the bloom of life, like the sun at eight or nine in the morning. Our hope is placed on you. The world belongs to you."

~Mao Tse-tung



## **Protest at Central University of Karnataka against moral policing**

Students staged a protest in front of the vice-chancellor's residence at Central University of Karnataka in Aland taluk of Gulbarga district, accusing the varsity authorities of resorting to moral policing against them on the pretext of maintaining discipline on the campus. Students contended that the security staff in the university are torturing the male students for being with or talking to female students. The university staff like electricians are invading the hostel rooms of the female students. But, the authorities have suspended a female student for raising objections to it.



## **Rohith Vemula commemorated on his martyrdom day**

All India Students' Association (AISA) took part in a protest rally after permission was denied to organize a programme in memory of Hyderabad Central University student Rohith Vemula on his martyrdom day, in Lucknow University campus on January 17. NSUI and Samajwadi Chhatra Sabha joined in solidarity. The students also

demanding the implementation of Rohith Act, which provides a legislative measure for marginalized students. They said that the only way to remember Rohith Vemula is to keep alive the struggle against fee hike, NEP 2020, and fellowship cuts in educational institutions. Two students were issued show-cause notices after they planned to organize a lecture to be delivered by Professor Ravi Kant on Rohith Vemula. Activists from the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) belonging to the Sangh Parivaar tried to disrupt the event by raising slogans of 'Jai Shri Ram'. They attacked the protesting students physically as well. The students have demanded the university administration and police to take immediate action against the perpetrators of violence.

A symbolic sit-out was organized under the aegis of Ambedkar Students' Association (ASA), at Velivada in remembrance of Rohith Vemula at Hyderabad Central University, where he was a PhD scholar. The students also organized a rally in remembrance of Rohith Vemula from men's hostel via Velivada to ladies hostel under the banner 'Justice for Rohith Vemula'. Students from Jadavpur university organized a street corner programme remembering Rohith Vemula.

(continued on page 18 )



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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 lies and fabricated news that suit their interests which makes exposition of the truth an imminent task. The intention of Spark is to provide an alternative perspective on issues that affect the majority of population. ”

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**СМЕРТЬ  
ФАШИСТСКОЙ  
ГАДИНЕ!**

Death to the  
Fascist Beast -  
Soviet  
propaganda  
poster (1941)

# □ Social Inclusion? Not Necessary □

*Rohit and Shri Lakshmi*

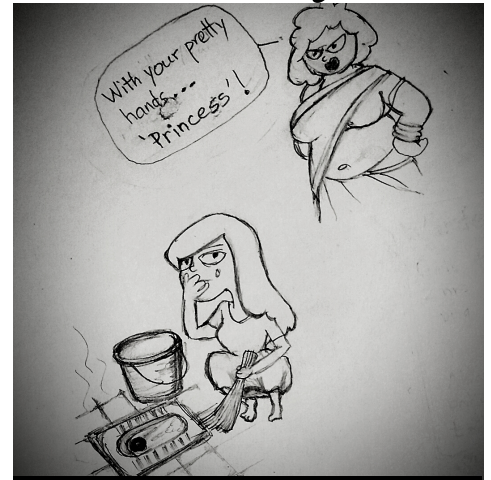
Right at the start of the new year 2023 when the techies of the IT capital of India were making new year resolutions about trips to 10 exotic locations or following health plans like their favourite celebs, news came out that in the same city girls from government run backward class hostels were forced to clean toilets with their bare hands. Bowing to different movements led by the Bahujan community, the government provides hostels for students from SC/ST/OBC and minority backgrounds in some cities. When photos of girls cleaning toilets came out from RR Nagar Backward classes girls' hostel, Bangalore, it exposed that under the pressure of social movements, the government started hostels, but backward communities are still discriminated against. In this RR Nagar hostel girls complained of getting abused regularly by the warden if they protested the verbal rules made by her. And when these issues were taken up to district level authorities, instead of taking action against the warden, the complainants were threatened with cancellation of their admission. This is not the only case where such inhuman treatment is meted out to students from the Bahujan community. Previously, incidents of poor condition of hostel building, unhygienic food and lack of other facilities have come up in Karnataka, some of which were reported.

In such a scenario one would expect the representatives of the people to address caste while making policies. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 enforced by this BJP government, was the final nail in the coffin of such expectations. The NEP 2020 focuses on 'merit', diluting the provision of Reservation in the process of admissions and recruitment in colleges. The NEP document rarely mentions the word caste. It brings all groups belonging to marginalized communities into one category called SEDG (Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Groups). This includes gender identities, socio-cultural identities, geographical identities, disabilities, and socio-

economic conditions. It is necessary to cover all these categories, but there has to be a separate body to address the problems plaguing each community. Instead NEP 2020 wants to club everything together to reduce the number of reserved seats and cause greater competition. Recently, the central as well as the state government scrapped multiple scholarships for minority and Bahujan communities.

Since the neoliberal reforms of the 90's, the floodgates to the Indian market have been opened allowing foreign investment in health, education etc. In recent years we have seen big corporations opening 'liberal arts' colleges. These provide scholarships mostly on economic basis to ensure 'diversity'. NEP 2020 paving the way for 'public-philanthropic-partnership' means that the government is recusing itself from providing any sort of social cushion for students coming from any socially or economically backward section. Using words like "greater flexibility, student choice, and best-of-two attempts" in the NEP document will ensure that students coming from disadvantaged classes take substandard 'vocational training' so that they can become cheap labourers.

These deliberately discriminating policies should not surprise anyone. For centuries, this Brahmanical society has gatekept education and denied this very fundamental right to the Dalits, OBCs, and women for "cultural and religious" reasons. From the Manusmriti stating that a Shudra is unfit for education, and deserves to have molten lead poured in in his ear if found to be uttering a word of the Vedas, to present day denial of the reservation system, we have come a full circle, or possibly back to square one. All this despite the fact that the importance of reservation has not decreased neither has the implementation been perfect(1). This is besides the fact that the reservation system is a half-hearted, token action by the state to annihilate caste from society. From pre-schools to higher education institutes, the students in India face disparities till date and it is



**Sketch by Joseph Joy Mathew**

already worsening under the NEP 2020(2).

It must be noted that in India there have been long-standing efforts by the ruling class to separate the class question from the caste question. Most landless agricultural labourers, manual scavengers, and other working people are Bahujans. If this huge intersection between the most backward classes and castes is not acknowledged for a unified struggle, there cannot be any fundamental change.

There is no denying that education is liberation, it made anti-caste warriors like Babasaheb Ambedkar, Savitribai Phule and others possible. It is a right, a necessity for every marginalized student in India, as was the dream of Babasaheb. "Educate, Agitate, Organize" said Ambedkar while addressing the All India Depressed Classes conference in July 1942, and it is what we must follow while questioning the NEP. Students across the nation must continue to stand up and fight against the monopolizing of education by this regime, and make sure this country does not witness yet another Rohith Vemula.

1. In the top IITs more than 60% PhD students are from the general category. Many seats reserved for SC/ST/OBC candidates are left vacant according to a recent study published in Nature.
2. According to a 2015 Oxfam India report, due to systemic discrimination in educational spaces, 75% of the more than six million children out of school in India were either Dalits (32.4%), Muslims (25.7%) or Adivasis (16.6%).



# Foreign Universities in India: Who Makes the Profit?

*Sachin and Aratrika*

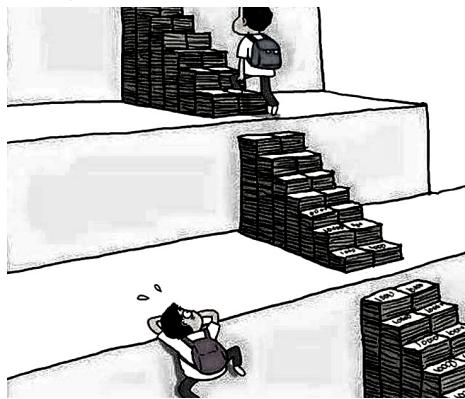
"Actually, hard work is more powerful than Harvard."

-Narendra Modi

The above comment made by the prime minister in 2014 was a dig towards a Harvard-educated political rival. In the wake of the University Grants Commission(UGC) showing green signal to foreign universities for setting up their campuses in India in 2023, the above comment has simply not aged well. The UGC move follows the diktats of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, a policy that was pushed through without due democratic process by the Modi-led BJP government in the middle of the first lockdown. Earlier, in 2010, Congress led union government also proposed to allow foreign universities in India. And very interestingly, it was opposed by the then opposition Bharatiya Janata Party. Now that the BJP government is in power with absolute majority, all policy suggestions in NEP 2020 are turning to reality swiftly, like '...selected universities e.g., those from among the top 100 universities in the world will be facilitated to operate in India. A legislative framework facilitating such entry will be put in place, and such universities will be given special dispensation regarding regulatory, governance, and content norms on par with other autonomous institutions of India.' So, 'top universities' in the world have been allowed to bring their 'world class' education to a 'developing' nation like India. As the document states, these universities will have a free pass regarding rules and regulations. This translates to them being able to decide on anything and everything on their own such as the selection process of the students, their fees, hiring of teachers, curriculum, affirmative actions etc.

Many may think that this is a very 'super' move in the process of India becoming

'VishwaGuru'. But if the state truly wants people to get quality education then why is it not increasing the overall education budget, directing it towards the proliferation of public educational institutions (from KG to PG), research institutes, and teachers' training institutes to impart quality education to the Indian masses? The standard of education has been quite backwards for a long time in our top universities. Now, it is falling every year. It is more pathetic in other smaller universities or those run by the state governments. In most cases the



teacher-to-student ratio is abysmal, classes are irregular, infrastructure is poor, students finish their 3 year courses in 5-6 years because of irregularities in exams. Now, if the foreign universities set up their campuses in India, their hefty fees would mostly be siphoned off to their parent corporations. The graduates would also get absorbed by foreign corporations or their Indian offices as seen in case of most IIT passouts(1). It has also been seen elsewhere that the external campuses do not impart the same quality of education as the parent campus and are also used to subsidize it. Hence, reduction of the number of students going abroad for higher education seems unlikely(2). So how practical is it to invite foreign universities by channeling a chunk of the education budget to serve that end while this fund can be better used to strengthen the indigenous universities?

On the other hand, in the last few decades the public school system in India has been systematically destroyed by successive governments through willful

negligence. This has forced a large chunk of the population to move towards private schools. Most major cities and towns in India now host a bunch of 'international schools' where fees go up to 12 Lacs per annum sometimes. Presently, the government schools only see footfalls of children belonging to the most economically backward sections of the society. The majority of them belong to Dalit, Adivasi, religious minorities, and other backward communities. Even if foreign universities set up their campuses in India, students from these sections would hardly be able to enter those places except as tokens to maintain 'diversity'. As per the recent Oxfam India report 'The top 1% in India now owns more than 40.5% of total wealth in 2021 while the bottom 50% of the population (700 million) has around 3% of total wealth.' Only this top '1%' would be able to afford entry into these campuses.

Is this sharpening of inequality in access to education a sudden development? Not really; these all started almost three decades back when India opened the doorways to foreign investment in education as well as other public sectors, converting those to commodities. All the checks and balances that were in place to prevent runaway profit-making by private parties were taken away in the name of liberalization, privatization and globalization. This neoliberal system wants more and more people to remain as cheap workers who can be easily exploited to build the empire. The setting up of foreign universities will exacerbate this already existing inequality.

1. Human Development Report of the UNDP (2000) estimated that India loses \$2 billion every year by providing cheap university education to professionals who migrate

2. Indian students spent \$7 billion or around ₹ 45,000 crore per year on foreign education according to a study by industry body Assocham and Mumbai-based Tata Institute of Social Sciences done in 2015.

# Education in mother language: The Soviet Experience - Part II

*Sushant*



{21st February marks the 'International Mother Language Day'. On this day in 1952, Dhaka of erstwhile East Pakistan witnessed huge gatherings against language imposition by the Pakistani government. Many protestors were martyred in the indiscriminate firing by the government forces becoming the first language martyrs of the world.}

Learning to read and write is much easier if done in one's mother tongue and, of course, greatly facilitates the spread of literacy. In this field, the Soviet Union made unprecedented achievements. Let's look back at how it became a multinational state by giving education and the right to self-determination to its national minorities.

In any multinational and multilingual country, an important general problem of language policy is how to achieve and maintain unity in diversity, that is to say, how to secure federal cohesion and free communication among the different segments without impinging on the development of any constituent ethnic group or their language. Tsarist Russia was made up of many different nationalities, national minorities comprised over 50% of the entire population but minority languages were

suppressed as a way to russify the country and publishing in such national languages was banned from the mid-nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century. Many years before the Bolshevik revolution Lenin and some of his followers had outlined a plan for a policy of the equality of nationalities and languages; this was a reaction to the oppression of minority groups and languages. Lenin wanted all nationalities to have some opportunities to use their native languages as a counter to Tsarist oppression.

After the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the proletarian state was faced with the difficulty of having inherited an ethnically diverse country and they saw huge gaps between the centre and the peripheries. It was divided administratively in such a way as to pay due account to the existence and needs of different nationalities, which encouraged the growth of national cultures. On November 2nd, 1917 the Declaration of Rights of the People of Russia proclaimed: '1. The equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia. 2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, even to the point of separation and the formation of an independent state. 3. The abolition of any and all national and national-religious privileges and disabilities. 4. The free development of national minorities and ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia'. This declaration was a way to solve the problems of past discrimination and oppression by the Tsarist regime. In 1923, the Soviet Communist Party launched the policy of *Korenizatsiia* (indigenisation or nativisation), which aimed to promote harmony between national and linguistic identity by establishing ethno-territorial autonomies to promote national cultures, languages, and cadres and to extending education among nationalities in their own languages to develop a multinational

state. *Korenizatsiia* promoted the distinctive national identities among different groups through "the formation of national territories staffed by national elites using their own national languages," as well as through "the promotion of symbolic markers of national identity: national folklore, museums, dress, food, costumes, opera, poets, progressive historical events, and classic literary works". In this context, native languages were seen as "a means of social discipline, as a social unifier of nations, and as a necessary and most important condition of successful economic and cultural development". Implemented as a part of the Soviet indigenisation policy in the 1920s and 1930s, the support of indigenous languages was accompanied by a rapid spread of mass education across the USSR. Over fifty nationalities that previously had no literature in their native languages were getting education in their own languages. Books and newspapers were published in relatively large numbers, and original literature in the native language made noteworthy progress. Alphabets and principles of orthography had to be created for languages that had never been written before. Specialized terminologies were created since they were naturally lacking in languages that had been used only as regional spoken languages. A centre was set up to handle the general and theoretical problems, with local committees for the various languages. By the middle of the 1930s, native language schools were operating in all regions of the Soviet Union. In 1928 books were published in seventy national languages, and by 1934, textbooks were being printed in 104 languages. As a result of the Soviet "cultural revolution," the number of children attending schools rapidly increased, especially in the republics of Central Asia where formal schooling was not available. During the

first five years of Soviet rule, the number of children enrolled in schools increased 15 fold in Turkmen SSR, 18 fold in Kyrgyz SSR, 39 fold in Uzbek SSR, 57 fold in Kazakh SSR, and 225 fold in Tajik SSR. In essence, post revolution Russia showed the world what feats can be achieved in a socialist system.

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# The Climate Dilemma

*Shairik*

When the seas rise and we all see the curse  
Those at the top still sit at summits and discuss  
How to make growth, and how to get an edge.  
World leaders are just actors on a dying stage.

They beg us and scare us into getting them in power  
So a little more of our earth they can cozily devour  
Development they use to wash their hands of blood  
Hoping to bewilder by lights, while we wait for a flood.

Governments, they portray, are what people make  
Sort the pieces and see, the state is only a barricade  
To keep profits going up while the people fall  
To keep us quiet and make us the glass wall.

Today they proudly sell resilience measures,  
While creating disasters looking for treasures.  
They tell me to stand strong on poisoned soil,  
While they strive hard to turn water into oil.

Save a system so broken that it has to drill  
Make enough small changes, and you can still  
Have a world to live in if you just preserve the order?  
Why do they come then breathing on my shoulder  
When I ask for the details of their plan to save us all.  
Why the threats of jail, why the spies on my wall?

Why is land snatched from people living there?  
Why do they want to sell what we all share?  
Is wilderness disappearing so fast to ensure instead  
Of asking where it went, we ask if it really existed?

Why do they work to make me to forget the forests,  
Accept neat gardens in their place or accept arrests?  
Why do they offer mountains in slabs of stone,  
Why sell me in pieces what in whole was my own?

I woke up with questions and stepped outside  
And found the state watching, every step and stride.  
Police screamed at me, they're here for my protection,  
While whispering to me about my dangerous intentions.  
They can take everything away, they keep reminding  
While on our very shoulders precariously standing.  
Do things, say things, you have the right they say,  
As long as we do it conveniently out of the way.  
The more they try to scare us the more we see  
How shaky, how afraid they really have to be.  
Behind the uniformed terror network they cower  
Trying to crack even those holding pens and colour.  
They're scared of simple questions, simple voices  
If you're silent today, question your choices,  
Do you repeat to yourself the comfortable lie  
Getting involved has a personal cost too high?  
Don't you see if you can't live fearless with eyes open,  
You're paying with yourself to keep the world broken.  
Join us, or we'll fight for us and fight for you too  
Simple tricks of ink can't save the vast blue.





# Yazaki Workers' Movement and the Role of Foreign Investments

*Arindam*

Illegally terminated workers of Yazaki India Pvt. Ltd plant of Lakkenahalli of Ramnagara district of Karnataka have been staging a protest under the banner of AICCTU outside the factory gate since 26th December. It was the 13th of December, 2022 when 53 workers were verbally terminated by this Japanese corporation. More than 100 other workers came out in support of their terminated colleagues and protested spontaneously. Due to this protest, these workers were identified and sacked the next day.

Instead of giving an apology, as demanded by the management in exchange of their jobs, they chose to form a union along with the other 53 terminated workers and launched the movement. Yazaki management was forced to assure in a tripartite conciliation meeting that all the workers will be taken back. They informed that re-joining letters to 45 workers have already been sent and the remaining will be subsequently dispatched. More than 20 workers have already resumed work on the factory floor, however the movement continues until all the 153 terminated workers are back to work. As of 23rd January, the movement has sustained for around a month.

Yazaki manufactures automobile wiring equipment. It has a clientele of Maruti Suzuki, Toyota, Mahindra etc. This unit of the company earns super profits riding on the backs of around 3000 workers employed currently, out of which only 130 workers are permanent employees, rest are all either contractuales or “trainees”. Yazaki has a fraudulent policy of recruiting workers guised as “trainees”, whose job roles are same as that of the permanent employees but with lesser salary (around Rs. 11,000) and no job security. Currently more than 1500 such workers are working in this unit.

“Training period” of these workers is extended for 4 years, then most of them are sacked and a new set of “trainees” are recruited. This is a strategy used by this multinational to enforce an easy “Hire and Fire” policy.

With the new labour codes being gradually implemented such abrupt terminations of workers would become a day-to-day affair in ‘New India’. The already bad working conditions will become worse. It is very clear that the only way to fight against this precarity and injustice is the path shown by the Yazaki workers, that is, by getting organised under the red banner.

Yazaki being a transnational automobile parts manufacturing company based out of Japan, they have their tentacles all over the third-world nations with 90% of their workforce from outside Japan. They have units in India with Pune as headquarter. In India the automobile sector is allowed 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit with automatic approval. This sector has attracted FDI equity inflow worth US\$ 33.53 billion between April 2000-June 2022 in India. Japan as the 3rd largest investor in India is currently operating over 1455 companies with automobiles as its top sector. India’s FDI inflow in FY22 was \$58.8 billion, registering a growth of 142% in eight years with the automobile sector as third largest. Karnataka attracted 45 per cent of the total FDI inflow to India in FY22.

Since the inception of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) in the 90’s, we have seen that the governments irrespective of the parties in power have continuously worked in

favour of foreign capital. Under the current regime of RSS-BJP, this has accelerated and is more brazen. Now the question arises what is the problem with allowing FDI into the country? Most political parties support and deem it necessary for “development”.

There are a number of reasons. International capital establishes companies in India to extract super profits and the profit goes to the foreign parent company based in imperialist countries like the US, Japan, etc. instead of indigenous companies where the surplus generated rolls domestically helping further industrialization and employment growth.

Moreover, such companies focus on luxury goods rather than necessities for their higher profit margins. Hence, it cares only in enhancing the purchasing power of the wealthy while reducing masses to penury. Contrary to government propaganda, foreign capital does not facilitate employment generation. On one hand it cuts a large number of jobs with sophisticated machinery imported at inflated rates and on the other hand it mostly (roughly 70% of the FDI inflow) concentrates on acquiring existing businesses and not setting up new enterprises.

Earlier in the colonial period, imperialists exported goods to countries like India, to seize markets; today they export not only goods, but primarily





capital as it has a double advantage. First by exporting capital and setting up branches (joint ventures with local corporates) of their industry in India they not only capture markets here, but also make super-profits through exploitation of cheap labour. So, for example, if a cake of Lux soap cost Rs 1 to manufacture by Hindustan Lever in India, it would cost say Rs 3+transport to manufacture in the UK, by the parent company, Unilever. Therefore, by setting up plants in India they can increase their profits 3 to 5 fold. The rate of return is multifold as the companies exploit cheap labour, lax environmental regulations, and diluted labour laws as compared to their home country. Also, by having a “Hindustan” tag on it, it gives the

appearance of being “Indian”, to deceive buyers.

The reality is, foreign corporations dictate domestic policies controlling life and livelihood of people, causing political enslavement, putting sovereignty of the country at stake. Laws and policies like labour codes, amendment to EIA, farm laws, NEP 2020 etc. are some examples. A recent estimate shows that due to the pro foreign capital policies of the Modi government, roughly \$500 billion got drained abroad from our country in 2020-21. So, about 17% of India’s present GDP of over \$ 3 trillion leaves the country every year, during the colonial period this drain was estimated at 8%. With this development model where imperialist loot is effectively



greater than what was in colonial times, neither it is the time to celebrate “Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav” nor we will become “Atmanirbhar Bharat” as claimed by PM Modi. We need all democratic, progressive and patriotic students, youth, intellectuals, activists to come together, deliberate upon this and work towards bringing massive structural change.

# Joshimath - How Neoliberal Capitalism Destroyed An Entire City

*Suryashekhar Biswas*

Joshimath is a city in Uttarakhand, located at the foot of the Himalayas. It is located at Zone V as per India’s seismic zonation scheme, which makes it geologically vulnerable, as it is fragile and seismically active.

This January (2023), at least 145 families in Joshimath have been directly affected by the cracks on its surface due to land subsidence (and the subsequent sinking due to landslide and snowfall) which has been happening for a long time. After a spell of lack in media coverage, Joshimath has begun to receive some media attention - but of what sort?

Are the geographical factors and location of Joshimath to take the sole blame for the present disaster that has put the livelihoods of the entire city at mortal risk? No. In fact, it is the neoliberal development model - and the systemic problems of capitalism’s endless drive for profit, with its complete lack of ecological sustainability, that has led to this.

About 50 years ago, a government

appointed committee led by MC Mishra investigated the situation in Joshimath, and submitted a report that categorically explained that the unsustainable development ought to stop, if Joshimath is to survive. It recommended that construction needs to stop. Today, the



Tapovan Vishnugad Hydropower project that was started in 2006, is still underway. We have seen elsewhere too, that such injudicious undertakings have led to horrible outcomes for ordinary working people. Adivasi communities in Chattisgarh have seen their entire livelihoods displaced, due to projects like these, in this case, at the service of Adani. People have resisted these drives,

but to little or no response from the government - which is deep in the pockets of the moneybags who gain from these investments. The Hydropower project that is turning out to be fatal for the survival of Joshimath, is funded by the notorious Asian Development Bank, which has ignored every warning coming from environmentalists and experts. Meanwhile, another project (Vishnugad Pipalkoti Project) funded by the World Bank, which is a bastion of U.S hegemony and imperialism, is also proving fatal.

Various examples point that this is not an isolated case, nor is it a simple natural disaster - as the mainstream media would like us to think. It is high time we resist the dictatorship of the likes of the World Bank and Asian Development bank. There must be a way to ensure development that is symbiotic to the needs of the people, and sensitive to ecology. It is high time we take inspiration from people's movements, pro people models of development and find the way.

# From the Fields of

# Devanahalli: A Report

*Sharath*



It is 300 days since Devanahalli (a taluka in Bangalore rural district) farmers first organised a committee against forcible land acquisition and have been on an indefinite strike until their demands are being met.

The struggle of these farmers is against the government body KIADB (Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board) which is taking over their lands against their will for so called “Industrial Development”

KIADB has issued a notice recently to acquire 1,777 acres of fertile lands. It is not the first time such mass acquisition is happening in Devanahalli, but the third time. The first instance of such acquisition happened in Devanahalli was for the Bengaluru International Airport where the KIADB acquired 725 acres of fertile lands from the farmers. There used to be three villages in the area where the airport stands today and not a trace of it can be found. The people of those villages have shared the same fate as the villages themselves where they were forced to scatter as no proper restitution or rehabilitation was given to them by the government. The people who once owned the land have been pauperized to do menial jobs such as housekeeping staff and security guards in the same land.

## **Habitual Acquisitions :**

The farmers have witnessed many such instances. KIADB acquires land across Karnataka from farmers by making promises of industrial development and providing employment in their villages and thereby improving “standards of living”. However the farmers have become aware of these false promises as they have witnessed the horrific plight of those who have become landless post such acquisitions. The farmers whose lands were acquired have become debt ridden as there is no sustained source of income.

KIADB habitually acquires land in the name of “Industrial Development” but goes on to keep it

unused. The CAG (Comptroller and Auditor General of India) report of 2017 states that in the time period of 2011-17, around 37,100 acres of land acquired was kept unused as “Land Banks”. It also sells these “Land Banks” to giant realtors at subsidised prices and thus effectively creating a playground for corporate players at the cost of the farmers and their livelihoods.

The farmers after looking at these atrocities decided to organise themselves and formed a committee called ‘Bhoo Swadhina Virodhi Horata Samiti’ which roughly translates to Committee for struggle against Land Acquisition. The farmers are sitting in an indefinite strike in a small village called Channarayapattana in Devanahalli. 13 villages who will be affected by this 1,777 acres acquisition take turns in participating in the sit-in. The Memoranda served by them to the state officials were all in vain and thus they decided to take it to the streets. The farmers had called for Devanahalli Bandh on the 75th day of their protest when the whole town of Devanahalli showed their support to the cause by closing shops in solidarity.

## **The August 15th Protest :**

On 15th of August the farmers planned a protest demonstration to express their anguish and their dissatisfaction with the state on Independence day. However the prominent organisers were picked up from the protest site by the police at 4AM in the morning. The farmers still determined, marched towards the ground where the flag hoisting was taking place, with the slogans of Raita Virodhi Sarkaragalu uliyodilla ( Anti Farmer Governments will not survive), Ambani

Adani sarkarakke dhikkara ( Down with Ambani Adani Government) and Raktavannu koduvevu Bhoomiyannu biduvudilla ( We’ll give Blood but not out Land ). They were manhandled by the police and 72 farmers were detained.

Even after such attempts by the state to crush the movement, the farmers are determined like never before and believe that they can defend their land from the corporate clutches by the way of struggle. They protested against the Global Investors Meet which was held in November by the government of Karnataka who had invited big corporates to invest and utilise indigenous land and resources. Similar movements against KIADB land acquisitions are erupting in different parts of Karnataka such as Dakshina Kannada, Dharwad, Davanagere, Kolar where farmers have taken it upon themselves to defend their land.

## **Jal, Jangal, Jameen :**

The acquisition is part of the ongoing corporate loot of the Jal, Jungle, Zameen where indigenous resources are being plundered from the people by foreign capital. There lies a huge threat to the sovereignty of the country when governments are merely acting as an agent/ puppet to facilitate this process and the farmers are doing the most patriotic act by resisting such plunder. It is our duty as students and youths to join hands with the working masses of the country and resist corporate loot.

# Aerial Bombings on Adivasi Land Continue in Chhattisgarh

*Surjadipta*

Widespread aerial bombing has been undertaken in Madkanguda, Mettaguda, Bottethong, Sakiler, Madpaaduled, Kannemerka, Pottemangum, Bottalanka, Raspalli and Erpad of Pamed and Kistaram blocks of South Bastar at Chhattisgarh-Telangana Border, from 11 am onwards on 11th January, 2023. On the intervening night of 14-15th April 2022, villages namely Bottetong and Mettagudem (Usoor Block), Duled, Sakler, and Pottemangi (Konta Block) of Bijapur and Sukma districts were bombed using drones. A similar aerial attack was conducted on the 19th of April, 2021, when Bastar was asleep, at least 12 bombs were dropped on Adivasi hamlets in between Botalanka and Palagudem villages of Bijapur district.

The regions bombed this year were in proximity to agricultural lands. The forests bombed in April 2022 were also not uninhabited. It is routine for adivasi people to go into the forests as they depend majorly on these forests for their livelihood. Not only that, it was the peak Mahua collecting season when women and children started going into the forests

from 3AM in the morning to collect Mahua. Given this extensive access of adivasis to the regions being bombed, these attacks are direct hostilities by security forces against our own citizens.

A large number of tribals staged a protest near Bodkel village in a forest region on the Bijapur-Sukma district border on April 27, 2022 demanding a probe into the aerial bombing. After two days of dharna, people of ten villages organised a massive protest on the third day to protest against the 'drone attack'. Over this month, thousands of tribals have come out in protest across Chhattisgarh. One of the protests was by adivasi women alleging that security

drones take footage of them bathing. People in these regions want hospitals, schools, anganwadi and other basic facilities instead of these intense surveillance and state repression. It is beyond imagination that a democratic state continuously drone bombs any civilian areas, let alone its own people.

To facilitate the corporate plunder of Jal-Jangal-Jameen, they are resorting to any possible extent of terror and violence. The ever strong resistance movements and rising people's struggle against the corporate loot are creating hindrance for the government in helping its corporate friends to carry out the exploitation of resources such as coal, iron ore, limestone, bauxite, and dolomite, as well as significant deposits of tin, manganese ore, gold, and copper. To this they are answering with all forms of terrorism. Security forces killing tribals with impunity, private militia like Salwa-Judum, drone strikes, imprisonment en masse without trial using UAPA etc.



## Meghalaya 2023 Election: The Issues that Really Matter

*Soumen*

In India, pre-election violence is almost customary which the ruling class uses to divert the focus of the common people from fundamental necessities to petty ethno-religious issues. The forthcoming Meghalaya Legislative Assembly (MLA) election, which is scheduled to be held on 27 February 2023, is no exception. In the last few months, Meghalaya had witnessed several violent incidents that are used to further the purpose of suppressing the real issues, such as extreme unemployment coupled with pathetic conditions of the working class,

tremendous corruption, plunder of national resources by the corporates, expensive healthcare and education, and constant erosion of inclusiveness which once was a beautiful feature of the state. This article is an attempt to turn the focus back on ground realities.

According to data released by the Reserve Bank of India, the Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Meghalaya for the decade of 2011-2021 is a meagre 2%, the slowest in the country. If we include depreciation and

consider Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) then we find the shocking truth that Meghalaya is the only state in our country that has a negative CAGR of per capita NSDP (-0.5 as per RBI data), for the same decade. Although the ruling coalition government of Meghalaya is trying hard to shed its responsibility and blame the previous government for this situation, it is clear from the same RBI data that the average inflation rate (Consumer Price Index) has doubled in the last five years. In addition, the per capita annual income of Meghalaya in



Rs. 8,382 and Rs. 11,748. This proves that the workers do not even get the paltry amount of minimum wages. Moreover, the calculation of per capita income implicitly assumes equal distribution of income among everyone, which is far from the reality. The situation is duly pointed out by a progressive platform named KAM Meghalaya, which remarked “we also have a small minority of Meghalayans who can afford to buy Lamborghinis, SUVs, erect gleaming glass-fronted buildings, have swimming pools, watch world cup matches in Qatar, do their Christmas shopping in Dubai”.

Studies also show that there is an ever-increasing amount of land seizure by private capital, while more farmers are becoming landless. According to the 2011 census, in Meghalaya, 76% of rural households are landless, compared to a national average of 56%. Extreme inequality is at the very heart of Meghalaya’s economic life, having one-third of the population (32.8%) as poor and deprived, according to NITI Aayog’s first Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) report released in 2021. This report also revealed Meghalaya as the poorest state in the North East Region (NER), and the fifth poorest state in the whole country after Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh. The RBI data mentioned earlier, also suggests that the urban unemployment rate has been increased from 2.8 in 2011-12 to 6.1 in 2020-21. According to the Center for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), it has reached to 7.7 (and 9.5, in case we consider the age group of 20-29) during the last three months of 2022. The quality of existing job also matters. As per Periodic Labor Force Survey (PLFS) of 2018-19 only 20.5% of the total workforce of Meghalaya is salaried employee which is less than the national average (23.8%) and lowest in the NER. Therefore, no wonder that the young people are migrating, more children are stunted, the number of school dropouts is increasing, and criminal activities like drug peddling are engulfing the youth.

Unfortunately, none of the sixty MLAs in Meghalaya seem to work on improving the policies that can systematically improve the state of affairs. Rather before the election, they can be found busy buying votes through the distribution of one-time doles, such as cheap quality cups and dishes, blankets, lottery tickets, and cash. Then there is the question of blatant corruption. The money for MLA schemes is being utterly misused on people or business houses that are directly or indirectly related to the MLAs or their family members or friends. In short, people’s money is being siphoned off to the pockets of medium and large businessmen, who in turn provide the monetary backbone for their extravagant election campaigns. It is unlikely that the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), who will contest in Meghalaya for the first time, will make any difference, as they practise the same in their respective home grounds.

Before the election, another standard tactic is polarization by creating unrest between communities. Just before the festive month of December, Shillong city witnessed two violent incidents. The first one was on 28th October 2022, when some participants of a ‘rally against unemployment’ organized by the Federation of Khasi Jaintia and Garo People (FKJGP), created a ruckus that is nowhere related to the issue of unemployment. They assaulted non-local passers-by and bikers, pelted stones at shops and a petrol pump owned by non-locals, and shouted jingoistic slogans like – “In my land, I can do whatever I want”. Patricia Mukhim, editor of The Shillong Times aptly noted that “The cry is intended to provoke violence and inequality among citizens. It also spreads hatred for the ‘other’ who does not belong.” Despite police presence along the route of the rally, no action was taken against the attackers. Again, after the recent firing by the trigger-happy Assam police at the Assam-Meghalaya border on 22 November 2022, Meghalaya has witnessed another spate of violence,

which too on some occasions turned hostile to the non-local population. Vehicles from outside Meghalaya had been torched in different places; several cases of stone pelting and targeted assault/harassment had been reported; even the Shillong Civil Hospital was vandalized by some protestors. Interestingly, “... none of the legislators or political parties is taking a clear stand on condemning the violence because they are doing their electoral calculations”, as pointed out by Angela Rangad – a social activist from Shillong.

The big guns of Meghalaya, irrespective of political inclinations, fund numerous pressure groups (like FKJGP), directly or indirectly. To the unemployed local youth they portray the non-locals as job-snatchers to create hostilities between local and non-local communities. This, along with a few cases of targeted violence, creates an environment of fear for the non-locals; and then the non-local population is promised safety and security at the cost of their votes, which is very crucial in Shillong city. Safety and security have become the prime concern for the minorities in the state, and the ruling class is consciously trying to convince them that safety and security are not a part of their basic human rights, rather it is something they can only achieve by casting their votes to the most powerful goon, armed with both muscle and money power. However, the positive side is most of the local people condemned this recent violence against their fellow citizens, as such unwanted episodes hamper day-to-day small business transactions, leaving a large portion of the working class further distressed. One must remember the famous saying “You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time”.



# Impact of Hijab Ban in Karnataka's Educational Institutions- A Report by PUCL *Aishwarya*



Six students were arbitrarily denied entry into their classrooms in December 2021 in Udupi. The Education Department, Government of Karnataka, issued a misleading order in February, indicating that the hijab can be restricted in some educational institutions. When some of the affected students approached the court, in *Resham v. State of Karnataka*, the Karnataka High Court issued an interim order and a final verdict that upheld a prohibition on the hijab. Even though the verdict does not issue a directive to institutions to impose a sweeping ban with immediate effect, in one stroke, educational institutions across the state banned the hijab. Hijab-wearing Muslim women students were forced to choose between continuing their education and wearing the hijab.

Since December 2021, students across Karnataka have faced violations of their fundamental rights, specifically, their right to education, right to dignity, right to freedom of expression, right to privacy, right to non-discrimination, and right against arbitrary state action.

PUCL-Karnataka undertook a study to investigate the impact of the imposed ban on the students and examine the role of

authorities, administrative officials and police officials. Through conversations with students as well as authorities, and an analysis of events that transpired, it becomes visibly clear that Muslim women students were not only actively prevented from accessing their right to education, but also bore the brunt of a climate of hate, hostility and misinformation. Students have faced humiliation and harassment in their own classrooms at the hands of their faculty, college administration and classmates. The report documents how vigilante groups of Hindutva organizations carried out a vilification campaign against hijab-wearing students and how the inaction of the government and police gave implicit encouragement to these fundamentalist forces.

Students from all 5 districts shared that they have been forced to make a choice between wearing the hijab and pursuing their education. They said that this compulsion to choose was a humiliating experience because they do consider the hijab and education as two integral parts of their lives. Neither were they given notice before this change in rules, nor were any members of the Muslim community consulted, before the Education Department issued the GO, implying a sudden ban on the hijab.

Most students shared that they had been wearing the hijab since they were around ten years old. Almost every student had a different answer when asked about their relationship with their hijab. Some said that it was a part of their body when they are in public, some said that the hijab symbolises their personal relationship with their God. Some said that the hijab was a way in which they wanted to express their identity as Muslims and others said that they felt naked without the hijab.

Muslim women students were forced to

remove their hijabs inside classrooms, in their examination centres and even outside college gates while the media, the police and their own college faculty coerced them to do so. Students and parents shared their experiences of repeatedly requesting authorities to grant them permission to continue their studies, and the distress they experienced when their struggles went in vain.

With lost friendships, experiences of harassment, humiliation and distress and a denial of their right to education, Muslim women students, in their teens, continue to fight against odds and pursue education.

The report was released on January 9, 2023, to highlight the series of continuing violations of the rights of Muslim students, and draw attention to the failures and unlawful actions of the police, the district administration as well as college authorities. The report also reveals various socio-cultural factors, including biases, prejudices and stereotypes against the Muslim community, especially women, which enabled the escalation of a climate of hate.

Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia's judgement is imbued with a constitutional concern for the rights of girl students to equal access to education. He holds that discipline cannot be at the cost of dignity and autonomy. While he set aside the Karnataka High Court verdict and quashed the Government Order of February 5, it remains a split verdict.

*(The writer is a member of People's Union of Civil Liberties- Karnataka)*

# The Modi regime is hand in gloves with the Adani fiasco

*Surjadipta*

When Narendra Modi took office, he flew from Gujarat to New Delhi in Adani's private jet. This public display of friendship symbolised their concurrent rise to power in a new world where the common people are at the mercy of divisive politics and plutocratic policies. Across the nation, several airports, coal power production, gas distribution, renewable energy, private ports, built with public funds have been given to Adani enterprises for peanuts in the name of privatisation. Being friends with the prime minister and sponsoring his electoral campaigns has increased his net worth by 230%. Not only the BJP, Adani also has opposition parties like Trinamool Congress, CPI(M) and Congress at his disposal. The ports at Vizhinjam in Kerala, Tajpur in West Bengal, coal mines at Silger in Chhattisgarh and Deocha Pachami in West Bengal are being given to Adani. Like major political parties, Adani also has almost the entire Indian media at his disposal. Adani is not answerable to anyone, and has made his way in the business world without regard for regulations.

In August 2022, Fitch released a report detailing the towering debts on Adani enterprises and the risk of its collapse. The debts exceed ₹2.25 trillion. In the recent Hindenburg report, we see that Adani has been involved in stock manipulation, accounting fraud, money laundering, and tax evasion using foreign shell companies. Using these, Adani enterprises inflated its stock valuation much above reality. They took massive loans on this inflated evaluation and expanded heavily. The reports also reveal many foreign debts and investments in the enterprise. The fortunes Adani makes from looting the Indian people flow into these foreign investors, while the debts continue to remain a liability making recovery impossible when the company goes bankrupt. Much of the loans were guaranteed by State Bank of India and some PSUs like LIC have invested in the company. Essentially the Adanis have managed to develop a bubble that will potentially wreck the Indian economy and banks when it bursts.

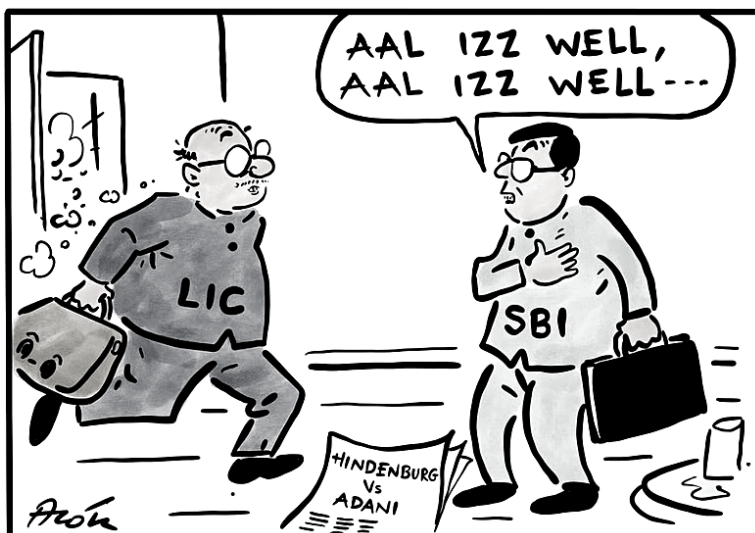


*Sketch by Manjul, published on Newslaundry*

After the uncovering of one of the largest corporate scams in the country, the regulatory bodies of the government such as SEBI and RBI are suspiciously quiet. It is not surprising that no investigations are underway. Given the government's past records with Adani, and other big corporate conglomerates, it appears as though Adani might get away with it once again.

The Adani group has constantly filed legal suits against journalists and activists. Paranjay Guha Thakurta was issued arrest warrant for reporting on allegations against Adani for tax evasion. In 2021, a youtuber who made critical videos of Adani was sent out a court gag order. After the research was published, most media houses reported on it through carefully worded news articles.

With the Indian media, major political parties, administration, governments at the mercy of him, Adani is leading the national role in the imperialist plunder of Indian people and resources.



**"The Adani Group...  
has draped itself in  
the Indian flag while  
systematically  
looting the nation."**

**-Hindenburg Research**

# Promoting Sattvic Foods Reinforces Caste and Religion based Hierarchy and Discrimination

*Dr. Sylvia Karpagam*

In Karnataka, food is rapidly becoming one of the critical ways of reinforcing age-old practices of hierarchy and discrimination as institutionalized in the caste system. On the one hand, nutrient dense foods such as meats, eggs, poultry, fish etc. that have traditionally been eaten by dalit, adivasi, Other Backward Castes (OBC) and minority communities are becoming increasingly criminalized and many efforts are underway to make these foods unaffordable and inaccessible. These foods, including the commonly used onion and garlic, which have been shown through research to improve the bio-accessibility of essential minerals zinc and iron from the food, are labelled as tamasic/rajasic and constantly projected as aggravating base, impure or immoral thoughts and actions.

Science, in fact, says that a balanced or diverse diet should include at least four of the six food groups – cereals and millets; pulses and legumes; eggs; milk, dairy, poultry, fish, meat; fats and oils; fruits and vegetables. Nutrient dense animal source foods, which includes milk and dairy, are crucial to address rampant malnutrition in the state. However, rather than going by the science, there is a push for cattle slaughter bans, continuous resistance to the provision of eggs in the mid-day meal scheme, and constant vociferous calls to economically boycott meat vendors as well as street vendors of meat-based foods. If sattvic food indeed instils compassion and kindness, then this is not visible in the way its proponents constantly demean, abuse, attack and humiliate meat eaters or vandalise their shops and vehicles.

By making it appear that sattvic foods are good, pure, of higher value and good for the climate, a narrative

of good food vs bad/unhygienic/unhealthy food is being created, influencing policy decisions vis a vis the National Education Policy (NEP) and, importantly, labelling some communities as 'superior' and others as 'inferior'. In terms of composition, milk is closer to meat rather than foods from plant origin so giving sattvic status to the first and tamasic status to the latter does not hold up to scientific scrutiny. Similarly, those concerned about ethical animal welfare cannot ignore that milk production necessitates domestication of livestock and necessarily killing the animal for economic reasons.

## Malnutrition crisis in the country

When the poor eat a cereal heavy and nutrient poor diet they are more likely to have malnutrition. Children are more likely to have stunting and undernutrition. Anaemia, Vitamin A deficiency and many other nutrition deficiencies are because of this cheap vegetarianism.

Many vegetarians also eat unhealthy foods like cereals, sugars, seed oils (deep fried foods that have trans fats), junk foods etc. so obesity is not uncommon. Many nutritional deficiencies such as anaemia, B12/vitamin D/calcium deficiency etc. can be found in vegetarians.

On the pretext of giving *sattvic* foods organisations such as Akshaya patra have been violating state government norms as well as National Food security Act norms in the mid-day meal scheme. Children are eating less than the mandated quantities

and there is wastage of the food. The State food commission has drawn attention to the fact that the food provided by these organisations are bland, homogenous and often spoilt because of being transported over long distances and long periods of time. Just the fact that the organization claims to be



religious and provides *sattvic* food has offered impunity against all forms of criticism that would be reserved for a public institution.

In addition, creating shame about the apparently inferior, debasing and impure tamasic/rajasic foods, may push marginalized communities to reject nutritious foods while also losing their own unique cultural and traditional memories. Children from these communities are often ashamed to talk about their grandmother's cooking/culinary skills even though these have nourished the family through difficult times. Instilling shame in children about their past is not something one would expect from an education minister and religious leaders and certainly not in a progressive state such as Karnataka. Nutrient dense foods are being made more and more inaccessible to communities by these ideology driven





decision makers who control power in the state.

Children from marginalized communities already face severe shame from the poverty in their houses, their poorly educated relatives, their clothes, language, attendance etc. It is important to reinforce to these already emotionally and psychologically vulnerable children that their traditional foods are not just something to be proud of but also

nutritionally important for them. Unless children are taught good eating practices, the cycle of malnutrition will repeat endlessly. Soon we will have a majority of children from marginalized communities growing up stunted and undernourished,

anaemic and with a host of other nutritional deficiencies that will predispose them to both non-communicable as well as communicable diseases.

The taboos around food should be addressed seriously if malnutrition of all social groups and classes has to be addressed. Food cannot be symbolic of only one caste or religion and there has to be space for representation of diverse

foods as Indian. Neither can corporate dependent fortification, processing/ultra-processing, packaged foods, plant based foods, lab meat etc. be offered as solutions because they are not.

The basis for nutritional policies and educational messages should be science and not ideology or propaganda; traditional foods and foods systems should be invested in and encouraged; cattle slaughter bans across the country have to be lifted and; all nutrient dense food groups such as meat, dairy, eggs, vegetables, pulses, legumes etc. have to be subsidised. This is the only way to improve diversity of food consumed and increase quantities consumed. This in turn is the only sustainable and certain way of addressing malnutrition.

*(The writer is a public health doctor and researcher working on the social determinants of health, specifically caste and nutrition)*

## UPDATES ON PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS

### Adani's application for a licence set off a major electricity strike in Maharashtra

On 4th January, several parts of Maharashtra were plagued by long power outages as employees of Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited began a strike that they had planned to continue for 72 hours. Their grievance: the possibility that Adani Electricity Limited could get electricity distribution rights in areas currently served by the state company. In November, Adani Electricity Navi Mumbai



Limited, part of the Adani Group founded by billionaire Gautam Adani, approached the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission, seeking a distribution license for the “entire geographically contiguous area comprising of Mulund, Bhandup, part of Thane District, Navi-Mumbai, Panvel, Kharghar, Taloja and Uran”. The employees want Adani’s application to be cancelled because they fear it would lead to losses to the state-owned company. “The areas they want a license for is the main source of revenue for our company,” said Krushan Bhoir, general secretary of Maharashtra State Electricity Workers’ Federation. “If Adani gets a distribution license here, our state-owned company will collapse.” Bhoir said over 120,000 workers and engineers represented by 31 unions were part of the stir.



## **Farmers in Punjab protest discharge of industrial waste into water bodies**

Farmers under the banner of Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee (KMSC) staged a protest outside the Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) office here on the 46th day of their agitation on 11th January to highlight the issue of discharge of industrial waste into water bodies. The KMSC has been protesting outside the DC office since November 26 and have made three toll plazas in the district free for commuters since December 15. KMSC general secretary Sarwan Singh Pandher said: "Industries must be asked to treat waste-water before discharging it directly into nullahs, canals and even underground borewells." Pandher said groundwater reserves have been contaminated with highly dangerous chemicals and industrial waste. A large number of people in the state are dependent on groundwater for drinking, cooking and other purposes, he said, adding that the pollution control board had turned a blind eye to the unethical and illegal activities of industrial units which was a cause for concern. "We want the authorities to wake up from their slumber and realise that their children too are drinking the same polluted water," said Pandher.

## **Maharashtra-Chhattisgarh Adivasis on indefinite protest against bridge over Indravati River**

People from the Adivasi community of Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh are protesting against the construction of a bridge across River Indravati. The tribal community has been protesting for the past 14 days in the Maharashtra-Chhattisgarh border area indefinitely. A protest leader, Lalsu Nogoti said, "People from 20-25 villages from Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra are here. There are no basic facilities like hospitals, anganwadi etc here even after 75 years of independence. Such bridges are only to facilitate loot of 'Jal-Jungle-Zameen'. The protest began on Jan 04. We intend to protest indefinitely."

## **Protests in Haldwani against bulldozer raj**



The Supreme Court has stayed an order of the Uttarakhand high court directing the removal of occupants from land allegedly owned by the Railways in Haldwani. Over 4,000 families residing in the area near the Haldwani railway station were facing this eviction, despite claiming that they have been living on the land near the railway lines for over 40 years now. Reports said that government schools also came up on this land. The now-stayed high court order comes against the backdrop of a

longstanding legal tussle over the ownership of land in the region, which is home to a predominantly working-class population hailing from the Muslim community. Even assuming it is Railway land, Justice Kaul said, the fact that some have lived there for over 50 years and some have bought the land in auctions are facts that have to be dealt with through rehabilitation and acquisition of land respectively. Justice Oka also said that "it may not be correct to say that paramilitary forces have to be deployed to remove people who have been living there for decades."

## **CRPF lathi charge and impose section 144 on Tribals protesting against ECL project in Godda, Jharkhand**

A clash broke out between CRPF Jawans and Tribal villagers at Rajmahal project located in Lalmatia of Godda in Jharkhand on January 19. The clash broke out during the demarcation of land for the ECL coal project in the area. CRPF Jawans resorted to baton-charge to crush the protest. Many people including a policeman sustained injuries in the clash. Later, section 144 was imposed upon the protesting tribals.

## **Thousands of people protest against US backed coup in Peru**

Peru's democratically elected left-wing President Pedro Castillo was overthrown and arrested in a coup on December 7 by the right-wing-controlled congress, which has an approval rating of between 7% and 11%. Castillo is a teacher and union organizer from a rural, indigenous-descent community in a country whose political system has long been dominated by racist elites. As soon as Castillo entered office at the end of July 2021, far-right elements in the congress, loyal to the US-backed former dictator Alberto Fujimori, constantly tried to overthrow him and destabilize his government. The Fujimori dictatorship committed genocide, sterilization of indigenous women. They represent the far-right wing of Peruvian politics. The U.S. ambassador in Peru, a veteran CIA agent named Lisa Kenna, met with the country's defence minister just one day before Castillo was overthrown in a coup d'état and imprisoned without trial. The U.S. government has staunchly supported Peru's unelected coup regime, which declared a nation-wide "state of emergency" and deployed the military to the streets in an attempt to crush the protests. Most governments in Latin America have criticized or even refused to recognize Peru's unelected coup regime, including Mexico, Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Honduras, Venezuela, Cuba, and various Caribbean nations. The CIA has masterminded many such coups against democratically elected left-wing leaders in Latin America, from Guatemala's President Jacobo Árbenz in 1954 to Chile's President Salvador Allende in 1973.

# **UPDATES ON STUDENT MOVEMENTS**

(continuation)

## **Protest at Kasturba College for Women, Puducherry**

Students of Kasturba College for Women at Villianur, Puducherry recently staged protests flagging difficulties in higher education alleging negligence from the faculty. They also alleged the staff member displayed inappropriate behaviour and made personal comments regarding their clothing. Students blocked the Villianur Main Road on January 10. Moreover, students met the Deputy Collector and presented a memorandum to him in this regard. They also met the Director and Secretary of Higher Education and Education Minister who assured action.

## **Protest at Ekalavya Model Residential School, Telangana**

A group of nearly 50 female students from the Telangana State Ekalavya Model Residential School held a protest against the school authorities at the main junction in Dumala village, alleging harassment by the principal and warden, as well as raising concern regarding the poor quality of food served during lunch and dinner. After higher officials promised to take action against the principal, warden and attending staff, the students called off the protest.

## Protest at K R Narayanan National Film Institute

The students alleged that the director of the institute, Shankar Mohan, had been discriminating against the staff and the students on the basis of caste and forcing them into domestic labour. The college has been shut as part of an inquiry against the Director. A report by a two-member committee, found merit in some of the complaints against the institute's director. Students said admission was denied to a Dalit student in the editing department even when seats were vacant. Now, the students are organizing a series of lectures

by eminent personalities from the film industry called: The Art of Protest. The Art of Protest includes lectures and sessions by prominent personalities from the film industry both online and offline. Amid the caste row, the chairman of the institute, filmmaker Adoor Gopalakrishnan, has openly come out in support of the institute director. He slammed the students instead, saying "those who come to study won't organise such protests". His comment was also endorsed by the CM of Kerala Pinarayi Vijayan. The students' protests have at last culminated into the resignation of the director.



## BBC Documentary on Modi Screened Across India amid State Repression



**The Indian EXPRESS**  
JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

Pulse India Cities Opinion Entertainment Lifestyle Technology Videos Sports Audio Education Premium

TRENDING Daily Crossword New Offers Health Specials Union Budget Movie Reviews Daily Horoscope UPSC Special

Home / Cities / Bangalore / AISA screens BBC documentary on PM Modi in Bengaluru, students of various colleges participate

### AISA screens BBC documentary on PM Modi in Bengaluru, students of various colleges participate

The BBC documentary, India: The Modi Question, has been blocked by the Centre using the emergency provisions of the Information Technology Rules, 2021.

'India: The Modi Question'- a recent BBC documentary exposing the current PM and then Gujarat CM Narendra Modi's principal role in conducting the Gujarat pogrom of 2002 has been heavily censored. In defiance, student bodies affiliated to leftist parties across India have organised screenings of it in campuses. College authorities, police, and saffron goons in JNU, Jamia, AUD, DU, Central University of Rajasthan, HCU, Madras University, TISS, Himachal University etc. heckled and detained students over this.



**AISA Karnataka organized the screening for the first time in Bangalore on 28th January**

The 108th Indian Science Congress was held in the first week of January in Nagpur. This time the theme was 'Science and Technology for Sustainable Development with Women's Empowerment'. The event was inaugurated by PM Modi virtually with a call for 'Atmanirbhar India'. The call comes at a time when researchers across India are reeling under heavy fund cuts with a decreasing overall education budget. Keeping to the theme, Vijay Laxmi Saxena, general president of the Indian Science Congress Association, said women were empowered during the Vedic period adding to the list of tall claims about ancient India made in the Indian Science Congresses post-2014.



# ON THIS MONTH

**February 10, 1898 - Birthday - Eugen Berthold Friedrich Brecht**, a Marxist, known professionally as Bertolt Brecht, was a German theatre practitioner, playwright, and poet.

**February 13, 1911 - Birthday - Faiz Ahmad Faiz** was a Pakistani poet, and author of Urdu and Punjabi literature. Faiz was one of the most celebrated Pakistani Urdu writers of his time. Outside literature, he has been described as "a man of wide experience" having been a teacher, an army officer, a journalist, a trade unionist and a broadcaster.

**February 17, 1909 - Apache Chief Geronimo** (1829-1909) died while in captivity at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He led his people's defense of their homeland against the military might of the United States. The U.S. Army then sent 5,000 men to capture him.

**February 18, 1946 - The Royal Indian Navy mutiny** or revolt, also led the 1946 Naval Uprising, was an insurrection of Indian naval ratings, soldiers, police personnel and civilians against the colonial British government. From the initial flashpoint in Bombay, the revolt spread and found support throughout British India, from Karachi to Calcutta, and ultimately came to involve over 20,000 sailors in 78 ships and shore establishments. It was repressed brutally by the British.

**February 26, 1848 - The Communist Manifesto** pamphlet was published by two young communists, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. It advocated the abolition of all private property and a system in which workers own all means of production, land, factories and machinery.

**February 27, 1931- Chandra Shekhar Azad** was assassinated by the British Police. He was an Indian revolutionary who alongside Bhagat Singh, reorganized the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) into Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) after the death of its leaders, Ram Prasad Bismil, Roshan Singh, Rajendra Nath Lahiri, and Ashfaqulla Khan.

**February 28, 2002 - The 2002 Gujarat violence**, was a three-day period of anti-Muslim pogrom Gujarat. The burning of a train in Godhra carrying many Karsevaks allegedly triggered this. Following the initial incidents, there were further outbreaks of violence in Ahmedabad for three months; statewide, there were further outbreaks of violence against the minority Muslim population of Gujarat for the next year.

