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PR^OUT

A Journal of Proutistic Views and Neo-Humanistic Analysis

A Flawed Food Security System

The unseen impact of corruption on the millions of the deserving poor does not seem to affect our collective conscience.

We are losing a great opportunity to show we care.

PROUT

Progressive Utilization Theory

A
Vibrant
Magazine
which
Informs
&
Inspires

Cry of the Suffering Humanity

What is PROUT :

PROUT is an acronym for the Progressive Utilization Theory. Conceptualized in 1959 by Indian Philosopher Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, PROUT is a viable alternative to the outmoded capitalist and communist Socio-economic paradigms. Neither of these approaches has adequately met the physical, mental and spiritual needs of humanity. PROUT seeks a harmonious balance between economic growth, social development and cultural expression.

Combining the wisdom of spirituality, the struggle for self-reliance, and the sprit of economic democracy, Proutist intellectuals and activists are attempting to create a new civilizational discourse. PROUT news-magazine aims at conveying comprehensive and visionary goals of PROUT theory.

PROUT magazine invites scientists, economists, politicians, artists, intellectuals and others to join us in the creation of a new, spiritually bonded society by propagating and popularising unambiguous elevating thoughts. Through Proutistic views and Neo Humanistic analysis, it strives to serve as beacon for the benighted civilization of our times.

Main principles of PROUT & Neo-Humanism :

Neo-humanism expands the humanistic love for all human beings to include love and respect for all creation - plants, animals and even inanimate objects. Neo-humanism provides a philosophical basis for creating a new era of ecological balance, planetary citizenship and cosmic kinship.

Basic necessities guaranteed to all : People can not strive toward their highest human aspirations if they are lacking the basic requirements of life. PROUT believes that access to food, shelter, clothing, education and medical care are fundamental human rights which must be guaranteed to all.

Balanced economy : Prout advocates regional self-reliance, cooperatively owned and managed businesses, local control of large scale key industries, and limits on the individual accumulation of excessive wealth.

Women's Right : PROUT encourages the struggle against all forms of violence and exploitation used to suppress women. PROUT's goal is coordinated cooperation, with equal rights between men and women.

Cultural Diversity : In the spirit of universal fellowship PROUT encourages the protection and cultivation of local culture, language, history and tradition.

World Government : PROUT supports the creation of world government with a global constitution and a common penal code.

For both civilization and science, intellectual knowledge is indispensable.

Spiritual or intuitional development is possible through the happy blending between civilization and science. - Shrii P. R. Sarkar

PROUT

February 2012

Cry of the Suffering Humanity

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FOOD SECURITY

A Flawed Food Security System

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Fundamental Principles :

1. No individual should be allowed to accumulate any physical wealth without the clear permission or approval of the collective body.
2. There should be maximum utilization and rational distribution of all mundane, supra mundane and spiritual potentialities of the universe.
3. There should be maximum utilization of the physical, metaphysical and spiritual potentialities of unit and collective body of the human society.
4. There should be a proper adjustment amongst these physical, metaphysical, mundane, supra mundane and spiritual utilizations.
5. The method of utilization should vary in accordance with the changes in time, space and person and the utilization should be of progressive nature.

There must be close correlation amongst PROUT, Neohumanism and spiritual practices. The balance amongst these three will elevate the structure of human beings to its existential status. We cannot neglect PROUT, Neohumanism or spiritual practices. This balance is to be maintained for all. It will create good will and elevate the standard of human beings so that they can render more service.

- Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

In a World of Plenty Why Poverty?

Today in the world as per UN Report, 1 % of the world population own 40 % of the global wealth, the richest 2 % own more than 51 % and the richest 10 % own 85 %, while 50 % of the world population own less than 1 % of global wealth. In a 2006 study it was estimated to be \$ 125 trillion. With 7 billion people in the world, and assuming the same value for today, mathematically every person's share comes to \$ 17,857. Even if we leave half of the world's wealth untouched, it is \$ 8929, roughly Rs. 4.5 lakhs, for every individual to own and derive sufficient purchasing power out of it for his day to day needs. In this backdrop, the inhumanity of poverty in the world gets singularly pronounced when we know that three richest people in the world possess more financial assets than the poorest 10% of the world's population combined. And as Shrii P. R. Sarkar the founder of PROUT said : "Poverty and misery of people in any country are the sins of the leaders. Most crimes throughout the world are committed due to poverty, except in countries where the minimum necessities of life have been met. True leaders should always be vigilant and think how to work best for the human society; they must be ever cautious that under their guidance the people are not led to darkness, death and



Scene in Calcutta in 1945 during Bengal famine

immorality". Therefore the first step in the direction of eradicating poverty, which is the scourge of humanity and a blot on civilization, is to gradually reduce this income disparity between people and nations. In society its economic structure should be reorganized, exploitation be totally banned and a reasonable ceiling enforced on individual wealth holdings. To begin with this surplus unutilized wealth with rational distribution will meet the minimum human requirements of people irrespective of their merit and station in life. Later with greater amenities being generated with Proutistic economic principles, minimum requirements will keep on increasing from age to age and then a stage will soon come when meritorious people are given maximum amenities for their contributions to society. This can only be done if those in power are moralists and have genuine love for the people suffering from hunger and poverty?



LETTERS

E mail : prout.am@gmail.com

BRIGHT FUTURE OF HUMANITY

Shrii PR Sarkar's article on minimum requirements and maximum amenities is full of profound wisdom. World leaders should consider these ideas based on Proutist economy seriously as capitalist economy has failed to meet the requirements of the vast multitudes of masses.

Pratik Vrata, Kanpur

NEO HUMANIST POET

The article on Rabindranath Tagore by Dr. Singh was full of details about this well known personality, with specific references to his neo humanistic qualities. More and more people are getting deeply inspired by his works which is like a beacon in the darkness in today's world.

Gora Sen, Malda

FOOD SHARING AND SAVING

The well researched article by Devinder Sharma is an eye opener. When the crisis looms large before humanity about acute food shortage, it's time the present system of access and distribution is changed radically to look after the food needs of the 9 billion people in the year 2050. Otherwise it will be too late.

Samuel Barnes, On email

DYNAMICALLY ACTIVE

With today's technological environment, it surely is time to be dynamically active with solution based understanding of the problems of the day caused by greed based capitalism. As the author rightly warns, no capitalist will simply hand over his wealth and power, there is a fight ahead.

Sonu Pathak, Mumbai

WHAT REVOLUTION LOOKS LIKE

Chris Hedges paints a vivid picture for our benefit. His scenario is true to a word.

Gopal Shresta, Kathmandu

WHY ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY

Dada Vedaprajinananda rightly exposes the fact that political democracy is meaningless without

economic democracy. Political democracy's bedrock is capitalism which can spend millions to have candidates elected who will further their selfish interests. Whereas economic democracy also ensures that people can vote in the affairs of the management of their work place. This can only happen if the structure of these enterprises, employing the people is changed.

Jane Wu, Taiwan on email

MULTIPLE RETAIL

Mahesh Prasad has rightly stated that any economic reform must be fair to all and boost employment of those semi literate. To this extent, the FDI scheme in the retail sector appears flawed.

Sarju Prasad, Faridabad

FUTURE TRENDS

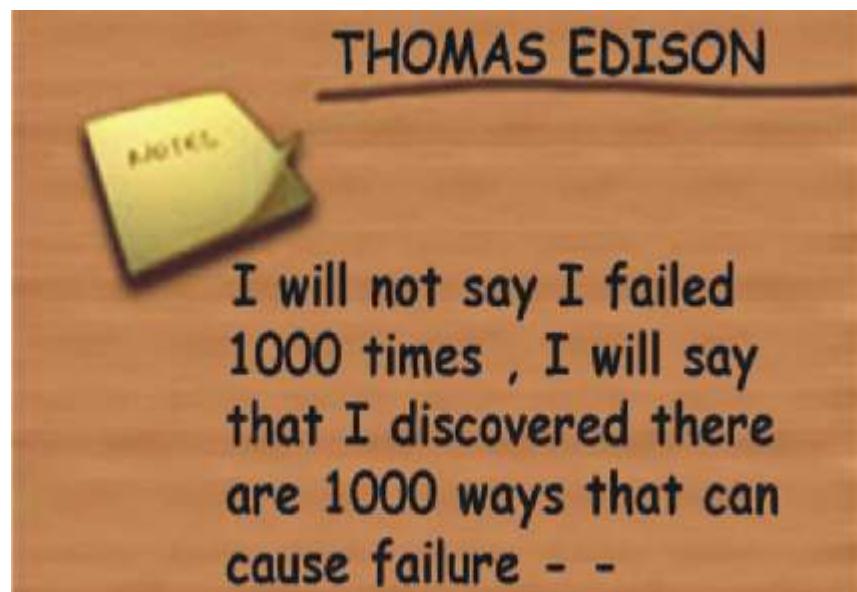
No doubt, shocking but true. – Celente's prediction. The writing is on the wall literally - as we have seen in the recent Wall Street developments.

Swaminathan, Coimbatore

YOUNG BRAVEHEART

How wonderful to read the story about such a young man who gave his life to save others. My heart goes out to the young wife and child. The picture says it all. May the Almighty bless both of them to lead their future lives meaningfully. Thank you Prout for publishing such a beautiful story.

Lajwanti Mohan, Mumbai



Articles / Suggestions Invited

We invite your articles, comments, letters, wit & humour materials etc. on any aspect of human life including Spiritual, Socio-economic, Political, Cultural, Ideological, Educational and local self government. Clips, photographs and cartoons are also welcome.

Please send them at the following address :

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The Snow Birds

It had snowed very hard. Ralph and Edward, who were visiting Grandma in the country, had to stay in the house all day. When they went to bed it was still snowing, and every time they woke up during the night, they could hear the wind sighing and whistling around the house, and through the branches of the old pine trees.

But the next morning the sun was shining brightly. Such a glorious day! How the branches of the pine trees did sparkle. "It looks as if they had been sprinkled with gold dust and diamonds," exclaimed Ralph.

"Oh Grandma! Please do hurry breakfast. We are going out to build a fort," cried the boys, bursting into the dining-room. Grandma smiled and told them to eat a good breakfast, for building a fort was hard work. They were soon out in the snow, and what a splendid time they did have. The fort did not grow very fast, for they had to stop so often to snow-ball each other.

When Grandma called them in to dinner they wondered where the time had gone since breakfast. After dinner, Ralph was looking out of the window, when he spied two little birds cuddled up on a branch of a pine tree. "Oh, Edward! come here," he called. "See those poor little birds. They look half frozen and so hungry." "Poor little things," replied Edward. "Doesn't it make you feel mean to think what a jolly time we had this morning out of the snow which has covered up the places where they get their food?"

"Let us get some food from Grandma and throw it out to them," said Ralph. "Perhaps they will find it." The little birds were soon chirping and flying about merrily and Ralph said it sounded as if they kept saying, "Thank you."

Will not other little children be as kind as Ralph and Edward?



**If winter comes
can spring be
far behind?**

William Shakespeare

Moving Towards The Welfare of All

SHRII PRABHAT RANJAN SARKAR

All the social, economic and geographical forces that normally motivate human beings are guided by dogma

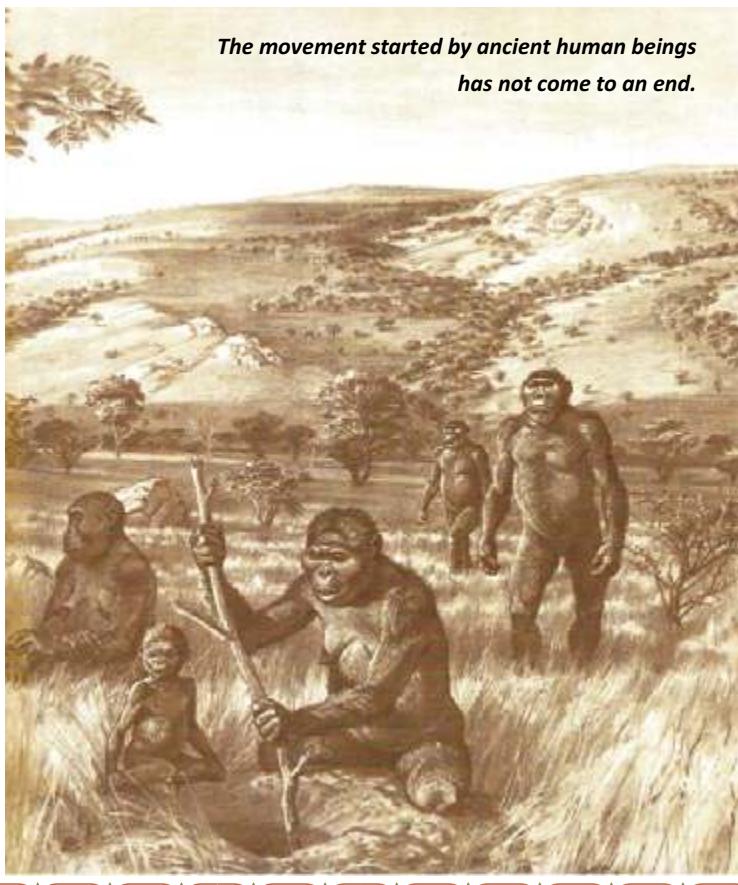
Dynamism is the essential characteristic of this world. The world is called jagat because it is always in motion. Just as there is individual movement, there is movement in collective life as

well. This very movement requires three things: First, an inspiration – an impetus from behind. When one person stops moving, another will have to push from behind, saying, “Move ahead!” Secondly, the capacity for movement – that is, the one who moves forward must have the requisite strength to do so. In the absence of adequate strength, how can one move forward? Thirdly, the goal of movement. These three factors are absolutely essential for any movement.

The movement that the ancient human beings started, collectively as well as individually, has not yet come to an end. Nor will there be any comma, semi-colon, colon or period to check that movement; it is uninterrupted.

Now the question arises, by what inspiration, by what strength, and towards which goal do human beings move? It has been observed that human movement is inspired by two ideas. In my recent book *Sabhyatár Ádibindu*: Ráh I have used two terms for these ideas, átma-sukha tattva [principle of selfish pleasure] and sama-samája tattva [principle of social equality].

Whatever human beings do motivated by átma-sukha tattva is



for the sake of pleasure. This principle of selfish pleasure rests on dogma. All the social, economic and geographical forces that normally motivate human beings are guided by dogma; and this dogma in its turn is entirely based on átma-sukha tattva. Human beings yield to this dogma with the sole intention of attaining selfish pleasures; even educated people knowingly submit to dogma. They know that they are surrendering their intellect to dogma, and that the outcome will be undesirable; they know and understand everything – why, even then, do they knowingly submit to it? They are all deliberate sinners and intentionally accept dogmas as truth. They observe that these dogmas are based on átma-sukha tattva; but they think, "I don't care whether it does good or harm to others, because at least I have got some pleasure out of it!" Being motivated by this idea, they enslave themselves to dogmas.

In the civilized world, even educated people knowingly follow dogmas because they have a desire in the back of their minds to attain some mundane pleasure in this physical world. Even in this civilized world where so much progress has been made in the field of knowledge, people are still following these dogmas, as if they are blind. The snares of dogma will have to be shattered to pieces; the iron prison gates of dogma will have to be crushed to dust.

The second principle is sama-samája tattva. Parama Purusa [Supreme Consciousness] is the goal of everyone. We are all moving towards Him, both individually and collectively; but we will not be able to move ahead if we compromise with all the disparities and inequalities of collective life. We should eradicate all these inequalities, while at the same time we move together towards our

spiritual goal. The progress of all would be accelerated if the inequalities were uprooted, if this were the motivation behind our movement towards the Supreme. We may not attain selfish pleasure, but we will enjoy spiritual peace, and pure spiritual bliss in the realization of Cosmic grace.

So the endeavour to advance towards the ultimate reality by forming a society free from all inequalities, with everyone of the human race moving in unison, is called sama-samája tattva. That is why I say categorically, that we must totally reject all those hypocritical ideas which are

contrary to this sama-samája tattva, and we must welcome all those ideas which will help human beings to be established in it. All opposing theories must be removed mercilessly, just like thorns from our path.

And in this process we must not give indulgence to any dogmas or supernatural ideas. This should be the task of today's human beings; all people should combine their efforts and strive unitedly to accomplish that end.

It is futile to think of an individual's past; we must not discriminate whether one is black or white. We should only remember

that we must establish ourselves in the ultimate reality, by forming a new social order based on sama-samája tattva. When we have embraced the ideal of sama-samája tattva, when we have attained the physical strength, psychic intellect and spiritual wisdom to materialize it – should we not play a successful role to implement this noble and sublime ideal? Our coming to this earth and our remaining here, our every breath, every vibration of our existence – should this not attain supreme fulfilment? Should we not, by utilizing all our physical, psychic and spiritual powers, attain the pinnacle of human glory?



A Flawed Food Security System

The unseen impact of corruption on the millions of the deserving poor does not seem to affect our collective conscience. We are losing a great opportunity to show we care.

I have always believed that food security is one of the most important manifestations of development for any community. Food security is not something that happens as a stand-alone phenomenon. It reflects the priorities of people and their spending capacities, the availability of and access to food grains, agricultural yields of the land, the social policies of the State, and more importantly, societal commitment to ensure that no person goes to bed hungry. It is with this understanding that I agreed to investigate the corruption

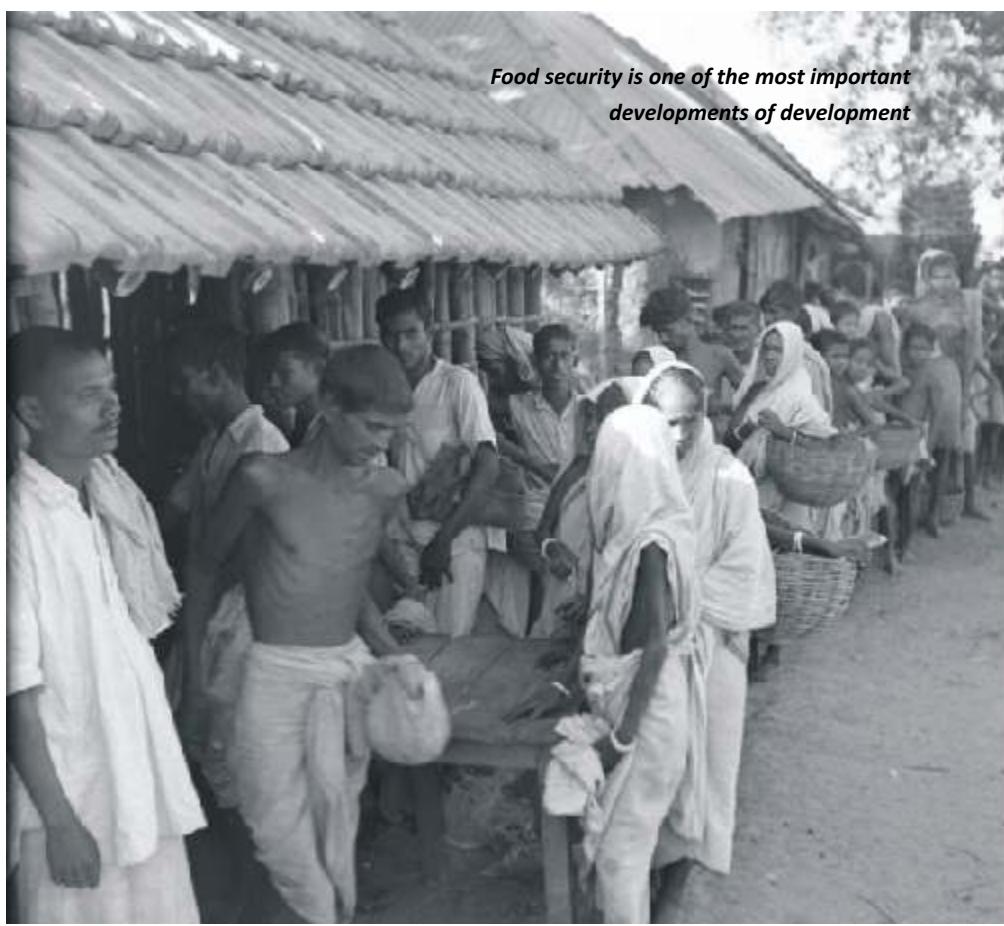
and mal-administration in the Public Distribution System (PDS) when the (then) Lokayukta of Karnataka asked me last year.

Apart from my own stand against corruption, I also saw this as an opportunity to help and improve the efficiency as well as the effectiveness of the Public Distribution System (PDS) in the state, and do my bit for the issue of food security to the citizenry, especially for those who live in rural areas. Despite my previous experience in the office of the Lokayukta, investigating allegations of corruption in the Health & Medical Education sectors, I must confess that I was not prepared for what I saw.

India's PDS is world's largest subsidized food distribution system, operating out of 500,000 Fair Price Shops (FPS). I am fascinated on why the planners named them 'Fair Price' shops! The very basis of my investigation is to see if they are really fair in letter and spirit.

I began the process many months ago in September 2010, by visiting few shops in Heggadadevanakote Taluk of Mysore District. I was accompanied by the local officials and went to a small village with a

Food security is one of the most important developments of development

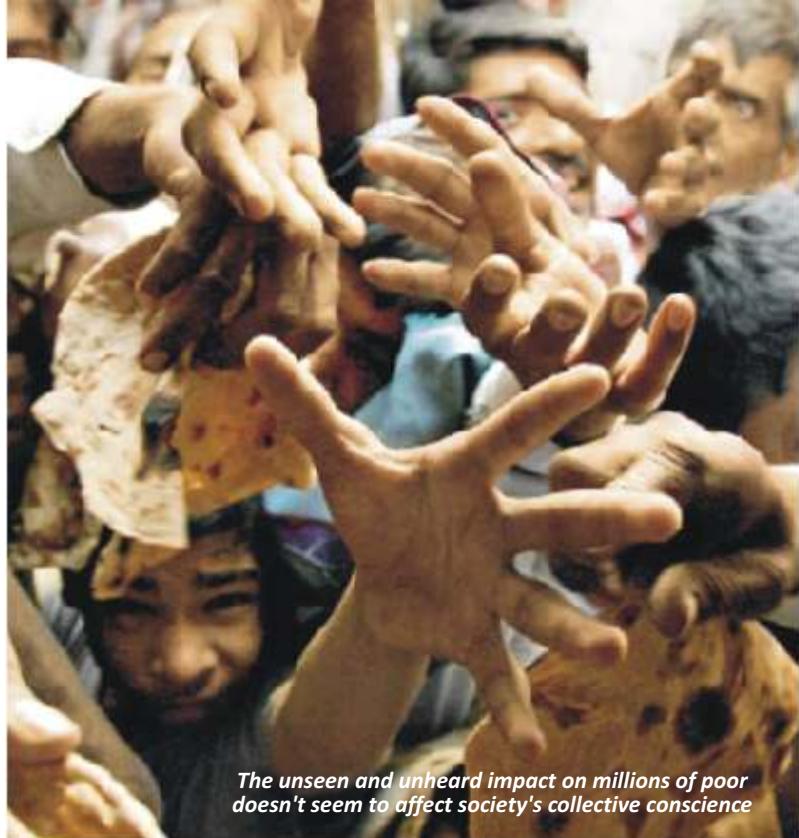


population of around two thousand people with a few tribal colonies surrounding it. The FPS in the village is run by the local Farmers' Society and I had heard of some irregularities there.

The shop was shabbily maintained, with food grains lying all around the place. The key person had done a disappearing act on hearing of our visit and had left his assistant to face the flak. People of the area were waiting for their rations to be given to them, and on casual enquiry I found that none of them were being given their rightful entitlement. People with the Antyodaya card, entitled to 29 kg of rice and 6 kg of wheat each month at Rs 3 and Rs 2 respectively, were only being given 25 kg of rice at Rs 3.25 and 3 kg of wheat at Rs 2.25. People were not even aware of what they were supposed to get and at what rates. They simply took what was given at the price which the shopkeeper told them. None of them realized that they weren't being given a receipt for the amount paid. The local people got wind of my visit and a small crowd had gathered outside the shop to relate their woes.

An elderly and nearly-blind lady slowly and hesitantly made her way towards me. She held my hands and pleaded to instruct the officials to issue her a card. She was a widow, more than 70 years old, and with no income, all of which would entitle her to get the Antyodaya card. The State has consciously created the Antyodaya system as a social security measure, specifically targeting the elderly, widows and the destitute. I turned around and asked the concerned food inspector how was it that this deserving old woman was excluded? His immediate response was that she did not come to the Taluk Office to get herself registered. Oh, if only this old lady had the means to travel 20 km to reach the Taluk office, negotiate the corrupt system and get her rightful due, why would we even need a Social Security System then? As I turned around and tried to give an answer to the lady, she, very innocently asked me what else other than being poor, neglected and blind did she have to be to get her share of rations. I wish I could answer that! This was not an isolated example.

A few months later I had a similar experience in a poor neighborhood within Gulbarga city. Another elderly lady aged around 70 years came to present her complaint to me. She too was a widow, with a mentally retarded son who was around 30 years of age. Having lost her husband 10 years ago, she was left with no social or economic support. All that she had was the sympathy and support of her friendly but equally poor neighbors. She came up to me with them asking for a BPL card.



The unseen and unheard impact on millions of poor doesn't seem to affect society's collective conscience

It was evident that her poor friends were more socially conscious than our state and its huge machinery. I was painfully aware that she deserved an Anytodyaya card and not just a BPL card. The system had completely ignored her because she was not loud enough or rich enough to bribe the concerned officials into giving her a card that she rightfully deserved. Comparing these two incidents with one another that I had experienced in Hassan left me feeling angry and helpless. The system is so irresponsible, irresponsible, and helpless that I could do nothing to help them.

In Hassan I met a ration shop owner who had a 15-acre estate nearby and a huge palatial house but still carried a BPL card. I know from my own investigations that the entire process of identifying the poor in the state is flawed and irrational. We not only have a huge number of rich people carrying a BPL card, but also some very genuine poor who do not have a card at all, or have an APL card. Who in the system should be held accountable for this state of affairs? Is it the politicians who think of eliminating poverty as mere schemes to be announced as electoral promises, or the bureaucracy which is caught up in the rules and regulations that they devise, or society itself which has forgotten that as citizens we not only deserve good governance but are also entitled to it?

It seems so paradoxical that the whole country is now obsessed with the scams that break out each day. It is as though one must siphon away millions of rupees to be



The Slap that Failed to Shake the Nation

For a country reeling under an unprecedented price rise, corruption and economic policies that benefit only 1 per cent of the population, 'the slap' was an expression of the simmering anger and increasing frustration

The day Indian Food and Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar received 'the slap', I and Sharad Joshi were speaking at a national conference of farmers in Haridwar. A little after lunch, Swami Ramdev walked in to take his seat on the dais and expressed his apologies for being late. He said he was late because he had got busy responding to media questioning on the thappad.

The moment he gave out the news of the 'the slap' there was a round of applause. I think the clapping and cheering that followed was louder than the applause any one of us had received during and after our presentations. Meanwhile, the stream of messages on my mobile seemed never ending. My twitter too was flooded with congratulatory messages. I am aware that howsoever we may strongly condemn the incident, which was the politically correct thing to do, the fact remains that there was a sense of jubilation all around.

For a country reeling under an unprecedented price rise, corruption and economic policies that benefit only 1 per cent of the population, 'the slap' was an expression of the simmering anger and increasing frustration. While the more daring have picked up the gun (in the Maoist-affected areas) against the inequalities being continuously perpetuated with impunity, the liberal and the educated in the urban centers too are getting restless. I agree with Shobha De when she says 'this is not about Sharad Pawar. He just happened to be the man at the receiving end of the most recent slap'. It certainly could have happened to anyone, including the Prime Minister. Blame for being politically incorrect, but the self-righteousness and 'we know what we are doing' kind of approach that ruling party politicians exhibit day in and day out smacks of arrogance. The 'tu-tu-main-main' that follows daily on the TV shows have turned into the biggest soap operas where the spokesperson of all political parties simply try to outwit the other to establish his/her shirt is cleaner than the other's. Not realising that every prime time TV show actually helps build up the

disgust and anger against the political class. Not only the politicians, even the economists and the specialists who are regulars on the TV shows behave like the committed voters, like the people political parties bring in to listen to leaders at political rallies. They know what is expected of them, and they deliver it faithfully. I am sure if they were to be ferried to a Congress rally, they would shout Congress Zindabad. The next time, if the BJP is in power, you can expect them to shift gears and not shy from raising BJP Zindabad slogans. Similarly, in the studio they know what is expected from them, and deliver it faithfully to get their fifteen seconds of fame.

It is very rare to see an expert on a TV show who speaks from conviction and is basing his analysis on ground realities. Nevertheless, returning back to food inflation, for several years now Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee and Food & Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar have been setting fresh deadlines for bringing down inflation. Chief Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister Dr Kaushik Basu too has been making statements which have little relevance to the realities and which clearly show that his finger is not on the right nerve. Certainly people are fed up and except for the media no one takes these deadlines seriously. They know that the leaders are hiding their inability to stem the rot in the system and are refraining from a crackdown against the stockist, black marketers and speculators.

Roughly a year back, I remember when I was asked by the media to respond to the UPA government's latest claim that food prices will ease by April. Although food inflation had risen to 17.87 per cent for the week ending Feb 20, 2010, Kaushik Basu was quoted as saying that the food price have come down, and the high inflation is because of the base effect. Analysts said that the April harvest would be crucial, and the pressure on inflation will ease after the new crop flows into the markets. I made it clear that food inflation will not ebb after April. In fact, I went a step ahead and said that any strong

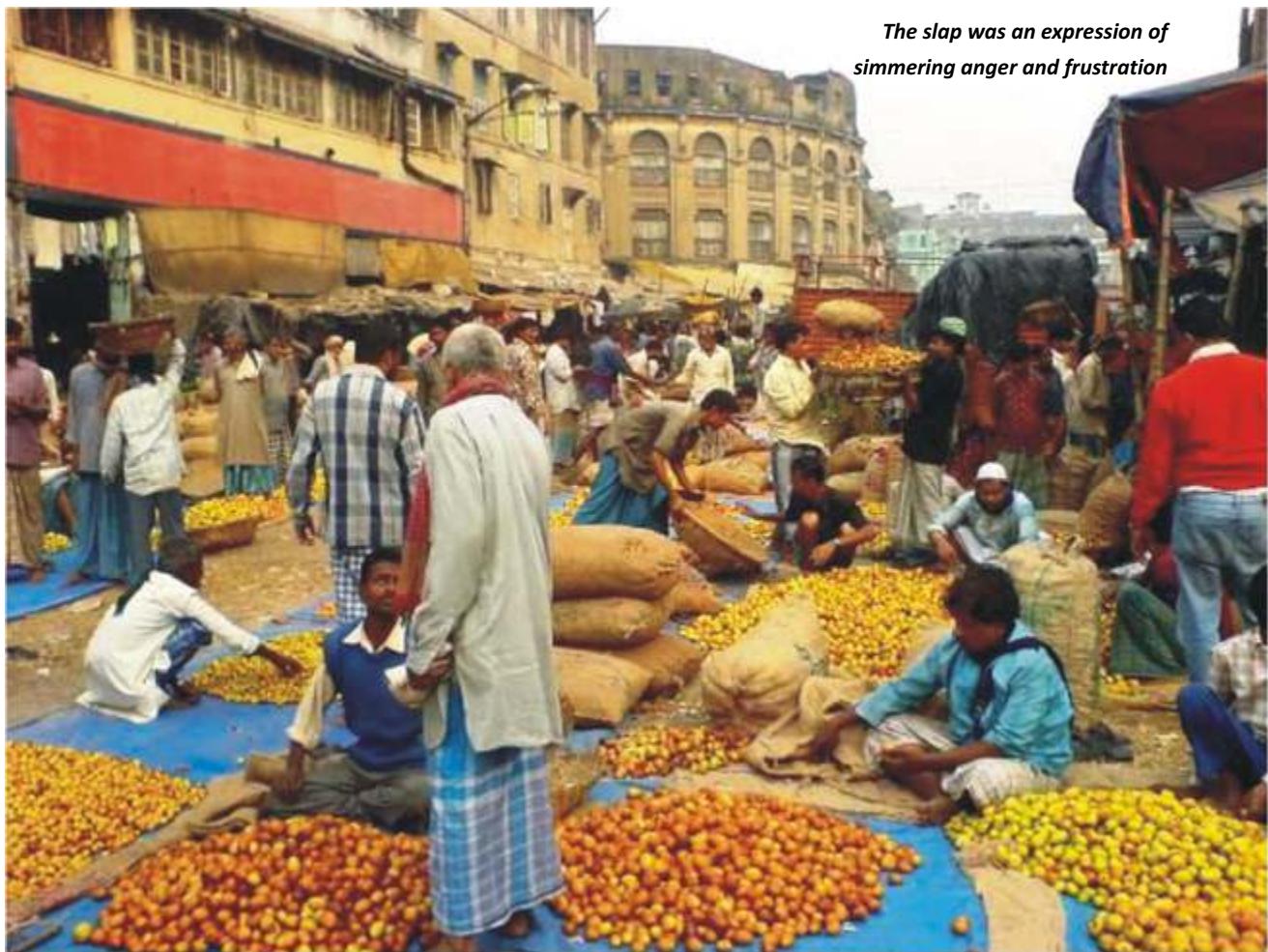
government, if it wasn't faced with the compulsions of coalition politics, would have removed the Food & Agriculture Minister by now. He deliberately makes statements that have helped raise the prices of sugar and made India pay through its nose for wheat imports. The UPA therefore cannot wait any longer. It must get rid of Sharad Pawar, and you will see the prices coming down. I wasn't wrong. Even Sonia Gandhi had reportedly told a group of visiting farmers and activists that she is helpless when it comes to agriculture. However, a few days after the thappad incident, I was expecting some visible changes in the way Agriculture Minister has been operating. But nothing seems to have changed. It is business as usual for Sharad Pawar. In the midst of the logjam over FDI in retail, he said: "The critics are overlooking the fact that the policy's main objective is to enhance the financial ability of the farmers who are responsible for the produce. If the farmers' produce is directly lifted from the fields, with them receiving higher remuneration for it, why should there be any objections?" he asked. "It has always been my endeavour to address farmers' interests." This is simply untrue.

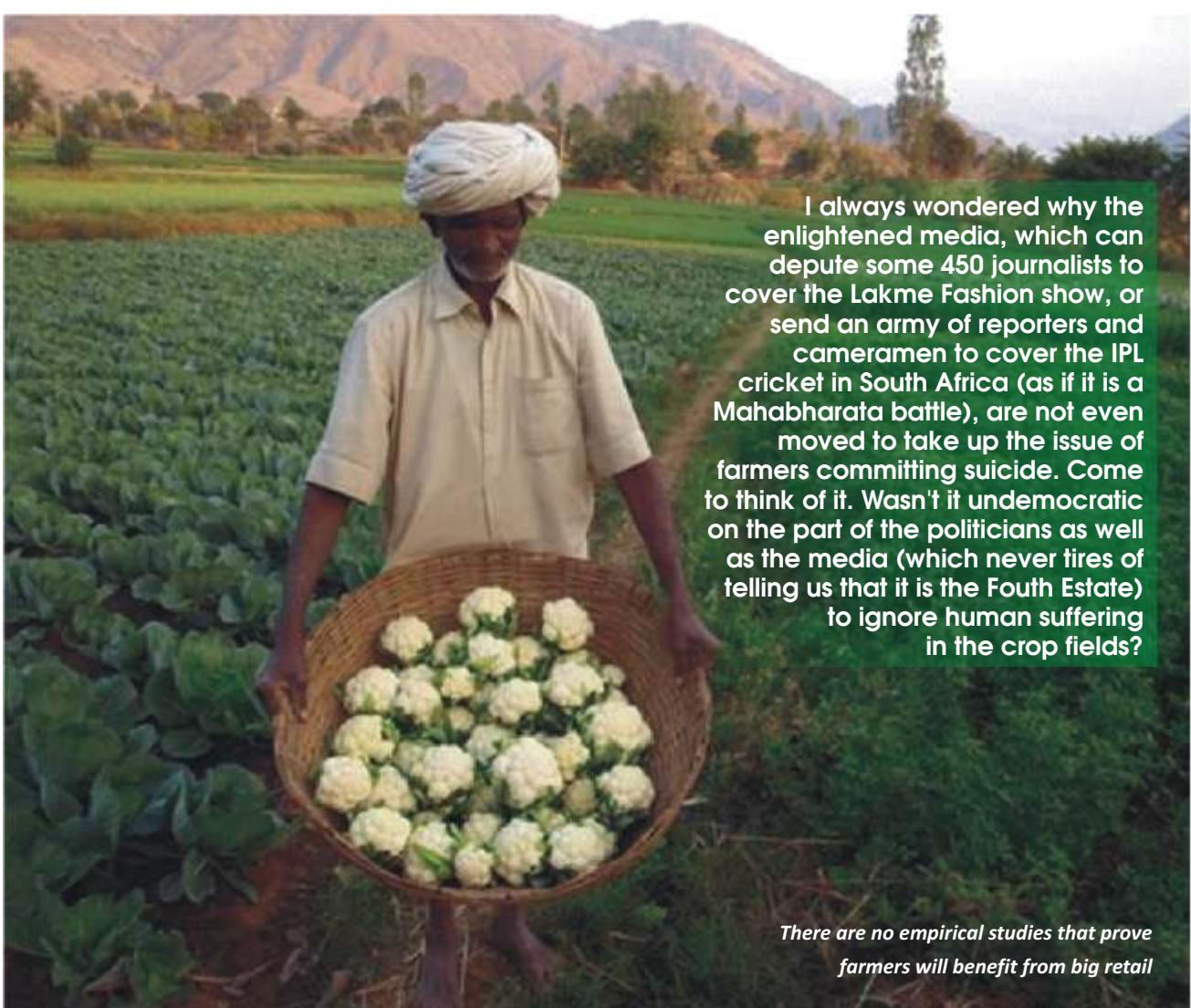
There is no empirical study that details the benefits that have accrued to farmers from big retail. Nor did Sharad Pawar or for that matter his Cabinet colleague

Anand Sharma has held any wider public discussions on the subject. Somehow, ministers have increasingly begun to believe that once they are elected they have the right to do anything in the name of 'inclusive growth'. The problem is that if the people protest outside parliament, the media chastises them saying street protests cause inconvenience. If parliamentarians protest inside, it is the wastage of public money. How and where people express their dissent?

And this brings me to another burning issue that many felt was an 'unhealthy' and 'undemocratic' trend. I am talking of the spate of editorials on Jarnail Singh's bold initiative a few years back of hurling his shoe at P Chidambaram, the Home Minister. I am aware that it will be politically incorrect to admire the trajectory the shoe took. But notwithstanding what our political leaders (and the so called enlightened media) believe, the fact remains that the nation is finding it a simple way to express their anger. After all there has to be an outlet for a deep-rooted anger and disgust. If democracy provides no avenues for people to voice their concern, people will eventually find other ways to make their voice heard. If shoe hurling and 'the slap' is undemocratic, is committing suicide democratic? In the 2004 general elections (correct me if I am wrong), the then chief minister of Andhra Pradesh

The slap was an expression of simmering anger and frustration





I always wondered why the enlightened media, which can depute some 450 journalists to cover the Lakme Fashion show, or send an army of reporters and cameramen to cover the IPL cricket in South Africa (as if it is a Mahabharata battle), are not even moved to take up the issue of farmers committing suicide. Come to think of it. Wasn't it undemocratic on the part of the politicians as well as the media (which never tires of telling us that it is the Fourth Estate) to ignore human suffering in the crop fields?

There are no empirical studies that prove farmers will benefit from big retail

Chandrababu Naidu witnessed a piquant situation when a farmer stood up in a political rally being addressed by him and drank pesticide. He died before he could reach the hospital. Imagine, if he had instead thrown his chappal at Mr Naidu, it would have caused commotion in the crowd, and more attention to the cause for which he eventually died. Not only in Andhra Pradesh, farmers all over the country have tried to send a strong political signal by taking their own lives. Over the years, when all democratic norms failed to draw attention, they took their own lives. By committing suicide they actually delivered what should be seen as a powerful statement. They failed here too. The world's largest democracy did not take notice.

Since 1997, the National Crime Records Bureau tells us that over 2.5 lakh farmers have committed suicide. I always thought that suicide was an undemocratic tool being used by the voiceless to make their voice heard. But what puzzles me is that why none of the political parties are taking it up as if it was a question of life and death (which you will agree, it is). After all, people are taking the extreme fatal step as an expression of their anger. I always wondered why the enlightened media, which can depute some 450 journalists to cover the Lakme Fashion show, or send an army of reporters and cameramen to cover the IPL cricket in South Africa (as if it is a Mahabharata battle),

are not even moved to take up the issue of farmers committing suicide. Come to think of it. Wasn't it undemocratic on the part of the politicians as well as the media (which never tires of telling us that it is the Fourth Estate) to ignore human suffering in the crop fields? Media has no regrets when the farmer took their own lives but it certainly would have been furious and "want these perpetrators to be booted out of society" if they had instead thrown shoes. Imagine if the 2.5 lakh farmers had not died but instead flung their chappals/jutis, wouldn't it have been a more civilised form of angst?

Please do not get me wrong. I am not advocating throwing shoes to be a democratic form of dissent. But at the same time, I want you to think, and think deeply, as to why this democracy finds nothing disturbing when farmers kill themselves in order to draw the attention of powers that be to their plight. Such arrogance and indifference in a people's democracy can't go on for long. "The slap" and the chappal cannot be simply dismissed as the work of a mentally unstable person. It is an expression of growing anger among the masses. Let us not wait for an Arab spring to force the Indian democracy to truly respond and represent the people. It is a question of the forgotten 99 per cent.

Devinder Sharma is a food and agriculture policy analyst. His writings focus on the links between biotechnology, intellectual property rights, food trade and poverty. His blog is Ground Reality



Bitter Dispute Among Indian Elites

| The heated rhetoric emanating from both the Tamil and Kerala elite has created a charged political atmosphere in the border areas

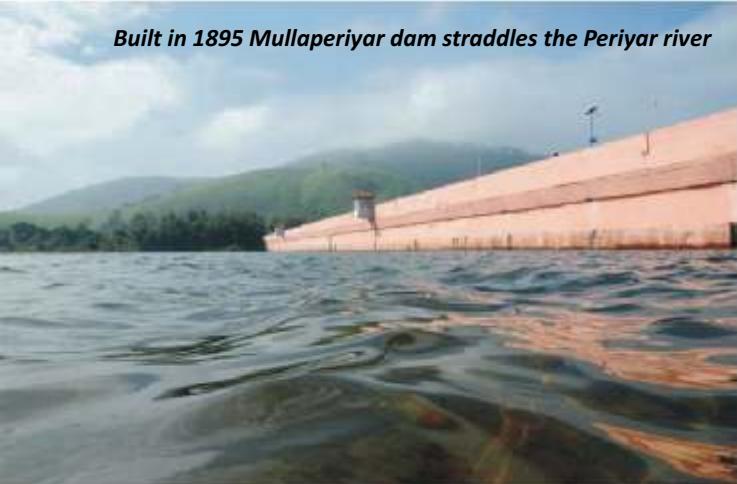
A long-running dispute over a 116-year-old dam located in Kerala, just across the border from the neighboring southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, is fanning national-ethnic frictions, as the state's rival ruling elites seek to exploit genuine popular concerns about dam safety and water availability for crass political ends.

The dispute picked up political steam in 2006 after the Kerala Assembly passed an amendment to the Kerala Irrigation and Water Conservation Act that declared the Mullaperiyar dam "endangered" because of the threat of earthquakes.

After last year's state assembly election, the Congress-led United Democratic Front government, which rests on a narrow majority, demanded the dam's water level be reduced to 120 feet from the current 136 feet. However, the long-term solution proposed by Kerala's elite is the demolition of the existing dam and the building of a new one further downstream—i.e., deeper inside Kerala.

Built by the British colonial administration in 1895, the Mullaperiyar dam straddles the Periyar River. Technically the dam belongs to Kerala, but it is used to divert waters for irrigation purposes to the arid southern regions of Tamil Nadu. Under a lease agreement with Kerala, the Tamil Nadu government is the custodian of

Built in 1895 Mullaperiyar dam straddles the Periyar river



the dam and retains effective control over its operation, while paying taxes to Kerala for water and land use and for electricity generation.

The Tamil Nadu government and all sections of the Tamil Nadu political establishment are united in charging that the safety issue has been trumped up by the Kerala elite with the aim of gaining a chokehold on the river water that is crucial for agriculture in Tamil Nadu. According to the Tamil Nadu government and many of its supporters, the fact that the dam has existed for more than a century without breaking apart is "proof enough" of its safety.

The new dam advocated by the Kerala government would not eliminate the danger posed by earthquakes, as it would be built within the same seismically active region. As pointed out by environmental activists, "The dam would be subject to the same problem of seismicity". Furthermore, "the proposed new dam is in the heart of Periyar Tiger Reserve and it will submerge hundreds of acres of forest and destroy bio-diversity in the area." It will also inundate farmlands and villages, forcing their evacuation and thereby destroying the livelihoods of many peasants and other toilers.

The heated rhetoric emanating from both the Tamil and Kerala elite has created a charged political atmosphere in the border areas. There have been reports of tens of Tamil workers and their families being driven from their homes in Kerala and, in a similar fashion, of chauvinists in Tamil Nadu attacking buses traveling to Kerala and shops owned by Keralites. Although there is as yet no evidence tying these attacks to any particular political party or parties, all sections of the political elite in both states bear responsibility for the raking up of chauvinist sentiments.

Being water-deficient, the state of Tamil Nadu is heavily dependent upon irrigation from rivers that originate in the neighboring states of Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh for its agricultural production. At various times, all sections of the state's ruling elite have exploited this water dependency for political purposes, so as to divert attention from the pressing problems of poverty, economic deprivation and inadequate

infrastructure that afflict the state's population. The state is currently embroiled in water disputes with all the neighboring states.

There is no doubt that the century-old Mullaperiyar dam does indeed pose a deadly hazard, as it is repeatedly subject to earthquake tremors. According to studies performed by seismic experts, the dam would not be able to withstand a tremor greater than 6.5 on the Richter scale. In 2011, a tremor measuring 3.9 was registered, as well as numerous other earthquakes of lesser magnitude.

When safety concerns were raised by the Kerala state government after a minor earthquake in 1979, the Tamil Nadu government was obliged to lower the storage level from 142.2 feet to the present 136 feet to facilitate safety repairs.

Asked to intervene in the dispute, India's Supreme Court appointed a five-member "empowered committee," mostly composed of bureaucrats, to examine the issues. It subsequently rejected Kerala's

of protests demanding the building of the new dam and in doing so has joined hands with all sort of right-wing bourgeois and chauvinist outfits, including its ostensible arch-rival, the Congress Party.

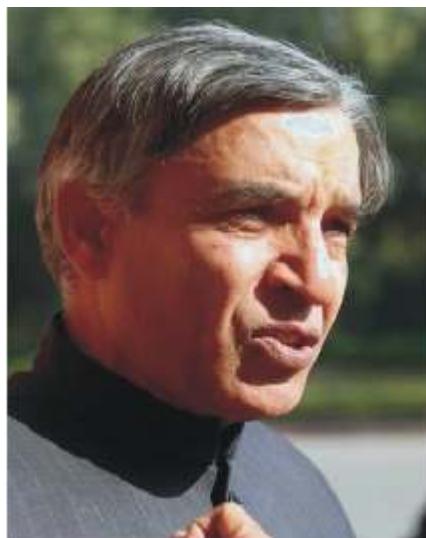
Under the leadership of V.S. Achutanandan, who headed the state's CPM-led coalition government till it was defeated in last May's election, the CPM has spearheaded agitations in the border Idukki District that have created an atmosphere of fear among Tamil workers. Achutanandan has also attacked Kerala's UDF government from the right, charging that it is not defending Kerala's "interests" with sufficient vigor.

Achutanandan has criticized the CPM Politburo for failing to champion the Mullaperiyar dam agitation, arguing that by doing so it is failing to voice the "sentiments of the people [of Kerala]."

The CPM's central leadership has effectively said nothing about the dam issue, not out of any principled opposition to the chauvinistic agitation of its state unit



Kerala Chief Minister VS Achutanandan



Union Water Resource Minister PK Bansal



Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa

demand that the water level be reduced to 120 feet. According to press reports, two members of the "empowered committee" were asked to investigate whether the dam had sustained any damage from last year's earthquake, and they concluded that there was no visible damage.

India's Congress Party led-United Progressive Alliance (UPA) coalition government has remained paralyzed, displaying its political impotence in the face of a burgeoning number of interstate disputes and calls for the creation of new states, whether based on ethnicity or "economic backwardness." Although Kerala's Congress-led government has been whipping up the dam issue, the national Congress leadership does not want to alienate the Tamil Nadu elite or risk upsetting state-Union relations by being seen to take sides in the dam dispute.

The Kerala state unit of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPM) has been one of chief organizers

and its readiness to join forces with the local Congress Party, but because it does not want to jeopardize the "political inroads" it made in Tamil Nadu in the 2011 state assembly elections.

Thanks to an electoral pact with the AIADMK—a party that when last in office used mass arrests to break a strike of government workers and invoked "anti-terrorism laws" to jail its political opponents—the CPM and its longtime Left Front ally, the Communist Party of India, were able to win 4 additional seats, bringing their combined total to 19.

The Mullaperiyar dam dispute exemplifies the reactionary and putrid character of Indian bourgeois politics. All sections of the elite make chauvinist ethnic, regionalist, communal and caste-ist appeals to further their factional struggles for self and power and to divert along reactionary lines the mass anger born of the failure of bourgeois India to meet the elementary democratic and social aspirations of India's toilers.



Building Resilient Neighbourhoods

Reflections on the PROUT Institute SEED Program

Scattered throughout this quiet neighbourhood, residents are working together to manifest a vision of a sustainable community inspired by PROUT localized economics

The River Road neighborhood in Eugene, USA looks like typical suburban development. But if one observes carefully, only a few blocks west of its main thoroughfare, a different type of development is being realized.

Scattered throughout this quiet neighborhood, residents are working together to manifest a vision of a sustainable community inspired by PROUT localized economics, permaculture design principles, and a neohumanist respect for all living beings. Their neighborhood project is focused on developing a network of properties producing basic necessities, particularly food, and fostering an ethic of compassion and resource sharing. In addition to sharing organic food, tools,

materials, and know-how, the community also offers cultural events, education in permaculture and local economic planning, and instruction in yogic practices and philosophy. The established properties include the beginnings of a food forest, several small gardens, an evolving village for volunteers and interns, and a spiritual center called Dharmalaya. This network demonstrates how small sites and connected people can carve a new vision in the shadows of an outmoded paradigm.

This past summer, a dozen interns participated in the Sustainable Economics and Ecological Design (SEED) Program, sponsored by the PROUT Institute and based on a modification of the "master unit" approach to integrated rural development in India, first conceptualized by Shrii P. R. Sarkar. The interns came

from locations across North America--Maine, Vermont, South Carolina, Louisiana, Missouri, Ohio, Michigan, Nebraska, Montana, Alberta, California and Oregon. Living in community at the Dharmalaya Center, home of the PROUT Institute, interns studied yogic philosophy while committing 25 hours of labor per week developing neighborhood infrastructure, which taught them useful lessons in permaculture, gardening, natural building, and community development.

The interns' work focused on a dramatic transformation of a one-acre back yard from a litter-riddled, blackberry-infested, unproductive lot into the beginnings of a food-producing village. Interns helped clear the property, plant gardens, construct a greenhouse, erect a straw-bale kitchen/bathhouse, create adobe

Hendricks Park in River Road Eugene, Oregon, US



bricks, build a wood-fired barrel oven and canning stove, construct a compost toilet, and more.

I signed up for the internship program with only a vague conception of what I was to learn. Emerging from four years of teaching college English, I was eager to immerse myself in physical work and purge my consciousness of hastily-written essays. I knew that the material world was more than keyboards, paper, pens, restaurants and markets, but I wanted to feel that truth. So, when I discovered the PROUT Institute internship, the ideas--natural building, organic gardening, and yoga-inspired my participation. The experience of living in this community has been far deeper and more complex than I anticipated. Immediately, I could see that I was entering into something both intentional and flexible, something still very much in process. While there was guidance from staff members, the interns were given the space to figure out the logistics of community living (such as the food system and cleaning schedule) on their own. In a group of twelve people, living collectively for the first time, having varying levels of financial resources, and being exposed to a new sattvic diet (vegetarian, no onions, garlic or mushrooms), this was not always simple. Successful systems were eventually developed, yet it was valuable for interns to feel both the tension and resolution of collective decision making. The whole exercise was

empowering because throughout it all, sincere respect was given to individual voices. This respect for all voices is part of the cultural ethic shaping the systems at the PROUT Institute. In the same way that each neighbor contributes to the community according to her or his skills and abilities, and each species contributes to an ecosystem, each individual person offers a valued perspective and voice. Empowerment is one of the imperatives of the PROUT paradigm of development.

PROUT: Meeting Everyone's Needs

PROUT is an acronym for the Progressive Utilization Theory, a new theory of socio-economic development and political organization based on the fundamental assumption that all people have potentialities in the physical, mental and spiritual spheres, and that all should be given opportunity to develop and express their potentialities. PROUT is a comprehensive approach, with its own values and planning principles, economic and political structures, and social and cultural systems. All of these are designed to work to meet everyone's basic needs and to promote the progressive enhancement of people's potentialities at the individual level, within the collective society, and in balance with the nonhuman world that sustains all life.

PROUT offers hope, vision, empowerment, and a solution-oriented approach to people and communities that seek a viable, life-affirming alternative to global capitalism and the various contradictions and crises inherent to it.

The Prout Institute's summer intern program is a part of a larger effort to create a PROUTist model on a neighborhood level. As the internship program ramped up, I began to see in practical terms how the values of PROUT informed the work we were doing. For example, to imagine the idea of "progressive utilization," consider the manner in which goods and services are exchanged in this community development project.

Neighbours know that they can each contribute—money, food, labor, construction materials, expertise, and social connections—according to their own skills or resources. So an artist in the community might paint a mural to enhance the aesthetic beauty of a building in exchange for labor deconstructing a patio. Or a gardener falling behind on weeding might exchange some of his/her harvest for labor. Tools circulate as needed, knowledge is shared, seeds are spread. It is a sort of cooperative economics, more or less informal at this stage, but certainly the foundation of a different kind of approach that, over time, will become more structured.

Individuals don't depend entirely on this cooperative system, but having it there connected to and supplementing their home economies makes life easier, and richer.

Learning from and observing the cooperative mentality of this community was, for me, the most profoundly educational aspect of the internship. To see a vital community in action was inspiring. Interns were sometimes dispatched to other properties in the neighborhood in the spirit of community service. The information and skills that were shared face-to-face, feet-to-earth, hands-to-tool—was exceptionally deep and enriching, especially for one coming from a desk-centered, indoor career path. It was like surfing the internet, but more focused, multi-sensory, and without advertisements. However, I couldn't have learned all that I did with keyword searches for "natural construction", "organic-gardening", and "yoga"; I did it by helping plant a literal and figurative community SEED and nurture it from the ground-up.

The writer taught as an English Instructor at Hastings College and Kansas State University. He now lives in Eugene, Oregon and is pursuing interests in natural building and energy management.



Saturday Market in Eugene a vendor's cart



Market Crisis – How?

| A meltdown caused by speculative excess and greed

The primary cause of this economic crisis is what is known as a “Bubble” that occurred in the Mortgage Market. Speculative Market Bubbles are caused when speculators, in the pursuit of profit, pile onto a particular asset class without regard to the economic fundamentals regarding the particular investment. A certain mania ensued as other speculators also invest in the particular asset because they see the price going up. The particular merits of the asset class, i.e.; whether or not there is a strong need or want (demand) for this particular product or service associated with the particular asset is not considered and greed for even more profit drives the price up even further. Eventually the demand subsides as people realize that there is no longer an economic reason to pay such a high price for the investment in question and the price rapidly falls as people sell the asset...

In the specific case of the Bubble associated with the mortgage market capital had already began to flow out of the market for stocks and bonds (the so called capital Markets) and began to flow into the housing market, as investors began to lose faith in the capital markets they began to invest in their homes via restorations furnished by home equity lines of credit due to the false belief that “Real estate always appreciates”. More and more people began looking for properties to buy as an investment beyond their primary residence and this speculation caused a Bubble to form as more and more people wanted to invest in homes that were rapidly increasing in value at that time. All of this speculation was fueled by easy

credit, as banks charged high fees and interest rates (which is essentially a payment that the borrower makes to the lender for the use of their money) without even verifying the ability of the borrower to repay the loan (the so called No-Documentation Loans). This scenario was further exacerbated by derivatives that were created such as Collateralized Mortgage Obligations (CMOs), and Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and such by Investment firms. A derivative contract (which is traded in the open market) is based on the value of an underlying asset, in this case a bundle of mortgage loans. The value of the contract is “derived” from the value of the associated asset, as demand increased for a share that received payments from an a pool of mortgages to investors the value of the contract increased. This was made even worse as some companies and large hedge funds used leverage (putting up a small amount of capital to hold a large position in the market, essentially borrowing money to speculate). After years of this the ability of borrowers to repay these loans began to come in question; and the bubble burst. This caused the value of homes to fall; creating a domino effect as demand dried up for Mortgage based securities as less people were getting mortgages and the ability to repay the mortgages that were hastily granted during the speculation became doubtful. Literally billions of dollars were lost as the Markets for Homes, Mortgages and their Derivatives crashed simultaneously. Lenders tightened credit (that is, they were no longer willing to lend as freely as they had during the Mortgage Mania, greatly scrutinizing the credit of potential borrowers and only lending to people with the highest credit category, and even then many lenders were not writing any new loans out of concerns for their current exposure to this particular type of debt). Many firms had so much exposure to this type of debt (because for a time it had become so lucrative that they threw caution and the concept of diversified revenue streams to the wind, focusing on mortgage revenue) that they collapsed as well, right along with the Mortgage Market... A Meltdown caused by speculative excess and greed: A Bubble.



A graph showing the median and average sales prices of new homes sold in the United States between 1963 and 2010.

Democracy and Market Economy in India: An Inter-Relational Study

A free market therefore entails social inequality, which in turn, makes political democracy in India meaningless

Introduction

India went for economic reforms in the early 1990s allowing deregulation in industries and foreign capital inflows into the Indian market to a large extent. Critics of market economy in India allege that market economy would encourage accumulation of wealth in the hands of few in the society. As a consequence it would foster inequality in the distribution of economic and political resources in the country, and generate social differences. Democracy in the long run may become a victim of this 'impending' socio-economic inequality. The present paper would argue that because market economy is new to India, it is natural that such schism would prevail. Market economy cannot scuttle the process of an already established political democracy in India. A developing country like India can use the benefits of market economy to promote the development of human capital, and investment in human resources to solve basic problems like poverty, unemployment and illiteracy. It can also use the fruits of a liberal economy to facilitate the absorption of know-how, -- both technological and organizational and create an entrepreneurial climate that require a lot of attention in many developing countries. Investment for the development of modern infrastructure could be promoted through market economy. The benefits of economic liberalization could be used judiciously to augment the development of economy and society. If these goals are realized, democracy would be strengthened in India. A basic prognosis

of this paper is : democracy and economic development are not necessarily correlated , yet in India, economic development through the mechanism of liberalization can prepare bases for social equality which would ultimately strengthen democracy. I begin this essay with a focus on the adverse reaction to the introduction of free market economy in India.

Projected ills of market economy in India

The initiation of free market economy in India raised a few eyebrows. The essence of market economy, opined critics, lies in the exclusion of marginal people not only from the market, but from socio-economic-political benefits as well; because economic exclusion exacerbates other forms of exclusion. Further, the 'roll-back' of the state would affect social security provisions normally guaranteed by the government. A free market therefore entails social inequality, which in turn, makes political democracy in India meaningless. Market would also weaken the community and the extended family as institutions of social cohesion and security. The market may also provide inclusion of people, but such inclusions are often coercive in the form of child or woman labour. Therefore, exclusion (and often inclusion, in a negative way) of the people by the market is ominous and affects the social rubric adversely. As one critic of market economy in India writes, "markets exclude people both as consumers and producers or as buyers and sellers if they do not accept or conform to, the values of a



Market economy encourages the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few in society

market system...It is only to be expected that there is bound to be an interaction between exclusion from the market in the economic sphere and the non-economic dimension of exclusion in the social, economic or cultural spheres. The social manifestations of exclusion can be powerful."

The major arguments of the critics of market economy in India could be summarized, for a succinct analysis, as follows:

- (1) markets may exclude some people from economic participation.
- (2) This economic exclusion may exacerbate socio-political-cultural exclusion for these people and may deny them civil or political rights.
- (3) The 'roll-back' of the state would deprive people of social security, normally provided by the government.
- (4) Markets would destroy the community and the extended family, considered as significant institutions of social security in India.
- (5) Markets may bring coercive inclusions of people in the form of women and child labour.
- (6) Market economy creates inequality and therefore, affects the principles of democracy.

All these arguments are however not free from defects. To begin with, no economy, state-controlled, capitalist, mixed or subsidized, can include all sections of the people all the time. In the case of India, the pre-reform 'mixed economy' (from 1947 to the early 1990s) left a vast section of the marginal people outside its reach, as it could not ensure their participation. As a result poverty and social inequality persisted. As two noted economists observed, "Four decades of allegedly 'interventionist' planning did little to make the country literate, provide a wide-based health service, achieve comprehensive land reforms, or end the rampant social inequalities that blight the material prospects of the underprivileged".

Therefore, the schism that market economy would exclude people and exacerbate inequality cannot instill a new sense of fear in the Indian mind because for over four decades it witnessed rampant poverty and absence of distributive justice in the socio-economic sectors. In an era of globalization, market has the potential of a vast 'reach', as well as a boon for society if it is judiciously controlled and used. This brings us to the role of the state in an era of free market economy. Nowhere in the world market economy can operate exclusively outside



government control. According to one leading American scholar, national, state, and local governments in the United States intervene in the economy in ways too numerous to list. If this is the situation in the United States, the apostle of market economy in the world, indications of a 'roll-back' of the state in India are not tenable. In fact the state in India is very much visible not only in the economic sector, but in the social and cultural sectors as well. A bit of a 'roll-back' would indeed be welcome as far as the Indian state is concerned. The state in India must forget to play the role of an interventionist, and instead, view it as a 'catalytic' state. Catalytic states try to achieve their goals less by relying on their own resources than by assuming a dominant role in a combination of states, multinational corporations and private sector groups. The state in India must play the role of a controller and ensure that the markets are contestable and a major part of the resources generated from the market is directed towards social development. In third world countries like India, as elsewhere, the state must learn to adapt fast to the demands of globalization. Therefore, a complete 'roll-back' of the state in India is not an imminent possibility in the wake of a free market economy, the state's role, on the other hand, could be crucial in the changing scenario.

The argument that the market in India would destroy community and extended family does not correspond to the times of free economy. In fact community and extended family in India started to decline with the onset of modernization that preceded the era of market economy. Modernization in India, I believe, started in its truest sense, after India became independent in 1947. Since the mid-1950s, the process of

modernization was accelerated in India with the setting up of modern industries, mainly under the guidance of the Indian state. Western education arrived in India during the British rule. The colonial masters encouraged western (mainly English) education, to create an English-knowing clerical cadre, and also to instill western cultural ethos into the Indian society. Though sporadic urbanization was effected during the British rule in India, massive industrialization was mainly created by the independent Indian state. With industrialization, started the migration of rural and semi-urban people to the modern industrial urban sectors. This process, started in the late 1950s, continued throughout the 60s up to the 80s and beyond. The decline of the traditional village-based Indian family as a cohesive integral unit started with rapid migration to the industrial cities. Members of the family, especially the younger ones, flocked to the industrial areas in search of jobs. The impervious Indian family began to get disunited from this time. I would cite another cause, which I believe, affected the extended family system in India. The 'family planning programme' undertaken by the Indian state, effectively since the early 1960s, with emphasis on two children per family, dealt a severe blow to the notion of a large cohesive Indian family. This programme gradually replaced the large extended Indian family with much smaller nuclear family. Now it is a family of four (or three) with parents and two (or one) child(ren). The sense of cohesion and security the extended family (with grandfather, grandmother, uncles, aunts, parents and children living under one roof) provided, could not be found in the nuclear family, especially so for the children where both the parents were working. The nuclear family was an established norm in urban, semi-urban, and even in rural areas of India by the mid-1980s. And when children of the nuclear family migrated to different parts

of India in search of jobs, the family got further estranged. Therefore, the decline of the impregnable Indian family was very much visible by the mid-1980s; and this happened before the onset of free market economy in India. Market liberalization therefore, has no role to play in the metamorphosis of the Indian family, because the family went through dramatic changes before the introduction of free market economy in India.

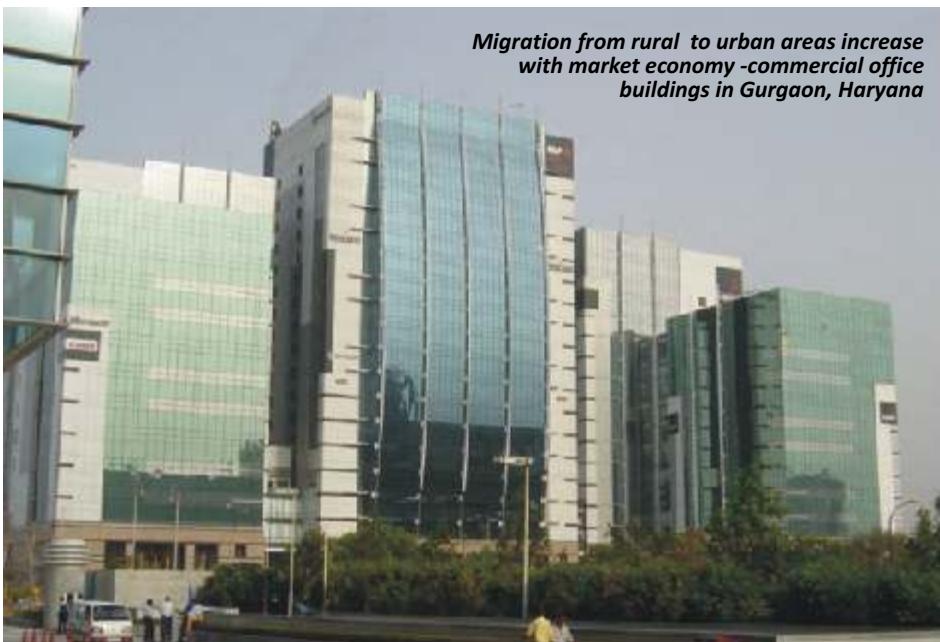
The apprehension of the critics mainly emerged due to, what I believe, a 'wrong notion' of the suzerainty of the free market. The market has been viewed (by the critics) as a sweeping force that has the potential to destroy all socio-political-cultural moorings in India. It is precisely here that I wish to raise my objections. Free market economy in India must not be viewed negatively, -- as the all-conquering demon that would unsettle the socio-cultural fabric of India. I, on the contrary believe, that market economy in India has to live and sustain on the strengths of Indian socio-cultural-political values. The market can never ignore Indian society, politics and culture, market is not that sovereign; nor can it operate exclusively outside the control of the Indian state. As I wrote earlier, the role of the state is very crucial in India vis-à-vis market liberalization. It must create all the conditions and infrastructures for a free market, yet act as a watchdog to rein the market, as well as try to reap benefit from the market. A liberalized market could prove to be immensely beneficial for third world countries like India. I discuss below the positives of free market economy for India.

Market economy and socio-economic development in India

In the very first paragraph of this essay, I outlined the potential benefits a market economy can bring to the third world countries like India. In order to avoid being

repetitive, I concentrate on hard data to illustrate that Indian economy has performed much better in the post-reform period (1991 onwards) compared to the pre-reform period. India's national income grew at around 3 percent per annum from 1947 to 1975. From 1976 to 1991, the growth rate was significantly higher, -- 5 percent per annum. From 1991 to 2000, during the post-reform era, India's national income grew at 6.5 per cent per annum; with a bullish phase from 1994 to 1997 when the growth rate of national income stood at 7 percent. A well-known Indian author has shown in a significant study that growth of the Indian economy in the post-reform period was much higher than in the pre-reform period, and Indian business firms responded positively towards economic reforms by going in for technological changes. India's overall exports stood at

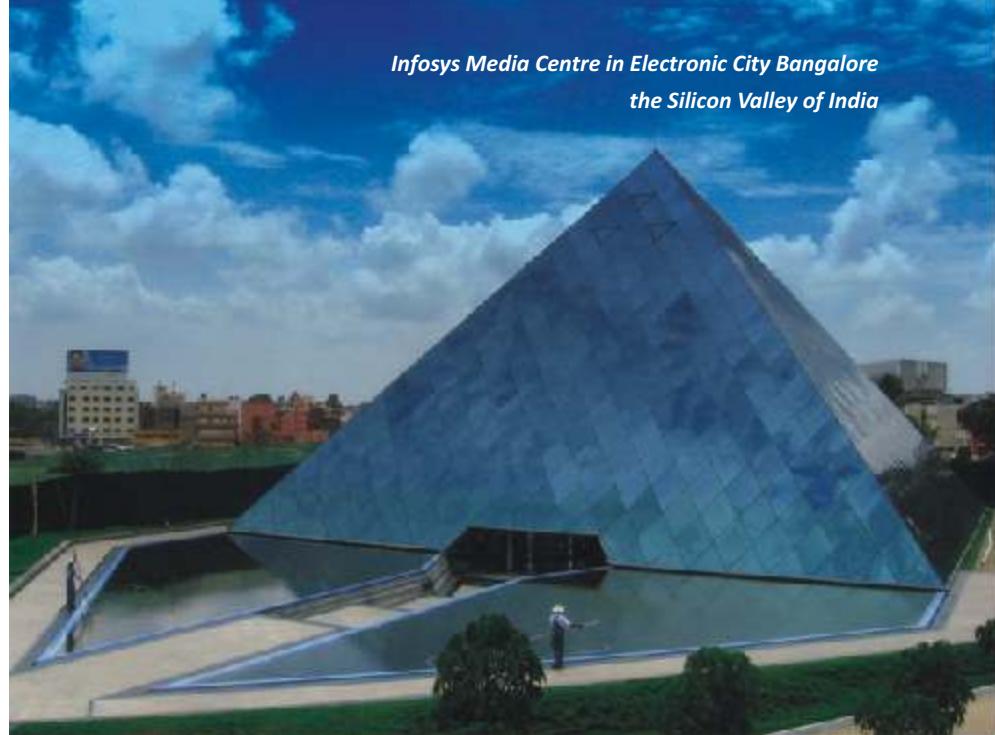
Migration from rural to urban areas increase with market economy -commercial office buildings in Gurgaon, Haryana



US\$ 18.14 billion in 1991, and in 2001, the figure reached US\$ 44.5 billion. India's foreign exchange reserves increased from US\$ 1.2 billion in 1991 to US\$ 55.8 billion in 2002. After economic reforms, India emerged as an attractive destination for foreign institutional investors (FIIs). Investments by FIIs increased from a meager US\$ 6 million in 1991 to a much respectful US\$ 1.8 billion in March 2002.

The economic reforms have put greater strength and vitality in many Indian industries. Consider for example, the spectacular growth of information technology and software industries (ITSI). India's annual software exports increased from US\$ 24 million in 1985 to a staggering US\$ 7.8 billion in March 2002. India's domestic software sales increased from US\$ 140 million in 1992 to US\$ 2.45 billion in 2002. This sector has witnessed an annual growth rate of nearly 40 per cent since 1991, and software exports are estimated to reach US\$ 50 billion by 2008. N.R. Narayana Murthy, Chairman of the Infosys Technologies Limited, and a pioneer of the ITSI revolution in India, observed in a recent article: "The reforms proved several bureaucratic dogmas wrong... It was believed that protectionism was the only way to help the Indian industry grow. On the contrary, the entry of multinationals into India created a competitive environment that forced Indian companies to successfully adopt world-class infrastructure, quality processes, human resources practices, and so forth." Murthy has stated in clear terms that the economic reforms have proved to be a boon for the ITSI and other industries in India.

A skeptic mind may still ponder over the consequences of the spectacular rise of the ITSI for the development of the people at large in India, because the ITSI is not considered a labour-intensive sector. Presently, more than half a million people are employed in this sector. This is not a small number. A study carried out by NASSCOM-McKinsey suggests that employment in this sector will grow to 3 million by the year 2010. This figure does not include employment in the IT-based sectors such as call centers and data-processing units. The IT-based sectors are growing more rapidly than the IT sector itself, and has the potential to generate more employments than the IT sector. One positive development of the rapid growth of the IT-based sectors is that the employments generated in these sectors are not always meant for the higher educated professionally qualified people. Persons with a simple graduate degree or below are getting employment in these sectors. Therefore, the IT and IT-based sectors have already



generated employment opportunities in India; and are likely to promote more employments in future. This is definitely a boon for a country like India where unemployment remained an intriguing social problem since India's independence in 1947. A closely related problem in India has been poverty. Market economy has the potential, I believe firmly, to address this problem as well. In fact survey data show that poverty is on the decline in India. A recent non-government study projects very clearly that poverty fell in India in 1999. According to this study, the percentage of people below the poverty line came down to 30.2% and 24.7% respectively in rural and urban areas. The census data published by the government of India (2002) shows that the rate of literacy has risen from 52% in 1991 to 65% in 2001. Though the rate of poverty and illiteracy remain too high to be complacent, it is heartening to note that they are declining.

The obvious question however would be: what is the role of market economy in this decline of poverty and illiteracy in India? Several significant empirical studies in recent years have shown that economic reforms in India have contributed to economic growth and caused a subsequent decline in poverty. Annual per capita growth in India rose to around 3 per cent per year in the 1990s from less than 1 per cent per year from the 1960s up to the 1980s. As economists pointed out, "this implied about a one-third increase in consumption per capita over the last decade and a 5 to 10 percentage point reduction in national poverty rates..." Studies have also shown that non-farm growth has propelled agricultural productivity to contribute towards poverty reduction. These growths were the outcome of the economic reform policies. Reduction in the level of poverty helped literacy rate to go up simply due to the fact that people staying above the poverty line felt encouraged to send their children to school. Economic reforms in India therefore contributed not only towards economic growth, but growth in the social sectors as well. Since I believe that rejuvenated



social sectors would also help to strengthen democracy, I now proceed to analyze the relations between market economy and democracy in India.

Market economy and democracy in India

It is never easy to ascertain the relationship between forms of government and economic development. Studies claiming to have found such a relationship, as also refuting the existence of such a relationship, could be identified among academic discourses. Without moving deep into this theoretical debate, I wish to put forward the argument that market economy in India would ultimately strengthen democracy in the country. Democracy, unlike many other third world countries, is rooted in the cultural values of the Indians. The introduction of market economy in India would further strengthen these values in favour of democracy. By these 'cultural values' I simply mean the belief of the average Indians that pluralistic social institutions and opinions must exist, and authoritarianism must be resisted. Market economy would help to boost these values. As observed earlier, market economy contributed towards poverty reduction in India through economic growth. With reduction in acute poverty and improvement of living standards, people's interests in pluralistic associations increase further. Economic growth also helps to reduce social and political conflicts. The reduction of these conflicts would provide for a congenial atmosphere where different social institutions proliferate and prosper. This proliferation of social institutions means to me, the evolution of a mature civil society that can help the state to function effectively and without authoritarianism. The civil society in India, as I have written elsewhere would gradually mature with market economy, and put a restrain on the state. Democracy would benefit most from these changes. Market economy in India, therefore, is an important catalyst of all these social transformation.

Market economy has already created a large middle

class in India,-- considered as one of the largest in the world. This middle class is increasingly seeking autonomy, personal freedom, more education, civic and economic rights, and rule of law. Like any other middle class anywhere in the world, this middle class also wishes to conserve and promote democratic ideas and institutions. The existence of this ever-growing middle class is an additional fillip for democracy in India. With increasing purchasing powers, this middle class is also attracting more FIIs and FDIs (foreign direct investments) and helping in the economic growth of the country. Since the 1990s, the middle class in India has become more visible both as economic and social force. Besides emerging as a buying power, this class is increasingly getting involved in associational activities and social movements. Democracy as a consequence, is getting strengthened.

Through deregulation of industries, abolition of the licensing system, and decentralizing many economic decisions to independent firms and individuals, economic reforms in India has hit the all-powerful state and its centralizing, authoritarian tendencies. The once-ubiquitous state is fast learning to relinquish some space for other social and economic actors. This is healthy for democracy. A centrally planned economy puts all its resources at the disposal of government officials. This makes the government officials feel that they are the superior species in the society, and offers them the scope to indulge in corruption, nepotism and authoritarianism. More than four decades of centrally planned economy has brought all these vices to India. The introduction of market economy therefore arouses hope in India that the evils of the centrally planned economy would be done away with.

Market economy thrives on decentralized planning and activity. As a form and as an ideal therefore, it is closer to democracy because democracy also favours pluralism of ideas and associations. This is never a correlation oversimplified. Market economy has the potential to promote pluralistic associations and ideas in society. It could therefore be a boon to democracy. On the other hand, a democratic country is more suitable, culturally, for market economy because it encourages decentralization of ideas and activities. Since democracy is firmly rooted in India, there is little reason to believe that market economy would be unsuitable for India. Democracy must not be evaluated in terms of economic achievements only, political freedoms have significance of their own. As one nobel-winning economist justifiably wrote, "Politically unfree citizens are deficient in freedom even if they happen to enjoy a high level of income, or a favorable standard of living in other respects." Democracy provides a socio-cultural base for free thoughts and movements. Market economy can make the best use of this environment of freedom and prosper. A free society after all is the best thriving arena for a free economy.

Conclusion

The Indian economy has gone past that critical stage where to open up means taking risks of being dumped by advanced economies. The Indian economy has shown enough resilience, despite apprehensions, to withstand the projected ‘onslaught’ of the market. Inequality did not escalate, poverty did not soar, illiteracy and unemployment did not create social conflicts, and the family was not destroyed. In fact, after the first phase of economic reforms, poverty, illiteracy and unemployment were reduced in India as data presented in earlier pages confirmed. Indian economy is now gearing up for second generation of reforms. In this phase, the economy would open up further to adjust itself to the growing demands of globalization. But transition from a closed to a more vibrant and open economy was not, and would not be painless. Market economy is not the panacea to all social problems. India has still to fight poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and other social problems. The second generation of reforms must be aimed at alleviating these social problems. The experience of the first phase of reforms would prove to be beneficial in this stupendous task. Market economy, if properly steered and controlled

may help to reduce social problems, as first generation of Indian reforms demonstrated. The role of the state is very crucial here. The state must guide the market towards the benefit of the people. That should precisely be the role of the ‘limited’ state in an era of free market economy. Democracy essentially means power of the people. While civil rights and political freedoms equip people to raise their voice against governmental authoritarianism, economic freedom empowers them to protect and nurture institutions of civil society, besides contributing to the economic growth of the nation. Market economy has the potential to raise the economic standard of the people. In a country like India, where people enjoy civil rights and political freedoms, economic empowerment of the people would certainly strengthen democratic values. Economic development of the people is meaningless without political freedom; -- that only strengthens the market and ignores democracy. But in the case of India where political freedom of the people has been in existence for nearly six decades, economic empowerment of the people would further boost democracy. Market economy is all set to play a crucial role in this context in India in the foreseeable future.

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Police and State

Should a ruling coalition which could garner only 37.22% of the votes in 2009 elections (against 45.78% by Opposition groups) claim to represent all of us according to democratic norms?

You can't kill Anna spirit by savage criticism

A perceptive political observer had already summed up the fate of the Lokpal Bill four hours before the Rajya Sabha (Upper House) was adjourned at midnight on 29 December in what was alleged to be a "choreographed chaos" by a member of the UPA coalition. Prof. Yogendra Yadav had told a national TV channel at 8 p.m. that RJD leader Lalu Prasad Yadav, who recently described the anti-corruption bill as a noose around politicians' necks, represented almost all political parties, including the Congress, which did not want an institution like the Lokpal.

This is not surprising if we study the history of this

legislation. A foreign business paper said on 27 December that India, which "failed on 10 previous occasions over four decades to pass laws to counter corruption" has slipped "four places in this year's annual ranking of corruption to a position below Liberia and Columbia".

The history of organised obfuscation of anti-corruption legislation in our country by successive governments since the Santhanam Report (1964) has been well documented. However, no one has done better than G.P. Joshi of the "Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative" in a 2003 paper on how the Supreme Court directives on the 1991 "Hawala case" were





systematically "thwarted" by New Delhi. The then BJP-led NDA government, which is now shouting itself hoarse, was initially responsible: "The judgment had directed that selection for the post of Central Vigilance Commissioner should be made by a Committee consisting of the Prime Minister, Home Minister and the Leader of the Opposition from a panel of outstanding civil servants and others with impeccable integrity. The Central Vigilance Commission Ordinance, 1998 conveniently omitted the category of 'others' and confined the selection to a panel of civil servants alone."

The Ordinance did not insist on having officers who were "outstanding" or with "impeccable integrity". The UPA government took advantage of this obfuscation later and selected an unsuitable officer as Central Vigilance Commissioner, who had to go in March 2011 on being ordered by the Supreme Court. While appearing eager to pass the legislation, Congress politicians like Digvijay Singh continued training guns at Anna Hazare by calling him an RSS sympathiser, with an eye on garnering minority votes during the Uttar Pradesh elections. Politicians were happy that Hazare had to give up his protest fast because of poor health and lack of adequate public response due to unusually cold weather.

Many had criticised Anna Hazare's strategy. The Bombay High Court, according to a national daily, had asked Hazare's lawyer on 23 December why they were doing "parallel canvassing" when a constitutional debate was going on in Parliament. A Mumbai tabloid said on 27 December Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen called the Anna Hazare agitation "anti-democracy".

Anna Hazare is an expression of protest by the non politicized middle class of India

I shall try to answer these two points from a citizen's perspective, with least disrespect to the High Court, Parliament or Dr Sen. To me, the "Anna Hazare phenomenon" is an expression of protest by the non-politicised middle class who cannot afford to contest the present day elections as demanded by politicians and compete with political parties who divide the voters through money and muscle power, reservations and quotas. What does an average non-political citizen do when he faces such an organized wall of resistance by elected representatives? He cannot afford to go to the Supreme Court in each and every case of corruption which he faces in day to day life.

Regarding Dr Sen's remarks that the agitation is "anti-democratic", it depends on what we consider democracy. Should a ruling coalition which could garner only 37.22% of the votes in 2009 elections (against 45.78% by Opposition groups) claim to represent all of us according to democratic norms?

For those who are writing the epitaph of the Anna Hazare movement, I would recommend them to read the text of the illuminating lecture by Dr Ayesha Siddiqa on 18 December in Karachi that it is the absence of an effective "middle class" that has weakened democratic growth in Pakistan. We should not replicate that situation in India by killing a middle class and non-political movement by savage criticism of Hazare's "Gandhian" protests.

It is high time we accepted that delivering corruption free services is the human right of an average citizen.



Europe Plunging into Recession

| This extraordinary crisis, without doubt the most serious one since World War II ... is not over

2011 was a year of austerity for Europe. At the behest of the European Union and the International Monetary Fund, stringent programs imposing cuts in wages, pensions and social services, combined with the decimation of jobs, were introduced by governments across the continent.

These austerity measures, designed to pay for massive bailouts of the banks following the financial crash of 2008, are now plunging Europe into new economic and social turmoil. This is confirmed by the most recent economic figures, which indicate that 2012 will be a year of renewed recession in Europe.

The first economic statistics for Europe issued in the New Year show that manufacturing across the euro zone declined in December, the fifth consecutive month of decreased output. Overall economic growth in the 17-nation euro zone was anemic throughout the second half of 2011, increasing by just 0.2 percent between July and September. The performance of the 27

economies of the entire European Union was only slightly higher, at 0.3 percent. Since September the general trend has been downwards.

While Europe's biggest economy, Germany, recorded significant economic growth in the second half of 2011, other major economies such as Italy and Spain registered large falls in production.

French manufacturing has also suffered from the slump in demand across the continent. PSA Peugeot Citroën, Europe's second-biggest carmaker after Volkswagen, recorded a 29 percent fall in its December sales, while the country's second major car producer, Renault, registered a 28 percent drop. "Orders were down about 55 percent in December, which leads us to expect a car market contraction of 17 percent in the first quarter of 2012," said Renault sales chief Bernard Cambier.

In Britain, retailers announced disappointing figures for the Christmas period. Jonathan De Mello, the head of the CBRE retail consultancy,

said that due to the slump in consumer spending, 30,000 to 40,000 retail jobs could disappear in Britain over the next 18 months.

During the recession of 2008-09, major British retailers such as Woolworths, Zavvi and MFI went into liquidation. According to the head of another British retail



consortium, conditions are now even worse than at the end of 2008.

The trend toward recession has been confirmed by British economists. In a poll conducted by the BBC at the end of the year, 25 leading economists predicted recession for Europe in 2012. Only two of those polled dissented. A majority of the economists questioned also said there was a significant likelihood of a breakup of the euro zone.

A parallel survey of 83 economists conducted by the *Financial Times* concluded that 2012 will rival 2009 for economic weakness, with output in the UK suffering as a result of the continuing debt crisis in the euro zone. According to Sir Alan Budd, chairman of the Office for Budget Responsibility, the UK faces a “choice between extended misery if the euro survives and catastrophe if it doesn’t.”

While predicated recession in 2012, a large majority of the economists questioned by the *Financial Times* stressed their continuing support for the draconian austerity measures introduced by the British coalition government headed by Conservative Party Prime Minister David Cameron.

Reflecting the intensifying crisis in Europe, the euro slid to a ten-year low against the yen and a one-year low against the US dollar to end 2011 as the world's worst performing major currency. International hedge funds stepped up their speculation against the euro in the last week of 2011. The slump in the fortunes of the euro came despite the action of the European Central Bank, which just a week previously provided European banks with nearly half a trillion euros in the form of new credits.

European leaders went public at year's end to warn that there would be no let-up in the policy of austerity. Ignoring the disastrous social consequences for European workers of the cuts already imposed, Danish Prime Minister, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, who took over the six-month rotating European Union presidency on January 1, declared, “The fat years are behind us. We must prepare ourselves for some lean years.”

The message was drummed home by German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who warned in her New Year's speech that for Europe, 2012 would “no doubt be more difficult than 2011,” adding

that the continent faced its “harshest test in decades.”

French President Nicolas Sarkozy was even more explicit, warning, “This extraordinary crisis, without doubt the most serious one since World War II ... is not over.”

In Spain, the cabinet of the conservative People's Party meets Thursday to agree further measures aimed at slashing public spending. The new proposals will come on the heels of a €15 billion package of spending cuts announced just days ago and the declaration by the treasury minister that the country's budget deficit for 2011 is likely to be higher than forecast.

In Italy, the technocratic government of Mario Monti is under renewed pressure from the financial markets to implement further austerity measures following its recent €33 billion package of cuts to pensions and social spending. Following a brief dip in December, Italy's long-term borrowing costs have once again been driven up to the critical level of 7 percent.

Bourgeois political commentators have drawn their own conclusions from the crisis and are issuing warnings to the political elite to prepare for major class confrontations. In her prognosis for 2012, Princeton Professor Anne-Marie Slaughter wrote in Tuesday's *Financial Times* that austerity and the spread of poverty would provoke revolts in sub-Saharan Africa and further mass protests in Central Asia and South America.

“In the US,” she wrote, “the Occupy movement will operate through rolling flash mob-type disruptions, but we should also see much more concrete actions such as defending against foreclosures a tactic pioneered in Spain. In European countries that are choking on euro zone-imposed austerity, protests are also likely to turn into coordinated civil disobedience, centered on a refusal to pay new or higher taxes. And the Middle East will continue to burn. ... Expect a very turbulent year.”

There are already indications of growing resistance within the working class. In Greece, state hospital doctors started a four-day strike this week against the government's cuts to the state health system. Their strike has been joined by pharmacists and other workers in the health system.

Villagers Facing Starvation Due to Corruption

| Due to drought through a year, the poor villagers could not get any agricultural work this year. Neither could Laxman

On November 25, 2011, Laxman Jagat died. He was survived by his wife, a child and 80 year old-mother. He was a rickshaw driver in Raipur, a bit far away from his village from which he could hardly manage sufficient food for the family. The Below the Poverty Line (BPL) card in his parents' name gives 30 kilograms of rice monthly that is distributed among his family and his brothers' families. He got ill in October getting weaker and could not drive a rickshaw. His wife had to go to Raipur to get food along with a small daughter.

Rice distribution to the BPL card holders stopped in July. Most of the BPL cards in the village show the last entry on July 11. Due to drought through a year, the poor villagers could not get any agricultural work this year. Neither could Laxman. He expected to get a job under the MGNREGS, but could not. Instead he got ill due to hard labour and lack of energy, which eventually took his life. While he was sick, his wife carrying her daughter went for seeking food. He died without getting any treatment and proper meals.

While Laxman was dying, the villagers made several complaints to the administration asking for rice distribution. They have reported about these irregularities to the Block Development Office (BDO), CSO and even the district Collector. Yet no one responded. There was rice rotting in godown, whereas the administration did not listen to the



poor villagers. On September 21, they found the Marketing Inspector of the block and the Executive Officer of the Panchayat who tried to transport 62 bags of rice from the godown by truck without knowledge of the Panchayat head. The villagers informed the police and the Executive Officer alone was sent to jail.

On September 22, the Marketing Inspector assured that rice would be distributed to the BPL holders, which did not happen. On October 10, the villagers again submitted a complaint to the BDO. The officer promised to distribute rice within a week, but did not keep the promise. On October 23, the complaint was sent to the Collector and the Chief Secretary Officer but, again no step was taken. On November 17, the Executive Officer of neighboring Panchayat came to the village and distributed 125 quintals of rice in total, which was far less than what was required.

Karanbaheli Panchayat has a quota of 273 quintals of rice per month and more than 1000 quintals was, in fact, due as for four months, between July to October, that the administration had failed to provide. Sixteen out of 125 quintals were given to Karanbaheli village. The villagers' current demand for rice distribution is for four months which they are legally entitled to get.

Furthermore, rice was distributed only in two villages i.e.

Kuliadongri and Karanbaheli and partially in Chandel village. The villagers of Badibahal and Dongriguda of Karanbaheli Panchayat have not yet received their quota. Madhusudan Padhi, secretary of the concerned department wrote in a mail that, "the rice (about 400 quintals) has been siphoned off.... The district administration had been asked to ensure distribution." He also instructed the district administration to ask for the same quantity from Government and assured that the matter would be followed up. Yet, no further step has been taken so far. In neighboring Panchayat, Kusumjore also the BPL families have not received food grain for months.

Additional Information:

The late Laxman's family is not the only one who is facing extreme poverty and starvation in this area. It is broadly found that many poor villagers confront starvation under the same circumstances. Drought brought more difficulties to the poor and the vulnerable groups like widows or elderly. The government did not pay special attention to drought and rather enjoyed more corruption and negligence. Failure of rice distribution is not the only problem to be raised. The overall social security system has been collapsed by the corrupt and malfunctioning administration.

Durbal Nag of the village with BPL number 3656 may face same

fate. His wife said, "Agriculture labour is not needed in the village, where I could have earned money to feed my husband and son." Durbal has been bedridden for one month. Durbal's only son is an orthopedically challenged. Durbal's wife cannot go out of the village to find employment leaving the sick husband at home. Durbal is in his 60's but no social security scheme supports him and his family.

The situation of Ratnakar Nag (55 years old) and his mother Bijli (85 years old) is pitiable. Ratnakar is unable to work since last 3 months. His mother cooks food looking after him. The only source of income is the Old Age Pension (monthly 200 rupees, USD 3.78). Without subsidized rice by the PDS, the family is not able to purchase enough rice in open market.

Khetra Chinda of Chindapada in Badibahal village of Karanbaheli Panchayat died in a brick kiln in Hyderabad in 2010. His wife Rama returned to the village with her children after his death. None of the children goes to school currently. Rama used to go to another village to do agricultural labour leaving the children with the old mother-in-law. Rama has not yet been provided the government support like National Family Benefit Scheme targeted for the family who lost bread earner or widow pension. Her agricultural labor cannot make sufficient food for her family and drought hit this year would expectedly make situation worse.

These are possibly the 5 best sentences you'll ever read and all applicable to this experiment:

- 1. You cannot legislate the poor into prosperity by legislating the wealthy out of prosperity.**
- 2. What one person receives without working for, another person must work for without receiving.**
- 3. The government cannot give to anybody anything that the government does not first take from somebody else.**
- 4. You cannot multiply wealth by dividing it!**
- 5. When half of the people get the idea that they do not have to work because the other half is going to take care of them, and when the other half gets the idea that it does no good to work because somebody else is going to get what they work for, that is the beginning of the end of any nation.**



The Making of a Field Marshal

Frederick the Great had introduced the rank of Field Marshal as part of reforms in the Prussian Army in the 18th century

It was on New Year's Day of 1973 that the nation got to know that the architect of India's greatest military victory in centuries had been elevated to the rank of Field Marshal. This came as a surprise to most of us. Only a couple of months earlier, the then Defence Minister had told the press at Chennai that India would not have a Field Marshal or a five-star general. I remember a friend of mine telling me at that time that if Pakistan had won the 1971 war, Yahya would have been made a Field Marshal the very next day. I disagreed with him, saying he would not have been made Field Marshal, but would have made himself one, like Ayub Khan. My thoughts went back to 1946, when for the first time three Indian officers were posted to the Military Operations Directorate at Delhi, hitherto the exclusive preserve of British officers and British clerks. They were Lieutenant Colonel Sam Hormusji Faramji Manekshaw, Major Yahya Khan and I in the rank of Captain. Who could then have predicted the path the careers of Manekshaw and Yahya would take? Inscrutable are the ways of providence.

I had the privilege of serving under Sam Manekshaw in all the ranks that he held from Lt. Col. To Army Chief. He had a tremendous capacity for work and was a brilliant professional, contributing immensely in every appointment. He combined all this with a great sense of humour and ready wit. As a senior staff officer at Army Headquarters in 1971, I saw how meticulously he planned for the coming war during the nine months



preparatory time he had managed to obtain. The resounding victory in that war was the crowning achievement of the foremost military leader of our Army.

I was functioning as Adjutant-General, the Army's chief of personnel, in January 1973 and

had to work out his entitlements in his new rank. I went to his office to congratulate him and found him examining the badges of rank in cloth that had been prepared by Bastani Brothers, the tailor in South Block. Apparently Sam had been informed of his promotion a day or



two earlier. To maintain secrecy, his personal staff told the tailor that a Nepalese field marshal was to come and his badge of rank had to be stitched. Sam told me that an investiture was to be held two days later at Rashtrapati Bhavan and I had to work out all the details with the government. I replied that it would be both an honour and a pleasure. However, I told him that the cloth badges of rank would be of no use, he would have to be in his ceremonial uniform for which he would need metal badges of rank. Moreover, the badges of rank made by the tailor were not correct. The Ashoka Lion at the top of the wreath had to be in miniature and touching the top of the two loops in one badge of rank. He asked me how I knew this. I replied that when Field Marshal Auchinleck used to visit the Operations Room in 1946, I used to closely watch his badges of rank and ribbons. He said he saw more of Auchinleck than me but was not sure what I said was correct. He wanted something authentic. I went back to my office and tried to find some written authority, but nothing was available. I rang up our military attaché in London. He told me that the War Office was closed for the

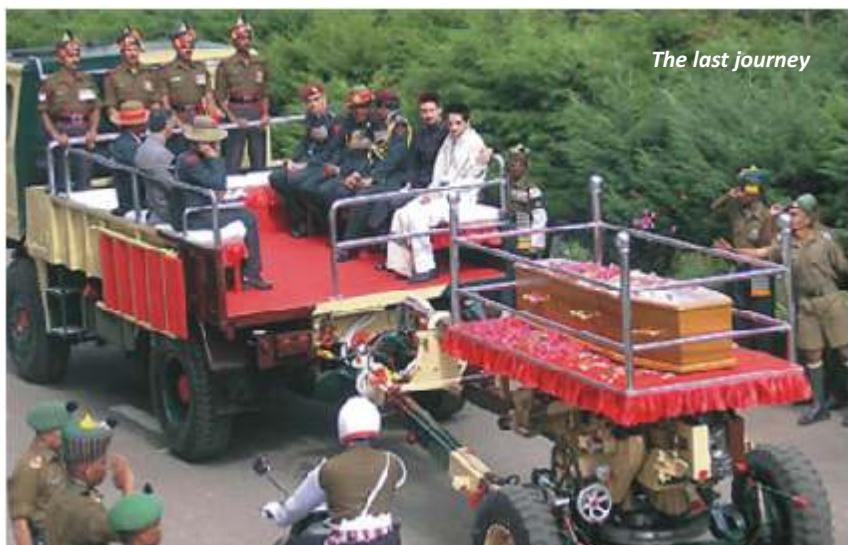
Christmas holidays and he would not be able to send me anything for a week. I then thought of looking up the Encyclopedia Britannica. I was happy to find a colour picture of a Field Marshal's badges of rank. That satisfied Sam. I said I would get them fabricated at the Army workshop in Delhi Cantonment. Working round the clock, our electrical engineers made a good job of it and completed the task within 24 hours.

We worked out the privileges Sam was not entitled to. A Field Marshal never retires. He would therefore be entitled to full pay for the rest of his life. He had to have a ceremonial baton which would now be part of his uniform. Besides, he would have to be given a small secretariat and personal staff. We also had to work out the procedure to be followed for the investiture at Rashtrapati Bhavan. A meeting was held, attended by home ministry officials, the additional secretary, ministry of defence, and me, with the home secretary in the chair. Having been an old hand in Army Headquarters, I was fully aware of the hostility of the civilian

bureaucracy towards the Army. I saw that in full force at this meeting. I found the bureaucrats opposing all our suggestions. They wanted the Cabinet Secretary, who was higher in protocol status to Service Chiefs, to have a higher place than Sam in the seating plan. I maintained that a field marshal should rank with Bharat Ratna awardees. The latter enjoyed much higher protocol status than the Cabinet Secretary.

Frederick the Great had introduced the rank of field marshal as part of reforms in the Prussian Army in the 18th century. A conquering general was from then not allowed to keep any part of war booty. This was now to go to the state. Generals who had done exceptionally well in war would be promoted field marshal, which would entitle them to full salary for the rest of their lives. That is how the tradition of a Field Marshal never retiring originated. The field marshal was also to be given a ceremonial baton, somewhat like a monarch's orb. His protocol status was to be next only to the monarch. Thus began the tradition of regimental flags dipping in salute, only for a monarch, a head of state and a field marshal. They do not do so even for Prime Ministers. Gradually, all armies in Europe introduced this rank.

The Duke of Wellington captured a French marshal's baton in



Spain and sent it to his sovereign. He was made the first field marshal of the British Army.

A fortnight later, when Sam was demitting office, we had a ceremonial farewell parade for him on Army Day. For the first time we brought regimental flags on parade for the Army Day. I had kept it as a surprise for Sam. When he arrived for the parade, I mentioned this to him. He asked me in his usual manner, "Tell me, sweetie, how do I respond to the salute?" He took me

by surprise. I did not know how a field marshal returns a salute. I later learnt that while doing so a British field marshal holds the baton in his left hand at an angle of 45 degrees to the middle of their left thigh. However, I had seen movies in which Reichsmarschall Hermann Goering used to raise his baton in his right hand. I promptly replied, "Sir, by raising the baton in your right hand." Sam accepted this. We started a new tradition of our own.

Thirty two years later, I

learnt from press reports that the government had at long last taken a decision on the salary of a Field Marshal, consequent to the visit of President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam to Staff College Wellington when he met Sam, then terminally ill in hospital. The Defence Secretary flew to Wellington to personally hand over a cheque of Rs. 1.3 crores to Sam as his arrears of pay for over 30 years. A couple of weeks later, I went to the Staff College, Wellington for a lecture. I met Sam

in hospital and congratulated him for the arrears he had received. He replied, "Sweetie, a babu from Delhi came and gave me a cheque. I have sent it to the bank. I do not know if it will be honoured." That was the last time I met Sam. Soon after, Sam died.

It was a national shame that we did not give him an appropriate funeral. As per our protocol, a Field Marshal ranks with the Service Chiefs and below the Cabinet Secretary. Bureaucracy had its way. The Government was represented by a mere Minister of state at the funeral. The funeral should have taken place in Delhi with the President, the Prime Minister and the high commissioner of Bangladesh, or a high dignitary from that country, attending. When the Duke of Wellington died, several monarchs, Presidents and Prime Ministers attended his funeral and he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

The writer, a retired Lieutenant General, was Vice-Chief of Army Staff and was Governor of Assam and Jammu and Kashmir.

Statue of Field Marshal Sam Maneckshaw in Pune cantonment



Cancer Treatment is About Making Money

After years of telling people chemotherapy is the only way to try ('try', being the key word) to eliminate cancer, Johns Hopkins is finally starting to tell you there is an alternative way.

Death cannot be avoided, even if postponed. Life without suffering is more important. What is written below is absolutely 100% true and as a doctor I have been telling people this for 15 years now. No one wants to listen. Folks need to wake up. Cancer treatment is about making money. It is a 120 billion dollar a year industry in the United States alone and estimated to be a 600 billion dollar a year industry worldwide. A successful cancer case according to the American Cancer Society and the American College of Oncology and Hematology means that the person survives for 5 years. Both the

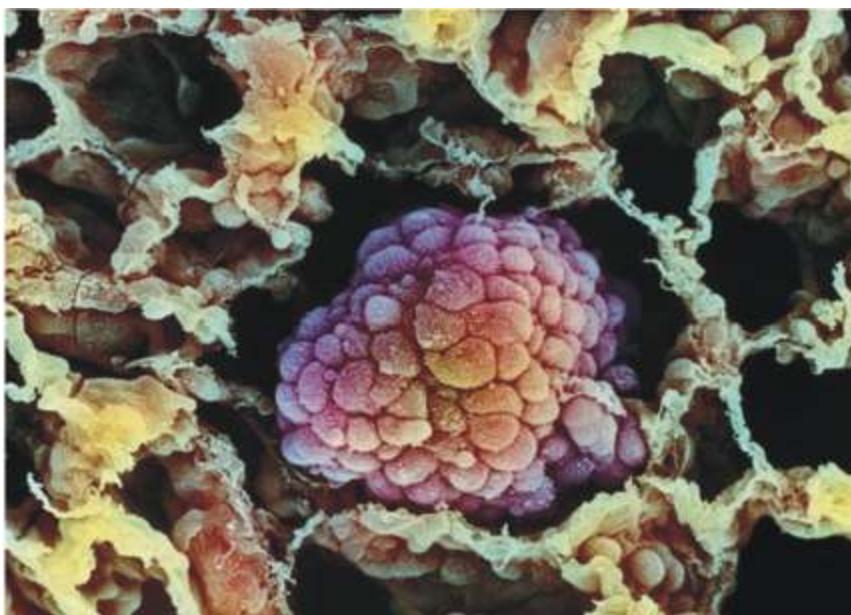
American Cancer Society and the American College of Oncology and Hematology admit that a person is likely to survive cancer for 7 to 10 years even if they do absolutely NOTHING. Of course, only the doctors get those magazines - not you, the cancer patient.

Alternative medicine's track record of curing cancer is 10 times higher than that of conventional medicine. Note that I say CURE. Remember another thing. A TUMOR is just a symptom. It is not the cause of cancer. Science is cause and effect. Remove the cause and the effect disappears. I am in my third battle with cancer right now. I have not done any chemotherapy or

radiation or surgery for any of my bouts with cancer. I survived leukemia, I survived Non Hodgkins Lymphoma and now I have Glioblastoma which is supposedly an incurable form of brain cancer. I was given two months to live 5 months ago.

I have been using Chinese herbs, high doses of vitamin C, acupuncture, chiropractic, homeopathy and nutritional changes. Yes, at first it got worse. It had metastasized to my lymph nodes, my lungs and my bones. As of this week, I am happy to say that there is no evidence now of any cancer in my lymph system or my bones. I had 6 tumors in my lungs, now there are only two. The tumors in my brain have shrunken tremendously. I never did any of their chemo, radiation or surgery.

Here is a very interesting statistic that you can only have access to by being a doctor. Every year more than 1,000 doctors oncologists (cancer doctors) are diagnosed with cancer. Less than 10% of them choose to do the treatment that they have been giving to their patients. Sort of like the fact that less than 25% of all pediatricians vaccinate their own children because of the fact that the risk of sudden death or serious side effects from the vaccination is higher than the risk of catching the disease one is being vaccinated for. This is not bullshit people - it is truth.



A scanning electron micrograph provides a color depiction of a small cancerous tumor within a human lung.



Medicine is about money, not about your health and the system traps people, especially the elderly, disabled and poor into a deadly treatment regime that puts them in an early grave. Meanwhile, all the jet set billionaires are flying off to Europe and paying big bucks for alternative treatments and getting cured.

Does alternative medicine work all the time? No. Of course not. Nothing works all the time. But there is a reason for that. You don't die until it's your time to die. Nothing can make you live longer than that time.

However quality of life comes into play. Those cancer patients who use alternative therapies for their cancer, yet still die from the illness, suffer a much higher quality of life. They die able to spend time with their families and even recognize their family members. They don't become emaciated like those who do chemotherapy or radiation do and rarely is a person who goes under the treatment of chemotherapy able to recognize anyone for the last few days of their lives. Their bodies become ravaged to the point that you can't even recognize them either. They suffer at a much much higher rate and they have one let down after another as doctors tell them, ahhh -

it's looking good, only to tell them on the next visit it's looking worse, you need more chemo and radiation.

What is criminal about this is that YOUR DOCTORS ARE AWARE OF THIS FALSEHOOD. I took an oath as a physician. I have always followed it. That has certainly not made me successful financially as a doctor because I have consistently refused to go along with conventional medicine's lies.

Cancer Update from Johns Hopkins :

1. Every person has cancer cells in the body. These cancer cells do not show up in the standard tests until they have multiplied to a few billion. When doctors tell cancer patients that there are no more cancer cells in their bodies after treatment, it just means the tests are unable to detect the cancer cells because they have not reached the detectable size.

2. Cancer cells occur between 6 to more than 10 times in a person's lifetime.

3. When the person's immune system is strong the cancer cells will be destroyed and prevented from multiplying and forming tumors.

4. When a person has cancer it indicates the person has nutritional

deficiencies. These could be due to genetic, but also to environmental, food and lifestyle factors.

5. To overcome the multiple nutritional deficiencies, changing diet to eat more adequately and healthy, 4-5 times/day and by including supplements will strengthen the immune system.

6. Chemotherapy involves poisoning the rapidly-growing cancer cells and also destroys rapidly-growing healthy cells in the bone marrow, gastrointestinal tract etc, and can cause organ damage, like liver, kidneys, heart, lungs etc.

7.. Radiation while destroying cancer cells also burns, scars and damages healthy cells, tissues and organs.

8. Initial treatment with chemotherapy and radiation will often reduce tumor size. However prolonged use of chemotherapy and radiation do not result in more tumor destruction.

9. When the body has too much toxic burden from chemotherapy and radiation the immune system is either compromised or destroyed, hence the person succumbs to various kinds of infections and complications.

10. Chemotherapy and radiation can cause cancer cells to mutate and become resistant and difficult to destroy. Surgery can also cause cancer cells to spread to other sites.

11. An effective way to battle cancer is to starve the cancer cells by not feeding it with the foods it needs to multiply.

Cancer cells feed on :

- a. Sugar substitutes like NutraSweet, Equal, Spoonful, etc are made with Aspartame and it is harmful. A better natural

- substitute would be Manuka honey or molasses, but only in very small amounts. Table salt has a chemical added to make it white in color. Better alternative is Bragg's aminos or sea salt.

- b. Milk causes the body to produce mucus, especially in the

gastro-intestinal tract. Cancer feeds on mucus. By cutting off milk and substituting with unsweetened soy milk cancer cells are being starved.

c. Cancer cells thrive in an acid environment. A meat-based diet is acidic and it is best to eat fish, and a little other meat, like chicken. Meat also contains livestock antibiotics, growth hormones and parasites, which are all harmful, especially to people with cancer.

d. A diet made of 80% fresh vegetables and juice, whole grains, seeds, nuts and a little fruits help put the body into an alkaline environment. About 20% can be from cooked food including beans. Fresh vegetable juices provide live enzymes that are easily absorbed and reach down to cellular levels within 15 minutes to nourish and enhance &nb! sp; growth of healthy cells. To obtain live enzymes for building healthy cells try and drink fresh vegetable juice (most vegetables including bean sprouts) and eat some raw vegetables 2 or 3 times a day. Enzymes are destroyed at temperatures of 104 degrees F (40 degrees C).

e. Avoid coffee, tea, and chocolate, which have high caffeine. Green tea is a better alternative and has cancer fighting properties. Water-best to drink purified water, or filtered, to avoid known toxins and heavy metals in tap water. Distilled water is acidic, avoid it.

12. Meat protein is difficult to digest and requires a lot of digestive enzymes. Undigested meat remaining in the intestines becomes putrefied and leads to more toxic buildup.

13. Cancer cell walls have a tough protein covering. By refraining from or eating less meat it frees more enzymes to attack the protein walls of cancer cells and allows the body's killer cells to destroy the cancer cells.

14. Some supplements ! build up the immune system (IP6, Florscence, Essiac, anti-oxidants, vitamins, minerals, EFAs etc.) to enable the bodies own killer cells to destroy cancer cells. Other

supplements like vitamin E are known to cause apoptosis, or programmed cell death, the body's normal method of disposing of damaged, unwanted, or unneeded cells.

15. Cancer is a disease of the mind, body, and spirit. A proactive and positive spirit will help the cancer warrior be a survivor. Anger, un-forgiveness and bitterness put the body into a stressful and acidic environment. Learn to have a loving and forgiving spirit. Learn to relax and enjoy life.

16. Cancer cells cannot thrive in an oxygenated environment. Exercising daily, and deep breathing help to get more oxygen down to the cellular level. Oxygen therapy is another means employed to destroy cancer cells.

1. No plastic containers in micro.

2. No water bottles in freezer.

3. No plastic wrap in microwave.

Johns Hopkins has recently sent this out in its newsletters. This information is being circulated at Walter Reed Army Medical Center as well. Dioxin chemicals cause cancer, especially breast cancer. Dioxins are highly poisonous to the cells of our bodies. Don't freeze your plastic bottles with water in them as this releases dioxins from the plastic. Recently, Dr Edward

Fujimoto, Wellness Program Manager at Castle Hospital , was on a TV program to explain this health hazard. He talked about dioxins and how bad they are for us. He said that we should not be heating our food in the microwave using plastic containers. This especially applies to foods that contain fat. He said that the combination of fat, high heat, and plastics releases dioxin in! to the food and ultimately into the cells of the body. Instead, he recommends using glass, such as Corning Ware, Pyrex or ceramic containers for heating food. You get the same results, only without the dioxin. So such things as TV dinners, instant ramen and soups, etc., should be removed from the container and heated in something else. Paper isn't bad but you don't know what is in the paper. It's just safer to use tempered glass, Corning Ware, etc. He reminded us that a while ago some of the fast food restaurants moved away from the foam containers to paper The dioxin problem is one of the reasons.

Also, he pointed out that plastic wrap, such as Saran, is just as dangerous when placed over foods to be cooked in the microwave. As the food is nuked, the high heat causes poisonous toxins to actually melt out of the plastic wrap and drip into the food. Cover food with a paper towel instead.



Botanist James S. Miller combs a Madagascar rain forest for potentially cancer-fighting flowers.



The Wealth Cap and Other Practical Proposals for Reducing Inequality

Businesses over a certain size should be owned and managed by workers collectively. Large scale key industries should be in the hands of elected local governments.

Inequality is the issue of the day – the real cause behind the prolonged recession and a major contributing factor in social, environmental and ethical issues affecting societies all over the world. It is finally dawning upon the public (and even upon some economists) that if you keep increasing production capacity (by making people work longer for less) and reducing consumption capacity (by stagnating wages and increasing unemployment) you will eventually end up with lots of goods and no one to buy them – in other words, a recession or depression. Public consciousness and anger about inequality is being clearly and increasingly expressed around the world. Coming out of genuine suffering it is one of the primary motivating factors behind the Arab Spring revolts, massive protests

against corporate tax-dodging in the U.K., “indignation” protests in Greece, Spain, Portugal and Israel and now the “Occupy Wall Street” protests against corporate greed spreading across the United States.

Although public anger at inequality is high, there have been few, if any, new ideas about how to solve the problem. This article explains a number of mechanisms for controlling inequality put forward in the Progressive Utilization Theory (PROUT) of Shrii P.R. Sarkar.

“The rich get richer and the poor get poorer”. Inequality is essentially an unhealthy gap between rich and poor. In present day economies the normal means for minimizing this gap include welfare benefits, minimum wage, bargaining powers of workers and unions, progressive taxation,



property taxes, capital gains taxes, company taxes, etc. Over the last 30 years we have seen all of these methods undergo steady changes which have been harmful for the poor and middle class and beneficial for the wealthy. As Warren Buffet put it, the class war has been going on for the last 20 years and his class won. In order to safeguard the interests of the vast majority of the population, obviously stronger methods (and the political will to implement them) are needed. Here are a few methods suggested by PROUT:

1. Constitutionally guaranteed increasing purchasing capacity.

In other words the right to a minimum wage which is constantly increasing in its actual value. The purpose is to ensure that the

government has a clear and legally binding social contract to make the basic requirements of life affordable to everyone. This will remedy the “poor get poorer” side of the gap.

2. A collectively agreed upon ceiling on the amount of wealth which individuals are allowed to accumulate (a wealth cap).

This ceiling should be set after a careful study of two aspects of the inequality gap: 1) How much of a gap is necessary to provide sufficient incentive for individuals to work harder (this could be reduced over time as people become more altruistic and observe the benefits of greater cooperation). Too small a gap would result in lack of incentive leading to economic stagnation and the alienation of talented individuals. 2) At what point does the amount of inequality begin to have a negative impact on the welfare of the general public. At present the top 10% of people in the United States own 75% of the nation’s wealth. Obviously that

leaves very little for everyone else. After careful consideration of these factors a ceiling on wealth can be set which strikes a harmonious balance between individual incentive and collective welfare. This will remedy the “rich get richer” side of the gap. It will also safeguard the political process from being purchased by the rich.

3. Decentralization and democratization of economic power through restricting private ownership to small family-sized businesses.

Businesses over a certain size should be owned and managed by workers collectively. Large scale key industries should be in the hands of elected local governments. If this model is followed neither private individuals nor state governments will be able to control vast amounts of economic power.

4. The above 3 methods are the primary tools which Prout employs for maintaining a level of inequality beneficial for all. Additional Prout policies such as abolition of the

stock market, regional self-sufficiency in essential commodities, local level economic planning and restriction of access by external economic interests would also have a positive impact on inequality. Details of these and other Prout policies are beyond the scope of this article.

Applying these methods could bring many benefits in the following areas:

Economic Benefits

Through proper control of the wealth gap productive capacity and consumptive capacity will rise in tandem, i.e. “a tide which lifts all boats”. Everyone prospers. This is the essential factor in maintaining a healthy economy. As the economy grows everyone’s purchasing capacity increases thus stimulating more demand, more production and more growth. If the above methods were applied (especially no. 1 and 2), the economic crisis would be ended overnight. Notice that there is no need for welfare in this system. With jobs and a livable wage





guaranteed no welfare will be required (other than for those who are unable to work for health or age reasons). On the one hand, elimination of excessive wealth will help get rid of the financial instability caused by speculation. It will ensure that all wealth is used for productive purposes and no wealth sits idle in bank vaults benefitting no one. On the other hand, elimination of poverty and unemployment will ensure that the poor and uneducated will not be a drain on the economy, rather the productive capacities of all people will be put to maximum use.

Social Benefits

A more equal society is a more united society. In both the social and work environment people will feel a closer family or team feeling. This will have enormous benefits socially as well as economically. In their ground-breaking book, "The Spirit Level—Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger" Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett present thought-provoking statistics showing that more equal societies, are happier, healthier, have longer life expectancy and fewer social problems (and also do well economically).

Less inequality will also help recapture democracy. No longer will

wealthy individuals be able to purchase political decisions that favor a small minority of people, rather the government will stand a much better chance of protecting the actual needs of its people. In the workplace the cooperative mode of production will enhance worker participation and ensure that the needs of labor as well as capital are reflected in decision making.

Environmental Benefits

People with little or no economic power are at a great disadvantage when it comes to protecting their environment. Conversely, with more equal economic power, the common people will have an equal voice in decisions affecting the local environment. Prout policies such as local control over the economy, decentralization and regional self-reliance will ensure that overcrowded cities and abandoned rural areas will become a thing of the past.

Spiritual Benefits

Unequal societies sooner or later are exploitative and oppressive in nature. Overworked and underpaid, burdened by fear and anxiety, the common people have little opportunity to develop their subtler human potential. In an effort

to dampen discontent the populace is drugged with media emphasizing violence and sex. Divide and rule policies are employed to cause the disenfranchised to war amongst each other thus distracting their attention from their real oppressors. In a society where the people are economically secure and prosperous, where the benefits of technology can be spread amongst all in the form of reduced working hours, such people will have sufficient comfort and security to develop their subtle potentialities. The prevailing atmosphere of co-ordinated cooperation will be conducive for emotional and spiritual growth.

To conclude, despite abundance of material wealth and sophisticated technology, we have been unable to create a society which offers security and happiness to our citizens. The people have run out of patience and we are on the border of global rebellion. Our old methods have failed and something new is required which expresses a higher level of care and respect for each other and for the environment. The PROUT policies outlined above, aimed at the good and happiness of all, represent a comprehensive solution to this problem.

Police Tips

| It never hurts to be careful in this crazy world

Everyone should take 5 minutes to read this. It may save your life or a loved one's life. In daylight hours, refresh yourself of these things to do in an emergency situation... This is for you, and for you to share with your wife your children, & everyone you know. After reading these 9 crucial tips, forward them to someone you care about. It never hurts to be careful in this crazy world we live in.

1. Tip from Tae Kwon Do : The elbow is the strongest point on your body.

If you are close enough to use it, do!

2.. Learned this from a tourist guide.

If a robber asks for your wallet and/or purse,

DO NOT HAND IT TO HIM.

Toss it away from you....

Chances are that he is more interested in your wallet and/or purse than you, and he will go for the wallet/purse.

RUN LIKE MAD IN THE OTHER DIRECTION!

3. If you are ever thrown into the trunk of a car, kick out the back tail lights and stick your arm out the hole and start waving like crazy..

The driver won't see you, but everybody else will.

This has saved lives.

4. Women have a tendency to get into their cars after shopping, eating, working, etc., and just sit (doing their checkbook, or making a list, etc.

DON'T DO THIS!

The predator will be watching you, and this is the perfect opportunity for him to get in on the passenger side, put a gun to your head, and tell you where to go.

AS SOON AS YOU GET INTO YOUR CAR , LOCK THE DOORS AND LEAVE..

If someone is in the car with a gun to your head DO NOT DRIVE OFF,

Repeat:

DO NOT DRIVE OFF!

Instead gun the engine and speed into anything, wrecking the car.

Your Air Bag will save you.

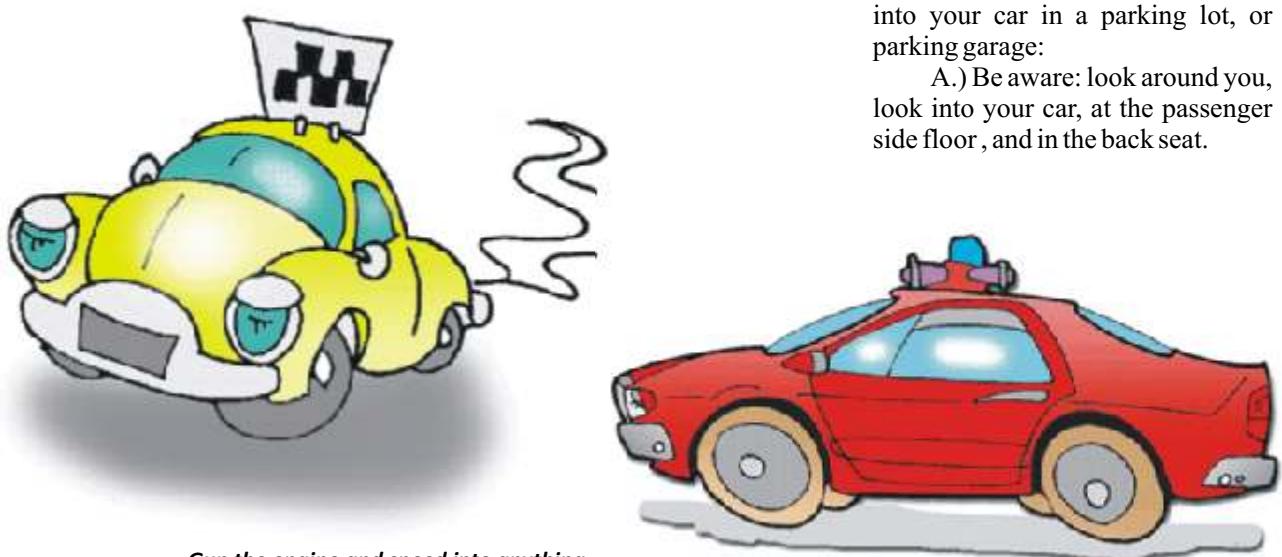
If the person is in the back seat they will get the worst of it.

As soon as the car crashes bail out and run.

It is better than having them find your body in a remote location.

5. A few notes about getting into your car in a parking lot, or parking garage:

A.) Be aware: look around you, look into your car, at the passenger side floor, and in the back seat.



Gun the engine and speed into anything

B.) If you are parked next to a big van, enter your car from the passenger door.

Most serial killers attack their victims by pulling them into their vans while the women are attempting to get into their cars.

C.) Look at the car parked on the driver's side of your vehicle, and the passenger side.. If a male is sitting alone in the seat nearest your car, you may want to walk back into the mall, or work, and get a guard/policeman to walk you back out.

IT IS ALWAYS BETTER TO BE SAFE THAN SORRY. (And better paranoid than dead.)

6. **ALWAYS** take the elevator instead of the stairs.

Stairwells are horrible places to be alone and the perfect crime spot.

This is especially true at NIGHT!)

7. If the predator has a gun and you are not under his control,

ALWAYS RUN!

The predator will only hit you (a running target) 4 in 100 times; and even then,

it most likely WILL NOT be a vital organ.

RUN, Preferably in a zig -zag pattern!

8. As women, we are always trying to be sympathetic:

STOP

It may get you raped, or killed. Ted Bundy, the serial killer, was a good-looking,

well educated man, who **ALWAYS** played on the sympathies of unsuspecting women.

He walked with a cane, or a limp, and often asked 'for help' into his vehicle or with his vehicle, which is when he abducted his next victim.

9. Another Safety Point:

Someone just told me that her friend heard a crying baby on her porch the night before last, and she called the police because it was late and she thought it was weird.. The police told her



'Whatever you do, DO NOT open the door..'

The lady then said that it sounded like the baby had crawled near a window, and she was worried that it would crawl to the street and get run over.

The policeman said, 'We already have a unit on the way,

whatever you do, DO NOT open the door.'

He told her that they think a serial killer has a baby's cry recorded and uses it to coax women out of their homes thinking that someone dropped off a baby..

He said they have not verified it, but have had several calls by women saying that they hear baby's cries outside their doors when they're home alone at night.

10. Water scam!

If you wake up in the middle of the night to hear all your taps outside running or what you think is a burst pipe,

DO NOT GO OUT TO INVESTIGATE!

These people turn on all your outside taps full blast so that you will go out to investigate and then attack.

Stay alert, keep safe, and look out for your neighbors!

Please pass this on

This e-mail should probably be taken seriously because

the Crying Baby Theory was mentioned on America's Most Wanted when they profiled the serial killer in Louisiana

I'd like you to forward this to all the women you know.

It may save a life. A candle is not dimmed by lighting another candle..

I was going to send this to the ladies only,

but guys, if you love your mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, etc.,

you may want to pass it onto them, as well.

Drawbacks of Democracy

| While 'Lokpal' may be an effective deterrent, it is not the panacea

There has been a sudden ascendancy and rampancy in reputations of Anna Hazares and Ramdevs in the firmament of Indian politics. The masses began comparing them with Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda. (Their movements gained popularity beyond Indian Ocean too). The rampant rancid corruption in Indian political system and bureaucratic administration provided them a ready combustible and inflammable material. All the classes of society from the lowest rung of beggars to the business magnets had been incessantly suffering due to this cancerous malady of corruption --- one way or the other. The cause became a wildfire due to sympathetic fanning by the suffering masses. The

abolition and elimination of corruption is the burning issue today for one and all.

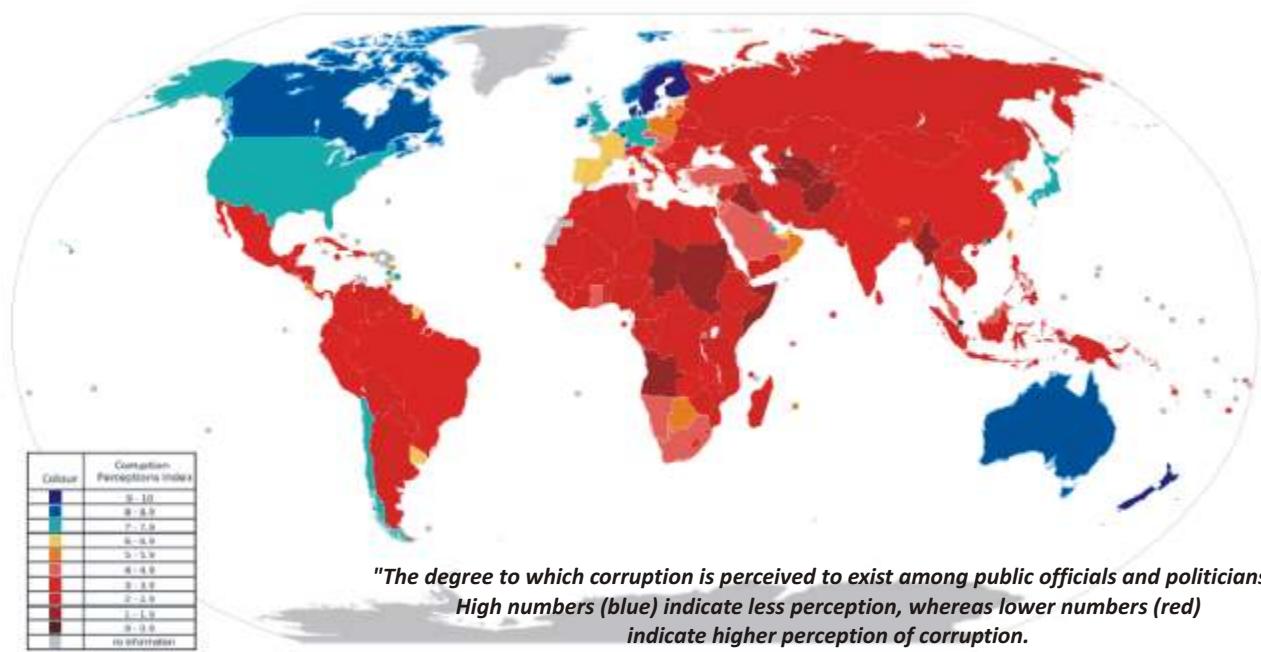
While 'Lokpal' may be an effective deterrent, it is not the panacea. Let us analyse --- what is the root cause of 'corruption'? Unless we reach to the roots, we will be only treating the symptoms of the cancer and not the cancer itself.

If the corruption was need-based, which it was in the elementary stage, the solution would have been to raise the buying capacity of the 'Babus' or the 'munshis' or the 'hawaldars'. But the base cause of basic needs exists no more. Now it has crossed over from need-base to avariciousness and covetousness fanned by intensities of consumerism and liberalisation of economy. The deterrent of penal action by the higher-ups is

obliterated because the virus of corruption percolates from top to bottom. Nourished, nurtured, procreated and protected by the malicious and malafide misdeeds at the topmost rung, it will be futile to treat the lower rungs. It will be as futile as an attempt to blow off a wildfire by a frail puff. We will have to cripple and curb ab initio this procreating habits or tendencies of the Queen White Ants.

It is not at all difficult to trace these Queen White Ants – viz. the wild herd of the politicians at the top level. For politicians, in a democratic system, the 'money power' is a need-base. They need to spend billions and billions of rupees for their elections. Also they have to plan to contest such elections life-long and for the posterity too. (This is also the basic cause of the

WORLD MAP CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX 2010 - TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL





Detail from Corrupt Legislation (1896) Mural by Elihu Vedder 1896, Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building, Washington, D.C.

prevalent hereditary or lineal or genealogical system of political leadership in India). There is a very popular saying in India which means that masses ever follow the classes or their leaders. If the leaders are corrupt, the whole spectrum of administration from top to bottom gets corrupted. The deterrents get reduced to zero level. Rather, the practice of 'you scratch my back and I scratch your back' becomes established deep-rooted and irrevocable. The brotherly feeling amongst different classes of thieves and dacoits as said proverbially in ethnic parlance, gets rooted deeply and permanently in the system.

In other words, it is our election system or electoral pattern which is the root cause for corruption in India at least. Either we have to drastically transform our electoral pattern or accept it as a bitter pill that democracy has failed in India.

When Anna Hazare or Kiran Bedi mock at our 'degraded' parliamentarians, a hue and cry is raised that it is an insult to the parliament or our parliamentary system or our constitution; while the fact remains that the slur is not against 'parliament' or 'parliamentary system' or constitution but the slur is on the 'grade' (or rather 'degrade') of our parliamentarians. Where votes can be bought by 'money power' or at the threat of elimination (to the extent of class elimination and mass elimination), the standard of the parliamentarians will gradually get degraded (if not already degraded) to the levels of 'dacoits, looters and ruffians.' It is for sure that the framers of constitution never anticipated such a debased level of democratic system. But the facts, as they are, can hardly be gainsaid. The situation is as crystal clear as a

'gooseberry on a palm', as proverbially described in classical language. We either elect dacoits or looters for the parliament or ruffians and rogues of a specific caste and community.

We have to willy-nilly accept that democracy has failed in India and will continue to fail in a country like ours, where poverty, illiteracy and basic ignorance of the value of a vote is so rampant. We have also discovered that both 'communism' and 'capitalism' have failed all over the world. 'Communism' is already consigned to obscurity and buried twenty thousand leagues below the sea, while capitalism is on the way to its burial or crematorial ground. What next? This is the million dollar question. Why not experiment the 'PROUT' system given by the seer and political thinker of India viz Sri. Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar.

PBI in Electoral Fray



The electoral officer of Fategarh Sahib constituency receiving nomination papers from Dr. Surender Parashar

people assemble at the place where they were bricked, and where a magnificent Gurudwara stands today in the memory of their great sacrifice.

It was thus befitting for Dr. Surender Parashar to make choice for this constituency as his field to join electoral battle to initiate Proutist movement in this state of northern India.

Dr. Parashar is M.D. in Ayurvedic medicine. Proutists accompany him in the election campaign and go especially from village to village. S.C.Tyagi, National Chairman of PBI ,and Acarya Santosananda Avadhuta besides Jaichand Saini (Punjab State PBI Chief), Dhanpat Rai, Jaideo Singh, N.K. Jolly and Sukhdarshan Singh also accompany him. From Bangalore (Karnatak state) an ardent and aged Proutist A.P.Singh has also arrived to campaign for him from the very first day. Singh is a vibrant speaker and thrills the audience with his inspired speeches which keeps them spell bound.

Interesting campaign experiences: A day before the beginning of the campaign, one proutist brother of neighbouring district brought us in the contact of a local (Fategarh Sahib) person who is politically a very influential person. When we told him that PBI stands for morality in politics and it will strive to work for making morality minimum qualification for those entering the arena of politics, he got quite excited . He told us that it is first time he was hearing someone espousing the cause of morality in politics, and he further said he will lend his all possible support in the prevailing circumstances.

This gentleman whose name is Prem Chand Sharma had been a staunch supporter of Congress Party and had been instrumental in the victory of many a congress candidates. But he is disillusioned with the party and its leaders due to their hypocrisy and corrupt practices. Sharma took our team to several persons and told us that they will be the pillars of PBI since they all will support the morality plank of PBI sincerely.

One amongst these persons told us : Your ideas and cause are very good, but it will take 25 years to materialise.

We replied : If you cooperate these 25 years can be made five years. We have to make a strong organisation of moralists so that there is clear polarisation between moral and immoral forces in Politics. Today a corrupt is fighting against a corrupt and the result is victory of a bigger corrupt person. PBI is striving to create polarisation between moralist and immoral politicians so that in the consequent terrific fight, Moralist forces are victorious and we have a government with only moralist faces. He felt quite inspired and assured us that he will motivate others to join this moralist political movement

At another place , when we talked about these ideals of PBI and also that Prout is the only solution for the

PBI(Proutist Bloc India)--a political party founded by Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, the propounder of Prout--has fielded Dr. Surender Parashar, an ardent Proutist, as its candidate in Panjab Assembly elections. Name of the constituency is Fatehgarh Sahib. This is the place where the two young sons--six years and nine years old-- of Guru Govind Singh , the last Sikh Guru, were bricked alive inside wall for their refusal to embrace Islam. It is therefore a very vibrating place where the exemplary sacrifice of the two brothers is remembered with great reverence. On the day of their sacrifice, about 20 lakh

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poverty and unemployment , the main leader of the area told us : why did you come so late?

We told them that we had been waiting that these politicians will deliver and will fulfill the promises they make during elections, but they have belied our hopes and aspirations despite having got opportunity to do something concrete for 64 years. We have also been inviting them in our seminars and symposium etc. and talking about Prout with them, but their admiration for Prout was only vocal; in practical field they always followed capitalism and promoted every form of exploitation. Therefore now we are in the field to consolidate moralist forces as well as to organise and unite those who have selfless love for the suffering humanity.

He requested us to come repeatedly and hold programmes in his area for the furtherance of these objectives.

Similarly our team met a very revolutionary aged person in a village. He made sarcastic remark saying all come for votes. No one loves the poor. There is no party to think and work for the poor ; but poor will rise one day and will establish its own rule.

We quietly replied him that why there will be poor in the first place. There will be no poverty line. There will be only richness line, i.e. there will be cap on the wealth, and none will be allowed to accumulate beyond a limit. Minimum requirements will be guaranteed to all.

Then he said it is first time that a party is promising to guarantee minimum requirements to every one, and your thoughts are same as mine and I will support you. Since you have come for the first time , don't worry about the number of votes you get this time, but in the next elections it will be my duty to make your candidate victorious.

Prout is the Cry of suffering humanity. Proutists have to go to the suffering humanity in order to elicit wider support for it as well as to serve the cause of Prout in reality. Suffering Humanity is actually the constituency of Proutists.



-Prafulla Samantra

Everyday in different parts of our state, people of Odisha especially Adivasis and farmers, become victims of forceful displacement. The displaced persons are again victimised by the corporate company and the government.

More than 15 thousand people have been displaced by Jindal Steel and Power Ltd. company in Angul district of Odisha in last 5 years. The government of Odisha had suppressed the anti-displacement movement in the beginning. People had opposed the Steel Plant project in the public hearing conducted by the State Pollution Control Board and managed by the district administration. Though the officials had declared that another public hearing would be done, it however did not take place.

The first hearing was manipulated and fabricated by which the company got environment clearance. Practically four thousand acres of land were acquired by the government for the company by using police force as well as alluring people by offering high payment or compensation and employment guarantee. But after acquisition of land, the displaced people are being betrayed and left un-employed and uncared without any source of livelihood. Now the company has grabbed another 5000 acres of forest land destroying more than 4 lakhs of Sal trees without any clearance from the concerned department.

The victims have been demanding just compensation, rehabilitation and permanent employment. The government remains silent while victims wait for justice that is overdue.

On 25th January 2012 , the day before our Republic Day, four thousand unarmed displaced persons including women went to the Company gate to demand fulfillment of their right to livelihood and a life with dignity. But in the presence of police, they were attacked physically by the security guards of Jindal company without any provocation. The security force of the Company used lathis and iron rods to mercilessly beat the people. Women too

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were attacked in inhuman and brutal way ; their clothes were torn apart and they sustained serious injuries from head to toe. More than 200 persons became grievously injured and were hospitalised in the Angul district Hospital and some of them were shifted to SCB medical college, Cuttuck. Government remained passive spectator of these barbarous inhuman acts and did not extend any assistance or help. Many injured women did not prefer being taken to the hospital out of fear. Now they are in their homes without proper medical treatment.

Evidently no justice is being given to the victims. Thousands of people have been demonstrating before the Company gate; they are not being allowed to work in any construction work rendering them totally jobless. In the local police station, F.I.R was lodged against CEO of the company, but no executive officer has been arrested except one security officer.

This heinous attack by Jindal company is an offshoot of a heinous conspiracy in league with the District administration to suppress voice of the displaced people so that they abandon their resolve to fight for their right to life and livelihood, and against the injustice meted out to them.

Recently 48 Tribal and Dalit people have been beaten by the police at Lanjigada and lodged in jail since they have opposed destruction of the village road for Vedanta company. Hired goons of Posco attacked people of Dhinkia with hand bombs who were struggling for the enforcement of their legal right in the very presence of police previous November.

The Chief Minister of Odisha has not reacted so far on the barbarous inhuman attack by the Jindal company against displaced people of Angul.

I as the convenor of NAPM being associated with their protest agitations appeal to the activists of democratic people's organizations to write letter of protest to the Chief Minister of Odisha and appeal to the National Human Rights Commission to order inquiry into these inhuman acts as well as take appropriate actions in giving justice to the displaced and victims. Let us campaign against the corporate crime what has resulted into unwarranted displacements everywhere in the country.

Prout correspondent from Bhuvaneshwar adds :

Proutists of Odisha led by Kanhu Charan Behura, Saroj Mahapatra and Vishnu Charan Das went to the site of the incident and met the victims. They also met the Superintendent of Police of Angul and expressed their dissatisfaction with the role of police which was inactive throughout the incident . The entire barbarous act has taken place before the eyes of police who at best played the role of mute spectators. They felt that police is under pressure from the Jindal Plant as well as from the government, and therefore they have done nothing concrete in the matter. Proutists were also part of a big demonstration before the State Human Rights Commission at Bhuvaneshwar. The agitationists met the Commission authorities and impressed upon them to take immediate action against Plant for gross violation of Human Rights. The Commission is however not taking active interest in the issue. It is evident that the Jindal Plant is using its money power to influence all the sections which matter. And therefore there is also not much uproar in the media despite such a ghastly incident happening at Angul.

Proutists have resolved to be an active part of the agitation of local people and work for the fulfillment of their genuine demands.



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Proutist Bloc India's "Begging Demonstration" Against Corruption



Ghatanjee (Yavatmal, Maharashtra) : Hundreds of forest workers earning their livelihood by collecting Tendu leaves, demonstrated at the office of forest department, Government of Maharashtra (at Shaheed Memorial ,Ghatanjee), to express their frustration due to corruption in the distribution of bonus. The demonstration was led by Madhukar Nistane, Vidarbha organiser of Proutist Bloc India. The State Government had announced bonus for the year 2010 for Tendu leaves workers . The list of beneficiaries was announced and it was declared that the amount was deposited in their bank accounts. When workers tried to withdraw the bonus amount from their bank account they were shocked to note that the amount was never deposited. On investigation it was found that with the connivance of employees of forest department and contractors, fake accounts were opened in the bank in the names of persons related to department employees and contractors. These relatives were shown as Tendu leaves workers. Normally the Tendu leaves workers get bonus amount varying between Rs 10,000 to 25,000. However the amount deposited in the account of some relatives exceeded Rs 50,000. With connivance, the workers were brutally deprived of their earning.

A large procession of Tendu leaves workers led by Proutist leader Madhukar Nistane, exposed these corrupt officers and brought to the notice of public the whole episode. The demonstrators said that, " these government officers getting a salary of Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 60,000 per month as per the sixth Pay Commission, are still hungry for money and are robbing the poor forest workers." These workers belong to scheduled tribes living in forests. To expose such corrupt officers, a " Begging Demonstration" was organised.

In the procession the demonstrators were begging from public. They explained that these corrupt officers despite drawing huge amount as salary are not resisting the temptation to usurp the money which rightfully belongs to the Tendu leaves workers. Therefore we are begging to satisfy there unbridled greed for money. The money which was collected in the begging procession was presented to the officer in charge of the forest department, causing him a big embarrassment. Several active social workers like Moreshwar Watile, Maroti Kanke, Devanand Gedam , Pandhurang Nikode, Ajay Gajbhiye, Dinkar Mankar, Ashok Jayswal, Sanjay Waikrao, Parasram Maraskolhe, Sushila Meshram, Baby Pendor, Faimida Khairkar, Bhagirath Waghade, Shobha Maraskolhe, Shankar Keram, Subhash Gedam, Naresh Pendor, Bhaskar Wadde, Mahadev Gajbhiye participated in the demonstration.

Proutist Bloc India's Seminar at Chas, Bokaro

Chas : A one-day seminar of Proutist activists of Chas Block, Bokaro District, Jharkhand State, India was held here. It was attended by the activists of the Block who had come from different areas . Youth participated in good number which is an evidence of their keen interest to know Prout as well as PBI and work for it.

It was inaugurated by Amalesh Kumar, Chairman of Jharkhand State committee. In his inaugural address, he said that we are celebrating 63rd Republic Day of India amidst an atmosphere of widening of gap between poor and rich, stinking corruption, rising prices and dwindling purchasing power of people. There is poverty line in our country, but there is no richness line. With the result while some are starving , committing suicides due to economic hardships, handful of people are living in abundant luxury and wasteful lavishness. This state has to be reversed and a trend towards lessening the disparity between poor and rich has to begin. Minimum requirements of life has to be guaranteed to everybody without any discrimination . Besides meritorious people have to be given incentive to keep intact their motivation to do maximum for the social good. PBI is a party which is active to realise this goal. He further said it is not a party of hypocrite politicians who say something and act something else. It is a party which will render genuine and sincere service to the downtrodden and exploited people.

The gathering was addressed by other functionaries of the State and District committees. Some of them included : Deepak Singh, Chairman of Bokaro Steel City, Puneet Kumar Karmakar,General Secretary of State Committee, Virendra Rai, Chairman of Chas Block committee of PBI, Balwant Kumar Rao, Head of the youth wing , Bokaro District PBI committee, Manojay Kumar, Chairman of Bokaro District PBI committee, Pawan Jha , General Secretary, Bokaro District PBI committee.

All of them spoke on various aspects of Prout, and explained that PBI is not a party who only coins slogans to appease people. It has definite answer for the problems of poverty and unemployment. It stands for cent per cent employment which it will do by implementing Prout's rational concept of Block level planning.

They also passed resolution to work for the suffering people and take up their causes with the administration and not to leave any stone unturned to bring relief to them.



All darkness has gone



PÚRVAÁKÁSHE ARUNÍ HESECHE
SAKAL KÁLIMÁ SARE GECHE-
RÁTRIR KÁLO- LÁGENIKO BHÁLO-
TÁI KRPÁ RUPE RÁUNGIA-CHE-,
SAKAL KÁLIMÁ SARE GECHE-

ÁNDHÁRERA KRÚRA DANSTRÁ JE NEI
Á-----Á
ÁNDHÁRERA KRÚRA DANSTRÁ JE NEI
SHATHATÁR RÁKSASII KŠUDHÁ NEI
NIJEKE BHOLÁR PRAVANÁTÁ NEI
JYOTIR SÁGAR NÁCITE-CHE-,
SAKAL KÁLIMÁ SARE GECHE-

MÁNUŠE MÁNUŠE BHÚL BOJHÁ NEI
Á-----Á
MÁNUŠE MÁNUŠE BHÚL BOJHÁ NEI
PASHU PIIRÁNER JIGHÁNSA NEI
KUTHÁRE TARURE UCCHEDA NEI
NÚTAN MÁNAVATA JEGECHE--,
SAKAL KÁLIMÁ SARE GECHE-
PÚRVAÁKÁSHE ARUNÍ HESECHE

In the eastern skies the sun smiles
All darkness has gone
Darkness of night O I didn't like
That's why You kindly painted the sky

The severity of darkness has no fangs
Demonic hunger for deceit is gone
There is no inclination to forget oneself
An ocean of effulgence dances

There's no misunderstanding
Between human and human
No intention to injure or kill animals
No hatchets cut trees
The new humanity awakens

(Translated from Bengali original)

ETERNAL SONG OF The Proutists

- Shrii P.R. Sarkar

Morality is the demand of the day.

'Prout' - the cry of the suffering humanity.

Wise you be, may not or may,

If sincere, success a certainty.

Fee fy fa fum.

Expel the demons from physical stratum.

Fee fy fa fum.

Expel the exploiters from economic stratum.

Fee fy fa fum.

Expel the brutes from psychic stratum.

Fee fy fa fum.

Expel the parasites from spiritual stratum.

Human body is to serve one and all,

Human mind to attend Cosmic Call,

Human spirit at the altar Supreme,

Surrender and be Supreme.



“Doing good to others is virtue; doing harm to others is sin. In this world there is no shortage of wicked people who have an innate desire to commit atrocities and harm others. What should the virtuous people do? They should acquire virtue by doing good to others, to the society, to the country, and to the masses. Their actions should promote the socio-economic well-being of the people in a skilled way. This should be their main concern. Your good deeds may take society two steps forward, but if bad people are at work at the same time, they will take the society two steps backward and the resultant progress will be nil. Therefore, you must continue doing good to society, and at the same time must fight against the bad people to prevent them from taking a single step forward. On the path of dharma [righteousness], one is not only to do noble deeds; one must also fight against the dishonest people— both are virtuous actions. There are many good people in the society—noble people engaged in noble deeds— who are not ready to fight against wrongs and injustices. This sort of passive benevolence does not really promote the cause of human progress in the world. What is desirable is to acquire virtue by doing noble deeds and fighting against all sins and crimes. Both are mandatory, both an integral part of dharma.”

Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar

(From “What Should Human Beings Do?,”

Ananda Vacanamrtam Part 8)

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