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THE IDEA OF INDIA

More than seven decades back, Dr Ambedkar had warned that “on the 26th of January, 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics we will have equality and in social and economic life we will have inequality.”

In our times too, we continue to face these contradictions, and at a higher scale. The very concept of equality is under attack, politically, socially and economically. One of the biggest banes of BJP government headed by Modi is its promotion of an unequal political, social and economic order dictated by the RSS. It is making country suffer greatly. Inequality is explicit everywhere. There is discrimination against minorities, ever-increasing rigidities of caste, in growing misogyny and in the unprecedented concentration of wealth with a few.

The solution to this is the unity of secular-democratic forces to strike at the root of growing inequality, the monolithic communal cronyism of the RSS-BJP. To resist and defeat the assault on our secular democratic fabric, the history demands the secular democratic forces to unite in order to save India and change India.

The newly formed Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance, acronymed INDIA, has become a topic of intense discussion and debate. On one hand, the emergence of INDIA has given the secular, democratic and progressive sections of our people a viable alternative to the hateful, divisive and crony capitalist rule of the RSS-BJP.

On the other hand, rattled from the unity of secular-democratic forces being cemented, the right-wing RSS controlled ecosystem is going out of its way to speak foul about the unity of the forces that have united to safeguard the very idea of our secular-democratic

D Raja

rial whims like demonetization leading to a situation of complete disarray. The informal sector of the economy was greatly harmed through a hurried and anti-federal GST. Mismanagement of economy led to the crisis of unemployment and the mishandling of the Covid-19 crisis turned it into a catas-

Unity of secular democratic forces not only prevents the division of votes but such an alliance also counters the majoritarian agenda of the BJP by becoming the voice of all sections of society by providing an alternative agenda. Constituents of such a bloc, it must be underlined here, must remain accommodative to each other to foster better understanding and enhanced mutual trust

Republic. Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the charge by comparing the alliance with the East India Company. He was deliberately oblivious to the history of patriotic and left forces chasing the East India Company and its offspring the British Raj from the country. His acts of omission are necessary since he and everyone else know who was serving the British loyally when the country was fighting for liberation from colonial rule.

In last nine years since BJP came to power, the country has been witnessing mis-governance all over and at an unprecedented level. Sector after sector of our economy is challenged through dictato-

rophe. Inequality has gone up under Modi as he showed benefits over corporates. The much-needed social sector of our economy became the victim of such acts.

India's fall on all social and developmental indices is a consistent feature of the BJP-RSS rule and has been detrimental to the most-vulnerable sections of our society. It is not an accident that the wealth of the richest increased manifold in the last nine years, it is by design. BJP's model of crony capitalism dictates snatching everything from the poor and inundating the corporates with benefits. Education, health and employment have gone out of the reach of common people

and from all sections of the society, they have come out protesting.

Further, the Modi government oversaw rampant erosion of the values enshrined in our Constitution. BJP's lust for power has dissected Indian society and has created deep divisions among the people of our country. RSS-BJP is holding back the progress of our country by dividing people



on the basis of religion, caste, language and region. They learnt the divisive game of 'divide and rule' from their British masters and are now trying to rule by using the same tactic.

Disastrous results of this dirty design are visible all over the country, most recently in the burning of the entire state of Manipur, on which the otherwise vocal Prime Minister kept mum for months. Voices critical of the government are being forcefully silenced using draconian laws and there is a general decline in democratic values and norms, inculcated by our freedom movement and our Constitution. Survival of democracy in our country has become the most criti-

cal question before us and the debate around the formation of INDIA should be placed in this context.

The need for a united opposition was felt since long against the ruthless stomping on our Constitutional values and also to uphold the ideas that unite our people. The CPI, in particular, was of the opinion that the BJP's coming to power in the Union was not merely a change of government but a qualitative change that will strain the constitu-

tional fabric of the country. We have advocated for the unity of secular democratic patriotic forces to take on the BJP politically and ideologically.

The alternative to Hindutva cronyism can be offered from the Left of the political spectrum and the agenda of the united bloc should be radically different from the RSS-BJP to take the country forward. In the past also, BJP and its allies found it difficult to reach the majority when met with a formidable combination of united secular democratic forces.

Unity of secular democratic forces not only prevents the division of votes

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Privatisation, a Threat to Democracy

The BJP-RSS government is moving aggressively with its privatization policy. Prime minister Narendra Modi made it explicit in one of his remarks when he said recently in one of his meetings: 'Hamare Desh me public sector kamarne keliye Janmahotahai' (In our country, public sector is born to perish). It stands in clear contrast to the ideals our Parliament has stood for. Our Constitution is committed towards building a society with socialist principles. Public ownership and the control of commanding heights of the national economy with its strategic sectors were considered imperative to the system we aspired for. Long years of colonized economy had destroyed the basics and the prime need was to make the recovery fast. It meant that each one of our people was to have access to every opportunity, free from individual domination. It could be possible only in a democracy with social justice. For these endeavors, availability of adequate finance was needed. First to be nationalized was Life Insurance, and then the Imperial Bank of India. Soon were built up other institutions in public sector and major banks were also nationalized. The step was taken to promote the mobility of public money, create an infrastructure in the fields of production, not only for the basic essentials but also those for export. It was the year of 1969, when the most significant shift came. Fourteen large commercial banks, owned by the monopoly houses, were nationalized. It was also stressed by the government that even after nationalization, the credit needs of the private industry and trade would be met. The unrolling of the nationalization process was to meet the needs of productive sector, especially those in agriculture, in small scale industries, and also for those that were self employed. The nationalized banks were also to sustain the new and growing initiatives, and in the backward and neglected areas in the country. The public own-

ership was also to help decline the process of spending in the direction of speculative and unproductive areas.

The aim was to remove control of few, extension of credit to priority sectors, giving a professional bent to bank management and encouragement to new classes of such producers and traders. The objective was to blend the capital and people's skills. It was to help society in its advances. Justice Krishna Iyer had said that the nationalization was aimed at collecting the savings of people and investing it in agrarian sector along with other sections that are in need of support. The purpose was to take each one

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together and with their skill and capital gathered to move forward. To aid these development projects banks were aimed at higher growth rate and bringing down of the rate of impoverishment.

There was massive expansion in branches, the volume of deposits was also growing, especially in rural areas. Just in two years, growing bank credit was diverted to priority sectors from 14 percent to 41 percent. There was also significant success in removing inequalities. Banking policy was extended to secure progressive reduction in income inequalities. All these policies protected not only the nationalized banking but the entire economy from the Melt Down effects.

Despite these achievements, challenges waited at doorstep through the years. Capitalist system was maturing and giving way to finance capital. Corporate sector was promoted by the system. Welfare of people was no more the task of the government. Various regimes came to power including BJP itself in the beginning of the century. But it was only in 2014, when BJP-RSS government came to rule, the major steps for

disinvestment were taken. The government at the Centre managed raise over Rs 4.04 lakh crore through disinvestment and strategic sale of public sector enterprises, according to finance ministry. There were sales in 10 companies, including Air India, that had yielded Rs 69,412 crore to the exchequer in the last eight years. Share buyback in 45 cases fetched Rs 45,104 crore. Dismantling of PSUs has been going on.

When the prime minister spoke about the demise of PSUs, he also meant the crumbling of democratic process in the country, the reason being large scale privatization, a task taken up by the government at the Centre. Public sector is the backbone of the Indian economy and it plays a pivotal role in its development. Its final aim is to socialize the means of production. Striving to achieve certain socio-economic objectives, the primary concern of public sector is to protect the economy which is owned and controlled by the government. Efforts are also made to provide basic goods and services to the citizens, promote economic development, and protect the interests of weaker sections of society. It has always tried to provide the basic essential services to the citizens. When the nationalization had been initiated, it helped to resolve the issue of unemployment also. It brought in opportunities for employment. Finally, the means for infrastructure is also provided by PSUs to strengthen democracy.

Along with Public Sector, our composite culture, Constitution, and the democratic ethos are also under threat. One example is Manipur, where humanity itself is in flames. Never had India witnessed such barbarity. It is not the issue of SC status, nor is it the tribal conflict. It is only an attempt to side line the major problems, the issues of employment, education, health, finally resources. Also it is an effort to fragment them to keep alive the discontent.

CPI Condemns Haryana Riots, Killing of Passengers

The National Secretariat of the Communist Party of India issued the following statement on August 2, 2023:

The National Secretariat of the Communist Party of India condemns the recent killings of passengers in Jaipur-Mumbai train which is being dubbed as mental derailment of the offender. This is over simplification of

the fact and is aimed to derail the real picture. In the riots and arson in Haryana more than five people have lost their lives which include Imam and two home guards.

The failure of the police in arresting a notorious murderer Monu Manesar for the past five months and his declaration to participate in the Brig Mandal Dharmik yatra ig-

nited the situation in Nuhin Haryana which is a hyper sensitive communal place. Further the cautions given by district intelligence chief towards communal clash eruption if the procession is allowed through Muslim localities were ignored. Subsequently the clashes took place.

Communal tensions which are a result of divisive

politics pursued by ruling BJP is obviously responsible for these incidents and is a warning to all on the background of Manipur happenings as to what awaits in future if the BJP rule is allowed to continue. CPI demands strict action against the perpetrators of violence and arson and proper compensation to the victims. CPI also appeals to

all to maintain peace and harmony and preserve unity and composite culture of India.

The party also appeals to all Indians that they should not fall prey to politics of hatred, fear and violence which is the main plank of BJP-RSS politics unleashed in the background of ensuing elections.

SAU Must not Stop Democratic Protests in Campus

Binoy Viswam, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and leader of the parliamentary group of the Communist Party of India, also Member, Committee on Public Undertakings, Standing Committee on Labour, Textiles and Skill Development, Consultative Committee on Environment, Forest and Climate Change has written the following letter to Prof Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, acting president, South Asian University, New Delhi to express his disgust and anguish at the recently introduced mandatory General Undertaking for the newly admitted students at the South Asian University. The undertakings impose restrictions on

student participating in democratic movements and at the same time, shamefully requires them to declare that they don't suffer from any psychological disorders or serious illness.

I write this letter to express my disgust and anguish at the recently introduced mandatory General Undertaking for the newly admitted students at the South Asian University. The undertakings impose restrictions on student participating in democratic movements and at the same time, shamefully requires them to declare that they don't suffer from any psychological disorders or serious illness. The nature of the undertakings highlights the undemo-

cratic and discriminatory functioning of the University.

Protests and democratic dialogue have been instrumental in shaping the entire South Asian region. Curtailing the rights of students from participating in democratic dialogue and movements is an obstacle in realizing the vision behind South Asian University which aimed to impart liberal and humane education. The declaration about psychological disorders or serious illness is highly discriminatory, inhumane and unscientific at the same time. It sheds light on the University administration's desperation in relinquishing its responsibilities of providing a student friendly space

for students of all backgrounds.

The case of now partially paralyzed SAU student Ammar Ahmed is testimony to the treatment students with special needs are getting at SAU. The unjust treatment of students, faculty and workers of the South Asian University is gaining notoriety in international spaces. SAU must address the multiple concerns raised by students, faculty and the workers of the University. I urge you to take back the archaic conditions put down in the General Undertakings for newly admitted students.

I hope this issue will find your urgent attention.

SC Takes Cognizance of NFIW Petition on Lynching

Asks Centre, Six States to Respond to Plea

The Supreme Court on July 28, 2023 asked the Centre and at least six States to respond to a plea about lynching and mob violence refusing to stop. The plea by National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) said gruesome incidents of mob fury and vigilantism continue to happen despite a five-year-old apex court judgment, which had made the government machinery squarely accountable for protecting the lives of victims, including minority community members.

Appearing before a Bench led by Justice B R Gavai, senior advocate Kapil Sibal began by requesting the court not to tell him to go to the High Courts. He said the incidents span across multiple states. The victims should not be made to go to all these High Courts. "Even if they did, they might end up getting Rs2 lakh each as compensation," Sibal said.

The senior lawyer, appearing for the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW), highlighted how the 2018 judgment of the apex court in Tehseen Poonawala case had foretold that lynching and mob violence were "creeping threats" and need to be nipped in the bud.

The court had warned that the rising wave of frenzied mobs — fed by fake news, self-professed morality and false stories — would consume the country like a "typhoon-like monster". "We are issuing notice," the Bench told Sibal.

The court asked the Union home

ministry and heads of police forces of Maharashtra, Orissa, Haryana, Rajasthan, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh to respond to the petition.

On July 10, the apex court had, in a separate case, decided to take stock of what the Centre and state governments have done so far to punish those involved in lynching, mostly spurred by communal hate, since its July 2018 judgment.

The judgment had condemned these "horrendous acts of mobocracy" as an anathema which requires a special law and punishment.

A Bench of Justices Sanjeev Khanna and Bela M Trivedi, on July 10, had directed the state governments to file year wise data, from 2018, regarding the complaints filed, FIRs registered and challans submitted in courts concerning incidents of mob violence and lynching.

The court had said the home ministry could meet with the department heads concerned of states and provide an updated status on measures taken by them to comply with the preventive remedial measures directed by the Supreme Court on its July 17, 2018 judgment in Tehseen Poonawala case.

The judgment had directed states to form Special Task Forces to collect intelligence on likely incidents of hate speeches, mob violence and lynchings in districts. The judgment had made it clearly the duty of the Central and state governments to take steps to curb and stop the dis-

semination of explosive messages, videos, etc, which have a "tendency to incite mob violence and lynching

of any kind".

The 2018 judgment had directed that the police were duty bound to register FIRs, arrest the accused, carry out effective investigation and file charge sheets in complaints of mob violence and lynchings.

AIFUCTO, JFME Launch Countrywide Protest

Demand Withdrawal of NEP

Prof Arun Kumar

All India Federation of University and College Teachers' Organisations (AIFUCTO) and Joint Forum for Movement on Education (JFME) have called up on the teaching fraternity across the country to organise state level protests on September 13, 2023 demanding withdrawal of NEP, Implementation of OPS and to end the adhoc appointments in the entire system of education.

In a press statement issued, general secretary, AIFUCTO, Prof Arun Kumar said that NEP -2020 has been imposed upon the nation without consulting the stakeholders. Neither the Parliament nor the states have been taken into confidence. AIFUCTO along with JFME tried to restrain the process of implementation and also to have a dialogue with the government at the Centre. They failed to attract attention and also failed to find a democratic response. AIFUCTO and all the contingents of JFME have firm view that the NEP-2020 is an attempt to centralize, corporatize, commercialize and communalize the system of education. In NEP-2020, the constitutional ethos, democratic values, secularism, federalism and social justice have been seriously injured. Their protests were also intentionally ignored. In fact NEP is basically against the women, the deprived, minorities and marginalized section of societies because the whole system has been shifted from grant to loan. Education System of the nation is in deep crisis. Being failed in all our previous attempts to arouse the democratic conscience of the Government of India, AIFUCTO with JFME decided to organise protests at state levels on August 1, 2023 and Massive Demonstration on September 13, 2023 in Delhi. Our charter of demands include Withdraw NEP, Restore OPS, 10 percent GDP for Education. Absorb/regularise the services adhoc/part-time/guest teachers/contractual/block grant employees and provide them dignified salary and security of service like pension, gratuity. Along with these issues, state level demands must be included.

AIFUCTO has called upon the teaching fraternity across the country to come forward to lodge our intense protest to save our public system of education and its democratic, secular, scientific and federal character. AIFUCTO and JFME appeal to the Government of India not to impose common syllabus, cuet, virtual university, BoG, budget cut and blended mode of learning that are against the common masses of the entire nation.

AIFUCTO hopes that Central Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan would ask for discussion with all stakeholders including AIFUCTO to save campus, save education, save nation.

Delhi CPI on Membership Drive

The meeting of the Delhi state council of the Communist Party of India held on July 27, 2023 has decided to build a strong party as well as to enroll more members. The meeting held at party's Subzi Mandi Ghanta Ghar office in North Delhi was presided over by Shankarlal, secretariat member.

State council secretary Dinesh Varshney reported about the activities of the state party. He spoke in detail on Delhi state flood relief work undertaken by the party, daily programmes in support of wrestlers agitation, 'BJP Hatao, Desh Bachao' national campaign from April 14 April to May 15 May etc. It was decided to build a strong party and to renew party membership

by December 31.

Party national council

16 in Delhi. He wanted each party member to enroll one



secretary Dr K Narayana addressing the council reported on the decisions of the party national council meeting held from July 14 to

or more party members. He urged the council members to make the state unit and the mass fronts active and strong. He added that the Modi

government is only benefiting the capitalists.

Party national council secretary Amarjeet Kaur while reporting on the recent national council meeting said that the party is of the view that the Russia-Ukraine war is provoked by NATO nations. Proxy war by them is fought against Russia. She added the BJP government at the Centre is making an excuse for the steepest price rise, unemployment, highest ever fuel prices, other problems of the people by putting the cause on the Russia-Ukraine war. Modi always diverts people's attention from the core problems of the people by raising communal issues.

BJP, RSS and the government through UCC want to lead the nation to a communal

divide. This they are doing for 2024 Lok Sabha elections. In the Karnataka elections, every section of society defeated the BJP-RSS communalism and jumala bazi. Manipur violence is the brain child of them. Modi could speak on Manipur only after 79 days and that too by diverting the main issue of Manipur violence.

She said all CPI comrades, left and democratic parties and forces should work together so that 'BJP Hatao, Desh Bachao' goals can be achieved.

She added that the formation of 26 parties front INDIA is a welcome step to save India from BJP, RSS fascistic, communal and jumla politics.

She explained all national council decisions in detail.

What the Others Say...

Rap on the knuckles

It is a matter of shame for the Union government and several state governments that the Supreme Court has had to remind them of their "consistent failure" in the past five years to act against the lynching of and mob violence against Muslims and marginalised sections by "cow vigilantes" in particular. Following a petition by the National Federation of Indian Women highlighting this failure, the Court has asked the ministry of home affairs, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana to respond to it. In 2018, the Court, in *Tehseen S Poonawalla vs Union of India*, had held that it was the "sacrosanct duty" of the state to protect the lives of its citizens and that the authorities have the "principal obligation" to prevent "vigilantism" of any kind...

That lynching, mob violence and "cow vigilantism" — an incorrect euphemism for criminals engaging in wanton violence against minorities for the purported reason of transporting cattle for slaughter or meat — still happen since the judgment and little has been done by the Union government or the states in question, especially in north India, points to the nonchalance of the governments. It does not take deductive powers to note that the ideology of the Bharatiya Janata Party at the Centre and in many of these states that allows for the stereotyping and demonising of the minorities has also played into this. Besides vigilantism, social and economic boycott of the minority community have also taken root in states where they receive political patronage. The Court is right in issuing orders to agencies of the state in holding them to account for the non-implementation of the guidelines in the 2018 judgment. However, it requires no less than concerted civil society action to tackle the menace of mob violence and "vigilantism" by sensitising people towards fraternal relations with other communities and avoiding typecasting them as the "other". In Tamil Nadu, for example, where, historically, secular and rational movements were active, such incidents are rare. And if they do occur, dominant political representatives face outrage from civil society. Preventing atrocities of the kind that mob violence wreaks on ordinary citizens cannot be left to just judicial fiat.

Courtesy: *The Hindu*

Campus unfreedom

The stated vision of South Asian University (SAU) is expansive. Located in Delhi, it is sponsored by all eight SAARC nations to "strengthen regional consciousness" by providing "liberal and humane education to the brightest and the most dedicated students of South Asia so that a new class of quality leadership is nurtured". However, the "undertaking" that SAU expects incoming students to sign undermines its own promise. It also violates the students "fundamental rights to privacy and freedom of expression and association.

The "General Declaration" asks students to promise that they will "neither join in any agitation/ strike for the purpose of forcing the authorities of the University to resolve any problem", nor will they participate in any activity which has a tendency to disturb the peace and tranquility of academic environment of the SAL campus/ or its hostel premises?

It also asks incoming students to declare that they are "not suffering from any serious/ contagious ailment and/ or any psychiatric/ psychological disorder." SAU administration must ask itself: Can "quality leadership" be created by muzzling students? And at a time when educational institutions across India and the world are trying to have open conversations about mental health, should young adults be asked to "declare" their mental health issues? This is violative of the imperative of confidentiality and privacy when it comes to a citizen's medical history.

SAU's undertaking is part of a dismal pattern in several higher education institutions across the country. Students are infantilised and there is an attempt to control and confine them instead of encouraging them to learn about and experiment with ideas, identities, and politics. And the university, instead of being a safe space for free speech, is seen as a battleground. University administrations, public or private, from JNU to Ashoka University and Hyderabad Central University, among others, appear to harbour a fear of being challenged by their faculty and students. In November last year, SAU suspended or expelled five students and 15 faculty members for protesting fee hikes. Now, with its repressive General Declaration, it is setting up a stark choice for students: To receive higher education, they must sacrifice their rights. Such a binary flies in the face of constitutional values. Unless it wants to let down "the brightest and most dedicated" young people it purports to serve, SAU must withdraw this undertaking.

Courtesy: *The Indian Express*

Hiroshima and Nagasaki were targets of nuclear bombing on August 6th and 9th 1945 respectively. On the 78th anniversary of these tragedies, we must remember the dreadful effects of the incidents that wiped out two cities, killed over 2 lakh people, and left mankind to suffer from the effects of radiation for several decades to come. Those who survived envied the dead. They suffered both physical and mental trauma. It was horrifying to watch the images of the effects of the atomic bombing during my personal visit to the Peace Museum in Hiroshima.

Second World War had almost ended and it was imminent that Japan would not be able to sustain for more than a few weeks. There was no justification for using such weapons of mass destruction. But the US wanted to assert its imperial power. A secret Manhattan project was launched to make a powerful weapon.

Modern science by then had given ample knowledge about the energy produced as a result of nuclear fission reactions. On July 16, 1945, the first atomic bomb exploded at the Trinity test site in the desert of New Mexico. Robert Julio Oppenheimer was the physicist behind this nuclear explosion. The explosion resulted in an unprecedented release of energy - equivalent to 20,000 tons of TNT exploding in less than 10 seconds. Even though the bomb was detonated from the top of a 30-meter steel tower, the blast created a crater over 2 meters deep and 40 meters wide. All around the crater, the ground was covered with a material never seen before.

The impact was beyond the assumption of the human mind. Oppenheimer developed the bomb, but its further use was not under his decision-making. He was a scientist, who had no control over the application of the bomb. As shown in a recent film on him, he later remarked that the explosion brought to his mind words from a religious scripture saying, "Now I have be-

come Death, the destroyer of worlds". This is a lesson for the scientists that they should not venture into such



things which could have harmful applications.

It had become clear that this weapon of mass destruction would add to the arms race. A new study on the radiation impact of the first nuclear explosion, says that the radiation reached 46 states, Canada, and Mexico



within 10 days of detonation. At present, we have 9 nuclear weapons possessing countries. There are several more countries that have the potential to develop such a device. The total number of nuclear warheads present on Earth is estimated to be 13000.

The world is however

now much more informed about the twin existential threat due to climate change and nuclear weapons. A landmark report, Nuclear Famine (2022), published by International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) summarizes

the latest scientific work which shows that a so-called "limited" or "regional" nuclear war would be neither limited nor regional. 'A war that detonated less than 1/20th of the world's nuclear weapons, would still crash the climate, the global food supply chains, and likely

public order.

Famines and unrest would kill hundreds of millions, perhaps even billions. Using less than three percent of the world's nuclear weapons, a nuclear war between India and Pakistan could kill up to every third person on Earth, with average global temperatures dropping about

It is Imperative to Abolish Nuke Weapons

Dr Arun Mitra

1.3 degrees Celsius. A full-scale nuclear war between the United States and Russia would kill an estimated five billion people worldwide within two years. This could

be an end to the modern civilization built through thousands of years of human labour.

The findings come at a time of greatly heightened tensions among nuclear states and amid warnings that we are closer to nuclear war than we have ever been. The threat has increased manifold after the war began between Russia and Ukraine. The US & NATO's explicit involvement shows their designs to increase their area of influence. In fact, after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the dissolution of NATO in a similar manner would have helped strengthen global peace.

There are several movements around the globe working at the international level as well as national level. Medical professionals have united under the banner of IPPNW to inform the world about the health impacts of nuclear weapons. The International Campaign to

Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) with 650 partner organizations are working for lobbying and advocacy. In fact, it was their intense work that led to the passing of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) by the UN General Assembly in July 2017. World Peace Council and Pugwash are also working on this. International Anti-Nuclear Movement "Nevada-Semey" is highlighting jointly the impact of nuclear detonations with the aim to promote the rapprochement of cultures, the practical implementation of ideas of peace, and the emergence of global consciousness under the leadership of Suleimenov Olzhas.

It is time that mankind must unite to not let the events take shape into a catastrophe. That nuclear weapons serve as deterrent is a myth that needs to be broken. Even if the countries decide not to use these weapons, any technology issue could play havoc. Moreover, the expenditure on their production, putting them on alert and their maintenance is costing our resources which could have otherwise been used for health, education, and other social needs

All these movements have one common goal, to make the world free of nuclear weapons. The TPNW is the hope which should be fulfilled collectively. India has been the harbinger of the peace movement under the banner of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). We must again rise to our historical role in bringing peace and harmony.

No Conclusive Data on Arrests for Spying

Reacting to minister of state for home affairs Nityanand Rai's written reply, CPI national council secretary Binoy Viswam MP said that despite the country witnessing an unprecedented number of people being accused of spying and espionage by Indian security agencies, the home ministry has no conclusive data on the subject. Several cases of espionage were reported in the media

recently implicating officials in high positions. Many activists were also allegedly targeted under the Official Secrets Act for asking difficult questions to the government.

In reply to the question raised by Binoy Viswam, the minister said in a written reply that out of the 136 people arrested under the Official Secrets Act during the three-year period between 2019 and 2021, only two persons

have been convicted. The conviction rate for Official Secrets Act during 2019-21 is merely one per cent. For a government that leaves no opportunity in thumping its chest on national security, the extremely low number of convictions exposes the reality behind the government's loud rhetoric. The reply also said that 155 cases have been pending trial, as the number of cases pending trial has been on a consistent rise since 2019.

While the question posed

by Binoy Viswam was about cases registered and arrests made by central investigative agencies, the minister made no mention of it and provided data available with the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). The ministry also kept silent on the query about the longest pending trial for espionage under the Official Secrets Act.

"The reality is that the government's record on

national security is excruciable. Several cases of espionage, honey trap, and compromised officials have come to light but no actions are carried out. Laws concerning national security are being squandered to antagonize activists. The truth is out in courts where the government could get a conviction in only one per cent of the total cases." Binoy Viswam said.

CPI Storms Manipur Legislative Assembly

Joy Kumar

Communist Party of India (CPI) Manipur state council organized a massive rally at Imphal near the state legislative assembly gate demanding the commencement of the assembly session for discussing and resolving the Manipur crisis immediately.

The protest in which hundreds of people took part

was held near the legislative assembly. Also a demonstration was held near the bust of Jananeta Hijam Irawat, the founding leader of party in Manipur at Lilasing Khongnangkhang, Thangmeiband on Manipur Day, July 25, 2023. Many comrades staged a sit-in-protest at Yumjao Lairembi community hall. Speaking on the sidelines, CPI state council secretary



Leishangthem Thoiren informed that the prevailing situation in Manipur was deliberated in detail during the CPI national council meeting held in Delhi from July 14 to 16. A decision was also taken during the meeting to carry out the solidarity day on July 25 for the restoration of peace in Manipur. He then said that convening the assembly could help in solving the issue and urged the government to take requisite steps in this regard.

CPI state council assistant secretary M. Joykumar Luwang said that the Manipur Solidarity Day

was observed by the party in various states across the country, including at Guwahati Rajgar Road, Silchar, Bhubaneswar, Odissa, and in other state capitals and district headquarters.

CPI Manipur state council is planning for strong protests against the double-engine BJP governments for their deliberate inaction in solving the crisis and ethnic violence occurring in the state for three months. More than 150 people were killed, 500 were injured, 4000 houses were burned down and

nearly 60,000 people became homeless due to the violence. Former Secretary L. Sotin Kumar and many other leaders were present in the demonstration.

The police used tear gas and other repressive measures against the rallies. In many instances CPI comrades confronted police and there were issues of physical violence from the side of the police. The efforts of the police to suppress the demonstrations went in vain in front of the strong resistance from the side of party cadres.

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DU New Workload Norms to Hit SC, ST Students the Most

The newly released workload norms by Delhi University have triggered concerns over “dilution” in the quality of education imparted to students, as the crumbling infrastructure does not have the capacity to bear the increased load, according to teachers.

According to the notification released by University of Delhi, the new classroom size for undergraduate courses shall consist of 60 students, and 20 students each for tutorials and practical, respectively.

For post-graduate courses, 50 students can attend the lectures while minimum 20 students are to be allowed for practical and tutorials. The General Elective Courses, Skill Enhancement Course and Value Addition courses can be taught to groups of 20 to 60 students. The notification further added that in undergraduate courses, minimum students for any course shall be 20. In case, adequate students are not available, the cluster of colleges shall be used for the teaching and learning process.

Cluster colleges are those centres where students can study their options if their choice is not available in their own institutions.

However, the new regime has been heavily criticised by students bodies, too, who alleged that it will unnecessarily increase the travel time.

The new workload norms have come under fire from teachers who said that students from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST) and other

marginalised communities will suffer the most and the chances of them dropping out are likely to further increase.

So far teachers could take care of students from marginalised communities because the tutorial class size was limited to 10 students.

The students would go to teachers with specific questions and they could address them. How are teachers supposed to



give them time when the university is prescribing a minimum class size for tutorial and practical to 20. The students who could think of better lives after formal education in colleges will feel betrayed.

The students teacher ratio that was earlier prescribed by former education policies at 1:18 has been revised at 1:30 under the New Education Policy (NEP). Further the class size of honours courses has changed from 40 in choice-based credit system to 60 in Undergraduate Curriculum Framework in NEP.

Changes have taken place without any academic debate or discussion and are being imposed by the university administration with scant regard for any academic merit. Moreover

they are being done through notifications by the Registrar instead of being approved by the relevant statutory bodies, ie, the Academic and the Executive Council.

The University Grants Commission has neither allocated funds nor new teachers for EWS (economically weaker sections) quota implementation. In this situation, swollen classes will be a matter of concern.

Many colleges where stu-

dents cannot take practical and tutorials in one go. Additionally, what skills can be imparted if the SEC and VAC papers, which are lab and tutorial-oriented, are to be taught to a class of 60 students.

The number of teachers who would have come under EWS expansion has simply gone. The students studying their masters and PhD in DU and other central universities will simply have very few opportunities to pursue their careers and head to private universities unfortunately.

Condemnation for the new norms also poured in. The notification for class/tutorial/practical batch size was a step toward ruining the academic and teaching learning process in university. Indirectly and

slowly, the university is moving toward online mode of teaching. This is a clear reflection of less funding by the Central government and in conjunction with policy of NEP 2020.

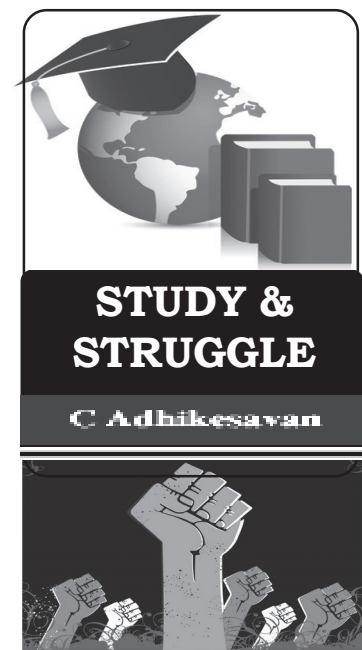
On the one hand, NEP provides diversity in paper selection/choice but at the same time it has restricted the choice. For instance, if the students' strength is less than 20 in a course, then they will visit cluster centres, and this will directly fluctuate the workload of any department in a college.

The real impact of these changes would be on colleges located in far-flung places. It may be easier for students to commute within North and South Campuses because they are closely located. Are the policy makers aware that students already travel up to 20 km to pursue their studies and their hopes for education would simply be hit when they are told to sit in overcrowded lectures and tutorials.

The NRF Bill is a threat to publicly funded science

The NRF Bill, 2023 seeks to replace the publicly funded mechanism of research support to the scientific community through the Science and Engineering Board Act, 2008 with a mechanism expected to be largely directed by the funds available through corporate sector and philanthropic foundations.

The National Research Foundation (NRF) Bill, 2023 has been approved by the Cabinet for introduction in the monsoon session of the Parliament. It has been largely welcome with some critical comments also emerging from the research community. The architects of the NRF Bill have claimed that the NRF emulates the



model of National Science Foundation of United States. Although an in-depth scrutiny of the NRF Bill 2023 will have to wait, what is certain is that the proposed model of NRF does not address the challenges faced by the Indian scientific community. In fact, this Bill has a design which is potentially capable of making the future of Indian science and higher education only more vulnerable and will allow the foreign donors, corporate philanthropists and domestic big business to capture the research directions.

NRF-funded research will be opening new doors for corporates to establish merchants of doubt to delegitimise publicly funded science. The corporates would leverage the NRF to become the guardians of reason. The NRF projects will offer legitimacy to the evidence building for the creation of markets for their brave technological solutions to the problems of Indian poverty and sustainability. The NRF Bill, 2023 seeks to replace the publicly funded mechanism of research support to the scientific community through the Science and Engineering Board (SERB) Act, 2008 with a mechanism expected to be largely directed by the funds available through corporate sector and philanthropic foundations.

Kamala Mukherjee: From Jugantar to CPI

Kamala Mukherjee (Chatterjee) was born on May 24, 1913 in a village of Howrah district, the then undivided Bengal. Her father ShPramathnath Chatterjee was a follower of ShivnathShastri, a protagonist of BrahmaSamaj. He was also sympathetic to the revolutionary movement. That was the time of Bengal Partition (1905-11).

Her father worked as a forest officer, was sacked and then joined as a Physical Instructor in Brahma Boys School. He was arrested several times for revolutionary activities. He was in prison when Kamala was born. When she was just 3 months old, he fled to Germany and joined MN Roy. He died there in 1917.

Kamala was the youngest among two sisters and a brother. The family was left shelter-less after father left for abroad. So, some revolutionary sympathisers supported them. Kamala's mother took up a teaching job in a school in Mymensingh, bringing up her three children. Her father had left a diary, which described various places in India. He liked Rajasthan very much, and wished in the diary that his children should visit Rajasthan. Therefore, one of the brothers of Kamala left for that area at an early age.

They lived near Damodar river, which got flooded every year. In 1916 also the floods came in the river. They were surrounded by water and somehow they managed to go to the third story of a house, and were saved. They were trapped there for a long time. Relief workers rescued them. A woman relief worker, herself a Brahma, took pity on them and took them to Mymensingh in 1917. Kamala's mother took up the teaching job here in a school.

Maharaja of Mymensingh was a patriotic person. Lot of social and educational reforms were carried out in the district. There were several schools, hospitals, and colleges that he helped to open.

Kamala was educated in Mymensingh Vidyamayee School, received scholarship, and continued her education up to college level. They wore coarse clothes. Mymensingh was a hotbed of revolutionary activities. She came to know of Sister Nivedita, Aurobindo and BaghaJatin, who all visited the place. Famous revolutionary Surendra Mohan Ghosh became her leader.

Kamala's brother Amarendu Chatterjee went to Rajasthan first, as per the wishes of their father as expressed in his diary, which he read only in 1919. He came back and joined the non-cooperation movement. He studied in City School started by Anand Mohan and then in the National School. He was severely beaten by the Police during the movement. He shunned all the luxuries of life, and quietly left the family. He died when 16 years old.

Her elder sister Tapasi Chatterjee was a brilliant student, imbued with patriotism.



She was more attracted to the philosophy of Swami Vivekanand.

'Simon Commission, Go Back!'

'Simon Commission, Go Back!' agitation engulfed Calcutta in 1928. Kamala's sister wrote back from Calcutta not to keep quiet. So, Kamala and her friends decided to go on strike. The girls in the hostel and others organized it, 75 in all. Kamala was in Class Ten. The school principal threatened rustication, displaying government orders. All this went for several days, and nobody except two or three surrendered. After sometime the rustication was withdrawn and the struggle ended in victory. It was her first victory, and she was very much encouraged by it.

Some of the teachers were very patriotic. Encouraged by them, the Girls' Guide Organization never sang the anthem 'God Save the King'. Instead they sang 'God Kill the King'!

Kamala joined the Scottish Church College in Calcutta after passing her Matric in

1929. It was a co-educational college, which broadened her vision.

In revolutionary movement

Kamala joined the civil disobedience movement in 1930. She recruited almost all the girls in her college as volunteers. They sold the illegal salt also. She and other girls recruited almost everybody, all girls. Jugantar leaders came from Mymensingh, and Kamala did lot of work for them. SM Ghosh was among the top Jugantar leaders. He was also the secretary of Bengal Congress. She also worked actively for the Congress. They visited every house and propagated khadi, and helped those injured in police atrocities.

So, she worked both openly as well as underground.

In the meantime, she got introduced to KalpanaDutt, SuhasiniGanguli and other revolutionaries. PritilataWaddedar was in the same college, a year senior and residing in the same hostel. They and Bethune College girls were very active in bomb-making and other activities. Kalpana and Pritilata carried ingredients of a bomb from the college.

All these girls including Kamala worked practically 24 hours. They were greatly influenced by the Irish revolution, the Sinn Fein Movement, Swami Vivekanand's works, Bankim Chatterjee, Dan Breen, Mazzini, Garibaldi, and also the Russian revolution.

Kalpana wrote to her colleagues from Chittagong in 1930 to procure chemicals to make bombs. They also planned to rescue the prisoners of Chittagong Armoury Raid from the jail. But the plan got leaked in the course of the preparations, and there were arrests all over Bengal.

Murder of Comilla magistrate

The Comilla magistrate was murdered in December 1931 by Shanti and Suniti. It was Shanti who shot him. Kamala was arrested along with six others: Indumati Singh, Leela Nag, SuhasiniGanguly and 3 others. They were first put in Suri Jail, and six months later were shifted to Hijli Jail. The number of women prisoners rose to from 7 to 23. Suhasini was beaten up and even given electric shocks in the Chandernagore PS. Kamala, though not harassed physically, was troubled in various other ways.

When Gandhiji came to visit the prisoners, it was KalpanaDutt, who met him on behalf of them.

Joining CPI

In Hijli Jail, Kamala came to know Ashalata Sen and Matangini Hajra. After their release, many members of the Jugantar Party joined the CPI. Kamala joined in 1938 after Latika Sen joined the party; she had to wait one full year, as party membership was not easy those days.

Both Jugantar and Anushilan parties also collaborated with the Burmese Communist Party. Its leader Aung San came to attend the Ramgarh Congress session, 1940. He met many Congress and Communist leaders. Subhash Chandra Bose and Aung San were close friends. Later, the British handed over power to him. Kamala watched all these events with great interest and learned much.

Kamala was critical of the Stalin-Hitler Pact of August 1939, and also the way the policy of the People's War was practiced. This led to certain isolation from the people. She felt that the party should have laid greater emphasis on the national side of the question during the WW II.

She opined that if the National Congress had permitted the coalition with Fazlul Haque's Krishak Praja Party, Muslim League could have been kept at bay, land distribution could have taken place and many communal troubles could have been avoided. There was a class angle too in all these events, she thought.

Mahila Atma-Raksha

Samiti (MARS)

Kamala participated in the founding of Mahila Sangh of the Congress, along with Leela Roy, Bina Das, Kamala Dasgupta and others. This was the first attempt at building a united women's organization in Bengal. It began to publish a journal called 'Mandira', with Kamala Chatterjee as its editor. Later, she left the post as anti-Communist feelings began to rise.

She also took part in the street-corner meetings in Calcutta.

Kamala was arrested at the start of the 1942 movement. After her release, she took part in the formation of Mahila Atma Raksha Samiti (MARS) or Women's Self-protection Society or League. In April 1942, some of the active women came together. Among them were: Renu Chakravarty, Ela Reid, Manikuntala Sen and Kamala Chatterjee. It was decided to organize MARS. It started functioning from the house of Ela Reid. It was the time that Women's Emergency Volunteers was also formed with Pamela

Biographies of Communist Leaders-91

— Anil Rajimwale —

Bankart as secretary; the two organizations worked together. In fact, The MARS was founded on May 7-8, 1943. It became very popular, and did lot of work for the protection of women during the WW II.

Chittagong and other places were bombed by the Japanese, and still others were in danger. The MARS and others worked hard to organize squads for arms, defense, food, relief etc. A large number of 'baithaks' (small meetings) were organized. It soon became a big organization of 22000 members.

Kamala became part of the relief kitchens for the famine-stricken people, particularly the women in Calcutta. Kamala, along with Sita Chaudhary, Brahmakumari Roy and others began to build a shelter home for the destitute women. Out of this effort emerged Nari Seva Sangh, which continued to exist as a rehabilitation centre.

The second conference of MARS was held in Barisal in May 1944. Kamala Chatterjee placed the report of All India MARS.

Marriage

Kamala got married to Dr Nirad Prasad Mukherjee in 1944. He was secretary to Maulana Azad. He was dismissed during the 'BTR Period'. The day after their marriage, Kamala gave away all her ornaments to the Communist Party.

The MARS was banned in 1949. Many women leaders went underground. Kamala was arrested. She was in prison for almost 3 years, along with her 4-year old son Abhijit. Bani Dasgupta and many others too were there. Kamala did not agree with the BTR Line. She said, the party suffered much.

Foundation of NFIW

Earlier, the All India Women's Conference or the AIWC was the largest joint organization of women. Communists and other trends worked within it, particularly before the freedom of the country. There were many joint actions. For example, on the question of Hindu Code Bill, a national

campaign was launched in early 1940s. Under pressure, a Committee headed by BN Rau toured the country extensively and suggested many progressive steps. It made its recommendations in 1943. Its draft Code was widely supported by the MARS and other women's organizations. Thousands of signatures were collected.

Gradually however, political differences grew within the AIWC. After independence, it moved closer to the government. Toiling Women's Convention took place in 1948 in Calcutta. An all India meeting of Women Communists in 1952 underlined the need to form a new women's organization.

In all this process Kamala Mukherjee (Chatterjee) played an important role. On June 4, 1954, 600 women from 39 women's organizations gathered in Calcutta University Hall to discuss the issue. A reception committee had already been formed. It was at this conference that the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) was founded. Kamala Mukherjee was among the founders of the NFIW. She participated in the drafting of its Constitution.

The West Bengal Mahila Samiti got split in 1970. A section went away with the CPM-led women's organization. Kamala remained with the parent organization, and worked to strengthen it. Mahila Samiti brought out a journal titled 'Chalar Pathe'. Its editor was Kamala Mukherjee. She was also in the forefront of all the major struggles fought by women.

She was later associated with many social organizations. She did not always agree and reconcile with party's policies and methods of functioning.

She also became passionate about mountaineering and travelled extensively in the Himalayas. She worked till the end of her life in the NFIW.

Kamala Mukherjee (Chatterjee) passed away on May 1, 2005.

Fill Up Vacancies in Bank Branches: AIBEA

The following is the text of the letter written by AIBEA general secretary C H Venkatachalam to Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman urging her to urgently fill up vacancies in banks:

You are well aware that banks in general and Public Sector Banks in particular are playing a pivotal role in broad-based economic development of our country in multiple and varied ways. Banks are also serving more than 100 crores of customers. Especially after nationalisation of banks, these banks have transformed phenomenally through proliferation of branches throughout the country including in very remote rural areas and hitherto unbanked villages and in reaching the masses and common people. In mobilising the precious savings of the people and extending credit to the needy segments, these banks have

performed an exceptional role with utmost social orientation.

All these patriotic roles to subserve national objectives have been undertaken by the banks only because of the dedicated customer services being rendered by the employees of these banks. Given the type and range of clientele served by the banks, provision of adequate number of staff in the branches is critical and crucial for the effective and satisfactory services to be rendered to the banking public at large.

We are conscious that over the years, alternative delivery channels have evolved including technology based and digitalised banking transactions. But these are more supplemental in nature and the need for adequate manpower in the banks cannot be undermined or dented.

When everyone — government, RBI, bank managements, banking pub-

lic — expects and demands best customer services, we find that due to acute shortage of staff in the branches and non-provision of adequate staff, existing employees are unable to cope up and invariably the quality of customer service suffers. The only way to ensure best customer service is to provide needed staff in the branches.

But we observe that in the recent years, there is a disturbing trend in the banks in as much as that the intake of clerical staff by the banks have drastically come down. Year after year, banks have reduced the number of clerical staff to be recruited and lesser and lesser Indents are placed with the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection. Some of the banks do not place any Indent at all. To quote the current example, only five banks have placed their Indent with IBPS for recruitment of 4,045 clerical staff for the year 2024-25. Remaining

public sector banks have not placed any Indent at all. Consequently the number of staff in the branches has come down considerably resulting in undue workload on the staff.

In addition to reduction in number of clerical staff due to lack of adequate recruitments, we observe that the banks have not been filling up the vacancies of subordinate staff and part-time house-keeping staff/ safai karmachari employees. These segments of employees are equally vital and important part of the manpower in the banks in extending proper customer services. Satisfactory customer services and proper functioning of the bank branches is incomplete without them. But banks have been extremely parsimonious and miserly in recruitment of subordinate staff and part time staff. Without exaggeration we can state that banks are deliberately avoiding re-

ruitment of these categories of staff.

To add salt to the wound, we reliably learn that some instructions have been given by the ministry of finance, government of India to the banks not to fill up these posts through regular employment of permanent staff, particularly the part time employees and house-keeping staff. On this premises, bank managements are not willing to recruit staff to fill up these vacancies.

In view of this, banks are engaging staff on temporary, casual and ad hoc basis which in due course would entangle the banks into a lot of litigations and legal complications.

Hence, in the interest of the banks, these instructions not to fill up these vacancies through regular recruitment need to be withdrawn. We request you intervene in the matter and advice the banks suitably to provide adequate staff in the bank branches.

India's Manufacturing Sector Activity Falls for 2nd Month

Manufacturing sector activities in India moderated for the second straight month in July as rates of expansion in output and new orders eased slightly, a monthly survey said on August 1, 2023. The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) eased to 57.7 in July from 57.8 in June. Despite the fall, the Indian manufacturing sector maintained strong growth momentum at the start of the third quarter amid ongoing buoyant demand, the survey said.

The July PMI data pointed to an improvement in overall operating conditions for the 25th straight month. In PMI parlance, a

print above 50 means expansion while a score below 50 indicates contraction. "The Indian manufacturing sector showed little sign of losing growth momentum in July as production lines continued to motor on the back of strong new order growth," said Andrew Harker, Economics Director at S&P Global Market Intelligence.

Rates of expansion in output and new orders were only marginally softer than in June, with firms expanding their employment and purchasing activity accordingly, the survey said. "Pressure continued to come on capacity, prompting firms to expand employment solidly again, a trend that is likely to continue in the months

ahead should demand remain strong," Harker said.

Harker added that "all in all, the Indian manufacturing sector has maintained its position as one of the star performers globally, bucking the trend of demand weakness seen in other parts of the world." According to the survey, reports of demand improvements were widespread and resulted in another marked expansion of new orders in the sector. Growth in new export business picked up to the fastest since last November.

Respondents noted increase in new orders from customers in the US and neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh and Nepal, it said. Firms responded to

greater workloads by taking on extra staff. The solid pace of job creation was broadly in line with those seen in May and June. On the inflation front, cost inflationary pressures remained relatively muted.

The rate of input cost inflation accelerated to a nine-month high in July. Panelists reported higher costs for raw materials, in particular cotton. These higher prices for raw materials, plus rising labour costs, led firms to increase their selling prices, the survey said, adding that the rate of inflation was solid, but eased to a three-month low.

Firms generally expect demand to remain elevated over the coming year, sup-

porting projections for growth of production." Confidence was slightly lower than that seen in June, but remained above the series average. Around 32 per cent of respondents predicted a rise in output, with just two per cent pessimistic," the survey said.

The S&P Global India Manufacturing PMI is compiled by S&P Global from responses to questionnaires sent to purchasing managers in a panel of around 400 manufacturers. The panel is stratified by detailed sector and company workforce size, based on contributions to GDP. Data collection began in March 2005.

The shattering of the MSME sector which was caused due to Demonetization in 2016 continues despite the proclaimed packages and claims. The demolishing of the MSME sector was further exacerbated by the GST reforms of 2017 and the unscientific, unprepared lockdown in 2020. Thousands of MSMEs were forced to shut down, rendering most of them unviable, and most are still struggling to survive. Lakhs of jobs were destroyed, and the era of joblessness that began in 2016 continues with record unemployment rates that reached 8.4 percent in July 2023.

The MSME sector in India has been a critical sector of the Indian economy, but it has undergone an unprecedented level of apathy from the government under Modi since 2014. The most shocking fact is that after the 73rd round survey conducted by NSS on MSME, the government has not collected any data about the sector. The union government still relies on the older data for the present scenario assessments.

There were about 6.33 crore MSMEs in the country in 2015-16, but as on July 26, 2023, a total of only 2.09 crore MSMEs were registered on Udyam Portal which included Udyam Assist Platform (UAP). Out of them, 2.02 crore are micro, 5.6 lakhs are small, and 52,821 are medium enterprises. They all together have employed 12.57 crore people. There is no official answer to the question about the disappearance of the 4.24 crore MSMEs.

Analyzing the employment figures, there was only about 1.27 crore addition in the MSME sector in the last eight years since 2015, which is a pittance compared to the 2-crore people entering every year in the Indian job market. Since government support are available chiefly to the MSMEs on record, it can be concluded that over 4.24 crore MSMEs are either no more extant or have no ac-

cess to the government's various measures to support the sector, such as providing collateral-free loans, credit guarantees, subsidies, tax relief, moratoriums, and incentive. As per the 2015-16 data, there were 6.30 crore micro, 3.31 lakh small, and 5 thousand medium en-

terprises and the big companies extracted the government packages and assistance provided to medium enterprises. The changed definition also included businesses into enterprise categories of MSMEs only to increase their number since most of them had already vanished by 2020. Thus, the real beneficiaries were pushed beneath the margins.

Let us take the example

cent on Tarun loans, and GST was also charged.

Altogether, it was too costly for the poor borrower. In practice, there is a much worse condition. Officials were given a free hand on charging interest rates which varied according to borrowers which gave rise to corruption. Borrowers were even enforced to give bank charges which

The reasons must be ascertained and the borrowers must be given expertise by the government to survive.

Separately Managed Accounts (SMA) went down from 11 percent in March 2022 to 8.6 percent in March 2023, which is an additional concern. Performance under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) which expired on March 31, 2023, has been worse. Modi government had announced 5 lakh crore and disbursed only Rs 3.65 lakh crore from the total sanctioned amount of Rs 3.73 lakh crore. RBI report says that the total disbursement by Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCB) was Rs 2.91 lakh crore. It goes without saying that the performance of the public sector banks has been very dismal.

MSMEs need help beyond loans and must include expertise in planning, implementation, production, and marketing which are not being provided to them resulting in poor performance of the enterprises. RBI report says that an analysis of borrowers availing ECLGS indicates that one-sixth of accounts and one-twentieth of the amount disbursed turned non-performing. Overall delinquency in the microfinance segment, measured in terms of 90+ days past due, in SCB, is still at elevated levels with a seventh of the portfolio under stress. Under these circumstances, MSMEs need special attention, and the Modi government must revisit its policies to revamp to enable them not only to survive but also thrive.

MSME Sector Trails Despite Tall Claims

Dr Gyan Pathak



MSME SECTOR IN INDIA

terprises in the country, but now the registered enterprises in these categories are 2.02 crore, 5.6 lakh small, and 52,821 respectively. This data reveals that about 4.28 crore micro enterprises just vanished.

The alteration made by the government in defining MSMEs is the tactic that has helped them in masking the crisis. The union government increased the volume of investments that can be made into the enterprises. Due to this, even the big companies were accommodated to the list of medium-sized enterprises. This in terms of

of the Mudra loan, which is intended to be given to micro-enterprises. The Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) was launched on April 8, 2015, for providing loans up to Rs 10 lakh to non-corporate, non-farm small and micro enterprises. Since its launch, only about 24 lakh crore loans were given. Loans up to Rs 50,000, 5 lakh, and 10 lakh were categorized as Shishu, Kishore, and Tarun respectively. These were announced collateral free. However, the minimum interest rates were charged up to 12 percent per annum, a processing fee of 0.5 per-

they were informed that it would go to the government.

Modi government has launched numerous programs to help MSMEs in the country but all of them only have propaganda value and are contributing only a little on the ground. The Financial Stability Report of RBI released in June 2023 says that credit to the MSME sector grew in the range of 13.8-18.9 percent y-o-y during 2022-23 while admitting that the GNPA ratio for advances below 25 crore is particularly vulnerable to slippage. If it is so, it is a matter for serious concern.

PM Must Apologize for Atrocities on Manipur Women: AIWWF

All India Working Women Forum (AIWWF) of AITUC expresses its profound condemnation at the barbaric acts of violence and atrocities on women in the violence-torn Manipur. Instances of women stripped naked, brutally assaulted, raped and paraded nude are blood curdling, horrific, brutal, sadistic, terrifying, shocking, all at once. More petrifying is the loud silence and the apathy of the 'double engine' BJP government at the Centre and state. It is a shame that the Prime Minister is forced to break his silence after the interven-

Vahidha Nizam

tion of the Supreme Court. Golden silence broke for 20 seconds on the worst crime.

The world watches with utter stupefaction of the brutality carried out in the open. Stunning and spine-chilling events unravel after more than 70 days after the FIR was registered. Many more instances of barbaric violence against women are reported to have happened every day since May 4. It is a shame that both the state

government and the Modi led Central government claim cluelessness. This is criminal ignorance, incredible nescience. All India Working Women Forum of AITUC in unequivocal terms castigates the Modi government for the loss of lives in Manipur and the shame befallen on the nation through the barbaric acts of violence on women. AIWWF-AITUC censures the Modi government for bringing disgrace to the nation. AIWWF-AITUC demands an explanation and unconditional apology of the Prime Minister to the women of India.

The cheap and surreptitious ploy of BJP to create castiest and communal divide in Manipur to reap political dividends has taken hundreds of lives and disgraced the women. India hangs its head down in shame, yet again.

Violence against women and murdering the family seeking justice is seen as a pattern after BJP came to power. Key witnesses go missing, found dead or turn hostile has become the norm. Victims and witnesses are left with dealing host of false charges. Unnao rape case and elimination of the victim's father for seeking justice was done to protect the rapist Kuldip Singh Sengar BJP MLA. In Hathras a 19-year-old girl from dalit community

was raped and killed by the local leaders of BJP. But FIRs were registered with several charges on those who supported the victims. Inhuman act in the name of communal hatred petrified the world when the eight-year-old Asifa Bano was abducted, drugged, raped and murdered in Kathua. What was more shocking here was that two ministers from BJP had attended the rally in support of the alleged murderers. Kathua, Unnao, Hathras were a few instances that tormented the Indian psyche in shame but had left the Prime Minister unmoved and unperturbed.

Remission of life sentence granted to rapists of Bilkis Bano and shielding Brij Bhushan Saran Singh,

Remove Cuba from Terrorists' List: AIPSO

The accusation on Cuba for spreading terrorism is false. The country has a transparent democratic governance system. Cuban doctors have served the suffering humanity during the Covid-19 and other global tragedies. It is not appropriate to include such a country in the list of terrorists.

These views were expressed by All India Peace and Solidarity Organization (AIPSO) national general secretary Arun Kumar while speaking at a meeting organised by the Indore unit to commemorate the historic event of the attack on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago during the Cuban Revolution. He said that there was landlordism in Cuba, farmers were exploited. Fidel Castro, the hero of the Cuban Revolution, distributed land among the landless and used the country's resources for the betterment of its people.

Incensed by Cuba's move towards a socialist society, the US imposed economic sanctions on the country. The then US President Donald Trump has put Cuba in the list of terrorist countries. It prevents other countries from doing business with Cuba.

Arun Kumar further said that 600 attempts were made to assassinate Castro, but the enemies never succeeded. He urged those who believe in world peace to demand that Cuba be removed from the list of terrorist countries.

AIPSO national secretary Vineet Tiwari gave details of the first attempt of the Cuban Revolution, known as the 'Attack on the Moncada Barracks'. He said that on July 26, 1953, Fidel Castro announced the revolution along with

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The Idea of INDIA...

From Front Page

but such an alliance also counters the majoritarian agenda of the BJP by becoming the voice of all sections of society by providing an alternative agenda. Constituents of such a bloc, it must be underlined here, must remain accommodative to each other to foster better understanding and enhanced mutual trust. The strong common resolve that has emerged at national level is to defeat BJP and to save the nation. The specifics need to be worked out at state level to ensure this. The Indian National Congress, being the largest pan Indian constituent of the bloc holds special responsibility in this regard.

To these ends, a meeting was held in Patna in June which was attended by leaders of 15 political parties where it was agreed upon to unite the opposition parties under one umbrella to uphold the Constitution, secularism and social justice by defeating the BJP. In the next meeting at Bangalore,

quite a distance was covered as it was attended by 26 political parties. It was decided to name the united bloc as Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance that is INDIA.

The unity exercise making the BJP wary was evident when Prime Minister Narendra Modi decided to call a meeting of the defunct National Democratic Alliance (NDA) the same day INDIA parties met at Bangalore. The party which was thumping 'Ek Akela Sab Par Bhaari' had to join forces with no less than 37 political parties just by the emergence of unity among secular democratic forces. That itself shows the pivotal importance of unity and the cracks it creates in RSS-BJP's Hindutva acronymism agenda.

The forces that have formed INDIA have the rich legacy of liberating the country from British colonialism. These forces have heralded the public sector and made our country self-reliant. In the fight against social discrimination, linguistic chauvinism and anti-federal

politics, the forces which are part of INDIA have played leading roles. These forces have the trust of the workers, farmers, students and youth of the country. In his desperation, the Prime Minister compared the alliance to the East India Company. He must be reminded of elementary history of both the Left and patriotic forces and his own organization, the RSS. Patriotic forces sacrificed their blood, sweat and youth to liberate the country from British clutches. The steadfastly loyal RSS was pleasing their masters by opposing the freedom movement.

Leaders of our freedom movement envisaged a strong, inclusive and harmonious country. Justice — social, economic and political — was to be its foundation. The RSS stands opposite to this idea by promoting communal divides, caste hierarchies and gendered repression. It is to liberate the country from hatred and to usher in harmony, INDIA has arisen. It is to ensure Justice — social, economic and political that INDIA has united. Unitedly, we will triumph!

Millions Will Live in Extreme Poverty in 2030

As per the report, In 2021, the number of people suffering from hunger was close to 800 million, far above pre-pandemic levels, and in 2022 an estimated 45 million children under the age of 5 suffered from wasting and 148 million had stunted growth while 37 million were overweight. As for education, the report said years of underinvestment and learning losses mean that without a major effort not only will an estimated 84 million children be out of school in 2030 but approximately 300 million students will lack basic literacy and math skills for success in life — and only one in six countries will achieve the target of universal secondary school completion.

In a grim report, the U.N. warned that at the current rate of global progress 575 million people will still be living in extreme poverty and 84 million children won't be going to school in 2030—and it will take 286 years to reach equality between men and women.

The report on progress in achieving 17 wide-ranging U.N. goals adopted by world leaders in 2015 to improve life for the world's more than 7 billion people said that only 15 percent of some 140 specific targets that experts evaluated are on track to be reached by the end of the decade.

Close to half the targets are moderately or severely off track, it said, and of those 30 percent have either seen no movement at all or regressed including key targets on poverty, hunger and climate.

The ambitious goals for 2030 include ensuring that hunger is eradicated and nobody lives on less than 2.15 dollars a day which is the extreme poverty line, providing every child with a quality primary and secondary school education, achieving

gender equality, ensuring all people have clean water, sanitation and access to affordable energy, reducing inequalities, and taking urgent action to combat climate change.

Unless we act now, the 2030 agenda could become an epitaph for a world that



might have been, according to the U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in a foreword to the report. Failure to make progress means inequalities will continue to deepen, increasing the risk of a fragmented, two-speed world.

The report was released ahead of a summit that Guterres has called during the annual gathering of world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly in September, which he said will be “a moment of truth and reckoning.”

Undersecretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Li Junhua said conflicts including the war in Ukraine, climate change, the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic especially its devastating financial impact on developing countries, and geopolitical tensions are all “threatening to derail hard-earned progress” toward achieving the goals.

In a foreword that the pandemic saw the largest decline in childhood vaccinations in three decades, an increase in tuberculosis and malaria deaths, and learning losses in 80 percent of the 104 countries studied. It also interrupted three decades of progress in reducing poverty,

and produced the largest rise in inequality between countries in three decades.

According to ECOSOC by May 2023, the devastating consequences of war, conflict and human rights violations had displaced a staggering 110 million people of which 35 million were refugees—the highest figure ever recorded.

At the September summit, the U.N. would like political leaders to come up with “a new roadmap” to accelerate action at the global, regional and national level to achieve the goals by 2030.

With seven years left, the report said achieving the goals is “in deep trouble” and “it is time to sound the alarm.”

At current rates, it said not only will 575 million people still be living in extreme poverty in 2030 but only about one-third of countries will meet the target to reduce national poverty levels by half.

The report further adds

that shockingly, the world is back at hunger levels not seen since 2005, and food prices remain higher in more countries than in the period 2015-2019.

As for education, the report said years of underinvestment and learning losses mean that without a major effort not only will an estimated 84 million children be out of school in 2030 but approximately 300 million students will lack basic literacy and math skills for

success in life — and only one in six countries will achieve the target of universal secondary school completion.

On tackling global warming, the report said, “If ever there was an illumination of the short-sightedness of our prevailing economic and political systems, it is the ratcheting up of the war on nature.”

The small window of opportunity to keep temperatures from rising beyond the internationally agreed threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) to prevent the worst impacts of the climate crisis is fast closing, the report said, and the critical 1.5 degree tipping point is likely to be reached or surpassed by 2035.

Fractured Electoral Results in Spain

The fracture and polarization that has marked the

Diary of International Events

C. Adhikesavan

Spanish elections could be a premonition of the future that awaits the country's democracy, regardless of whether socialists or the right-wing wins.

This possibility is already a defeat in itself, a defeat for everyone. But let's not blame the Spaniards per se. Spanish democracy is part of a broader order, where Western political systems are having problems or great difficulties, to generate common agreements and consensus between opposing political ideas.

Coincidence points no longer interest anyone. And this is the first symptom of a weak democracy: political polarization.

And if anything has characterized the social climate of this election period, it has been the clash between political factions, the deployment of an arsenal of discrediting and cartoons.

These have been and will be different elections, precisely because they represent a phenomenon that transcends them: the current crisis of the world democratic system, fragmented, fractured and polarized to extremes.

Political polarization is both cause and effect of these same elections. The future looks like an extension of what has been experienced so far: the political arena, rather than being driven by the logic of lucid and accurate opposition, threatens to be characterized by irreconcilable ideological factions.

Political polarization is a danger for democracy to perform its main function: to ensure the political stability of the nations that implement it and to put all existing political resources to perfect the system in its socio-political competencies.

Remove Cuba...

From Page 12

150 companions. They attacked the Moncada Barracks, the military camp of the then dictator Batista in the city of Santiago, but they failed and were arrested. He argued for himself in the court like Bhagat Singh and gave the world-famous speech 'History will prove me right' while pleading. Support poured in from all over the world for his release and after 22 months of imprisonment he and his companions were released. After coming out, he again started planning the revolution and after taking lessons

from the first mistake, he finally executed the successful revolution there in 1959.

Economist Dr Jaya Mehta said that after the collapse of the Soviet camp, it was being propagated that now socialism is over and there is more freedom in capitalism. People forgot the benefits of socialist system. Castro opposed imperialism by taking the people of Latin American countries together and defended socialism in adverse circumstances. It is the duty of all peace-loving citizens of the world to protect the Cuban Revolution.

Presiding over the

programme, journalist Harnam Singh said that among those who challenged the American imperialists, Fidel Castro, the father of the Cuban revolution, Che Guevara and Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam have always enthralled the youth.

Initiating the theme, Arvind Porwal of AIPSO Indore Unit said that July 26 holds an important place in the history of Cuba. In the year 1953, there was a failed attempt of revolution on this day. The revolutionaries made the revolution successful on January 1, 1959 by learning a lesson from failure.

INDIA Team Finds ...

From Last Page

The MPs drew the attention of the governor to the "pathetic conditions in the relief camps and also that of children. Around 10,000 children are said to be in the relief camps. The students faced uncertain future as all educational institutions were shut and the MPs urged the state and Union governments to address the issue on a priority basis.

"From the reports of incessant firing and arson of the houses in the last few days it is established beyond doubt that the state machinery has completely failed to control the situation for the last three months, the INDIA team of MPs made it clear to the governor." The team wanted urgent measures to rehabilitate and resettle the people so that peace and harmony returns to the state at the earliest.

The team also pointed out that the continued Internet ban for the last three months is aiding the unsubstantiated rumours, which is adding to the existing mistrust.

The governor welcomed the MPs and told them that the state and Union governments are making relentless efforts to restore peace and normalcy.

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The answer provided to Communist Party of India (CPI) Lok Sabha MP K Subbarayan has revealed that the current Union government had neglected the 121st Report by Department Related Parliament Standing Committee for Home Affairs which agreed to grant statehood to Puducherry.

The questions raised by K Subbarayan were about the issue of statehood to Puducherry. He had asked whether the government was aware of 16 resolutions that were passed in the legislative assembly of Puducherry between 1981 and 2021. In reply to the questions, minister of State for Home Affairs, Nityanand Rai replied that the government is aware of the resolutions and is not currently planning to grant statehood. He also contended that the resolution

received on July 19, 2018 was considered and the government has decided to maintain the Union Territory (UT) status of Puducherry.

The demand to provide Statehood status to Puducherry has been put forward by CPI since long. Several communist Members of Parliament had raised their voices for this demand in both the houses of the Parliament.

No Plans for Corporatizing Rly Production Units

In a reply to the question raised by K Subbarayan, the Union minister for Railway, Ashwini Vaishnav replied that currently, the government has no program to corporatize the railway production unit. It is estimated

that coach production units of Indian Railways manufactured 5877 Coaches and Indian Railways procured 22,790 wagons in 2022-23. The planning of coaches and wagons for the year 2023-24 are 7000 and 27000 nos respectively. Vaishnav said.

In reply to the sub-question regarding outsourcing the works the Union minister replied that outsourcing in Railway activities is done to supplement resources, primarily in optimally utilizing available resources in core activities.

East Coast Rail Project Needs More Fund Allocation

Communist Party of India leader M Selvaraj raising the matter in Lok

Sabha on July 25, 2023, asked the railway ministry to allot more funds for the East Coast Rail Project.

He said that during the year 2007, one of Tamil Nadu's dream projects called the East Coast Rail Project was laid out and it was decided to build a rail line starting from Chennai Perungudi passing through Mamallapuram, Kalpakkam and Puducherry to Cuddalore. A survey and feasibility of the project has already been completed. The objective of this project is to build a rail line starting from Chennai to Cuddalore through the entire area along the Bay of Bengal.

He pointed out that for almost 16 years the project has been under active

consideration to change/ deviate from the earlier plan/ route and re-route to start from Chenkalpattu instead of Chennai Perungudi. Any change to the East Coast Rail Link Project will defeat the very purpose of the project.

Further, the cost of all building materials has increased. Hence, I urge the minister of railways to take necessary action and give instructions immediately to Southern Railways not to change/ deviate from the earlier approved route which was decided in the year 2007. I also request to increase the budget to meet the increased cost to execute this project and complete the project as early as possible. Selvaraj said.

No Focus on Standing Committee Findings Report Favours Statehood to Puducherry

On Record ...

The Supreme Court directed the authorities to ensure that no hate speeches are made and no violence or damage to any properties takes place in any protest rallies being organised by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad in the national capital and the adjoining areas of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Hearing an intervention application drawing the attention of the court to the protest rallies that are being organised by VHP in wake of Nuh violence, a bench of Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice S V Bhatti directed the authorities to comply with the directions issued by the top court on October 21, 2022, prohibiting hate speech.

The bench said that the authorities are aware of the situation and they should take action whenever required, pointing out that the law and order is a policing matter that should be taken care of. – *The Statesman*, August 3.

The 65-year-old Kargil war veteran, whose wife was stripped and paraded by a mob during the May 4 violence in Manipur, has told “God must have made the video (of the sexual assault) go viral to ensure that the truth comes out”.

The man's wife, along with two other Kuki-Zomi women, were targeted by a mob on the

second day of violence in the state, but a video capturing the brazen sexual assault emerged only on July 19, prompting national outrage and finding resonance in Parliament.

“Till then, no one from the police or government had even called us,” the man, based on whose complaint a zero FIR was registered at Saikul police station in Kangpokpi district on May 18, told. – *The Indian Express*, August 3.

The bench asked DGP to adduce all records relating to the date of incidents, timing of registration of FIRs, arrests made, and recordings of victims' statements

An anguished Supreme Court lashed out at the “lethargic” and “tardy” probe into the loss of human lives, dignity and properties during the ethnic violence in Manipur, lamenting that the state has seen an “absolute breakdown of constitutional machinery for two months”, and summoning the state's director general of police (DGP) on August 7 to furnish an explanation. “One thing is clear; the state police are incapable of investigations. It's absolutely clear they have lost control of law and order in the state... There is no law and order left in Manipur. Investigation is so lethargic. For two months, FIRs are not recorded,

arrests are not made, and statements are recorded after such a lapse of time,” said a bench led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud. – *The Hindustan Times*, August 2.

Union Minister and BJP MP from Gurugram Rao Inderjit Singh has questioned the people at the VHP rally in Nuh on July 31 for carrying weapons. Speaking to the Indian Express, Rao Inderjit Singh asked, “Who gave weapons to religious yatis? Who goes to a procession carrying swords or sticks?” Watch Rao Inderjit Singh appeal to both sides to maintain peace. – *The Hindustan Times*, August 2.

Compiled by: *C Adhikesavan*



21 Opposition MPs on Two-Day Visit to Manipur

INDIA Team Finds Total Breakdown of Law and Order

Twenty one opposition party members of Parliament visited Manipur on July 29 and 30 and found that the government machinery has totally failed to curb the continuing violence and save the lives of Manipur people. The India National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) team met the governor Anusuiya Uikey on the second day and told her that their findings in the state had established beyond doubt that the state machinery has failed to control the situation for almost three months. The armed conflicts started on May 3.

The MPs, representing 16 political parties, submitted a memorandum to the governor in which they reported the condition on the ground, made suggestions for peace efforts and ruded the "silence of the prime

minister" over the issue. The 21-member delegation included Communist Party of India national executive member Sandosh Kumar P, Congress' Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, deputy leader in the Lok Sabha, Gaurav Gogoi, Sushmita Dev of TMC, Mahua Maji of JMM, Kanimozhi Karunanidhi of DMK, P P Mohammed Faizal of NCP, Chaudhary Jayant Singh of RLD, Manoj Kumar Jha of RJD, N K Premachandran of RSP and T Thirumavalavan of VCK, JD(U) chief Rajiv Ranjan (Lalan) Singh and his party colleague Aneel Prasad Hegde, CPI(M)'s A A Rahim, SP's Javed Ali Khan, IUML's E T Mohammed Basheer, AAP's Sushil Gupta, VCK's D Ravikumar, Arvind Sawant of Shiv Sena-UBT), and Phulo



Devi Netam and K Suresh of the Congress.

The MPs told the governor that they were shocked and very sad to hear the stories of anxieties, uncertainties, pains and sorrows of the individuals affected by unprecedented violence. The team had visited relief camps in Churachandpur, Moirang and Imphal. Both sides have been unleashing 'nger and

Our Special Correspondent

sense of alienation" on all communities since the beginning of the clashes. The team called for urgent measures to stop the continuing violence.

The INDIA team of MPs held the Union and state governments responsible for the failure to protect the lives and properties of the

people. More than 60,000 people had been displaced in the past three months. The MPs requested the governor to apprise the Union government of the complete breakdown of law and order in the state for the last 89 days. Silence of Prime Minister Narendra Modishows his brazen indifference to the violence in the state.

On Page 14

NFIW LETTER TO HM ON UNCLAIMED BODIES IN MANIPUR

National Federation of Indian Women general secretary Annie Raja and secretary Nisha Siddhu have sent the following letter to Union home minister Amit Shah over the several dead bodies reported to be lying unidentified and unclaimed in several mortuaries in Imphal:

The outbreak of violence in Manipur on May 3, 2023 has resulted in unimaginable devastation, leaving thousands displaced, hundreds dead. Numerous dead bodies are lying unclaimed in several mortuaries across Imphal hospitals without the facility of cold storage.

The relentless violence that has engulfed Manipur has caused immense suffering to the people of the state. Families have been torn apart, homes destroyed and the loss of lives have left an indelible mark on the collective consciousness of the state. The lack of cold storage

erbrates the anguish of grieving families who are unable to lay their loved ones to rest with dignity.

In the light of this distressing situation, we appeal for your immediate intervention to address the following urgent matters:

■ Immediate constitution of Medical Board headed by an independent forensic expert from a reputed medical institute to conduct post mortem on the dead including the unidentified dead bodies lying in the morgues before evidences are destroyed.

■ Allocate necessary resources to ensure that hospitals in Manipur have access to adequate cold storage facilities. It is essential to provide a dignified resting place for the deceased, allowing their families to mourn and perform the last rites with the respect and solemnity they deserve.

■ Families of persons, who are missing and feared dead are unable to reach the mortuaries

in Imphal. The state may designate an officer who can be contacted and who will facilitate visits by such families to mortuaries under escort/protection and enable the process of identification and handover of dead bodies.

■ Facilitate safe passage of the families of the deceased to Manipur, enabling them to claim the bodies of their loved ones and perform the necessary last rites. It is of utmost importance that they are granted the opportunity to bid final farewell and find solace.

We appeal for your urgent attention to restore peace and stability in Manipur. It is crucial to initiate measures to prevent further violence and ensure the safety of people residing in the state. Collaborative efforts, including dialogue with relevant stakeholders, should be pursued to address the root causes of the conflict and promote a lasting resolution for peace and normalcy.