

# Proletarian Era

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## So many walls are now erected on the soil of Kashmir

After effectively revoking Article 370 of the Constitution all on a sudden on 6 August 2019 and bifurcating the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories and simultaneously making Section 35A defunct, which had stipulated distinction between the permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir and the outsiders in so far as acquisition of properties etc. are concerned, the BJP leaders claimed that for these two constitutional provisions, democracy could never be fully implemented in the state. On the other hand, corruption had increased, terrorism flourished and no development could take place. Now that the hitherto existing 'historical blunder' has been rectified and the obstacle to the "integration" of Kashmir with the rest of the country has been removed, the RSS-BJP and their government also boasted loudly and arrogantly that they had removed the wall that had stood so far

between Kashmir and the rest of India, and that there is a joyous mood among the Kashmiris hitherto stifled by these binding clause.

But has such a claim been true to reality? Have the BJP and its mentor RSS, really removed any such wall and smoothed the process of democracy in Jammu and Kashmir? Or the reality, as vouched by one and all save and except the ruling dispensation and a few of its lackeys, is just the opposite and the state is now studded with numerous walls or barriers to keep it secluded not only from the external world but also from the rest of the country? Is it that the people of Kashmir are celebrating hitherto denied democratic environment or their normal life is impeded by a host of coercive impositions and imperilling restrictions? Facts speak otherwise and speak loudly.

### Kashmir virtually taken over by military before revocation of Article 370

It bears recall that in July last, the BJP government deployed about 10,000 central military and paramilitary forces in Kashmir on the pretext of strengthening counter-insurgency operations and law and order situation. This was in addition to the existing 100 companies of such forces stationed there. The drama heightened when the Army personnel announced that Pakistan-based terrorists were planning to target the ongoing Amarnath Yatra. Then, the state administration issued an advisory, asking pilgrims and tourists to "curtail" their stay in the Valley and leave immediately. The authorities stepped up security at vital installations and in sensitive areas, suspended mobile and internet services and either "arrested" or "detained" several opposition leaders. There was thus clear indication of 'something big' in the offing which made the already

persecuted, harassed, heckled and tortured Kashmiri people more panic-stricken. It was indeed a novel way to restore 'democracy' shrouded in secrecy of the highest order. And then on 6 August, capping days of speculation, anxiety and suspense, the union home minister announced the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under the said Article and divided the state into two Union Territories. Needless to mention that both the steps were taken without consultation with the people of Jammu and Kashmir or their elected leaders. It was an arbitrary and unilateral decision of the central government which glaringly trampled democratic norms and principles and hence smacked of autocracy.

### Backdrop of Article 370

Before unfolding the lurking reality of Kashmir 'relieved' of its special status in a highly questionable manner, it needs to be added that Article 370 was not whimsically incorporated in the Constitution. It was the product of a definite historical necessity and commitment. Jammu and Kashmir was one of the 562 princely states in undivided Indian sub-continent under British paramountcy. Though a Muslim majority state, it was under the rule of a Hindu king, popularly known as the Maharajah. While under British colonial rule, the people of various provinces of India in spite of speaking different languages and having cultural diversities were in course of their struggle for independence developing as a nation, the people of Kashmir were not connected with that process. So the sense of oneness that developed to an extent among the people inhabiting the Indian territory did not grow among the valley people. In course of rising anti-feudal struggle in that princely state, a kind of Kashmir identity sense that came to be known as Kashmiriat developed in them. This feeling was neither similar to the sense of Indian nationalism nor

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# Horrible kind of development the Centre has left for people of Kashmir

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compatible with the most unhistorical and preposterous theory of religion-based nation first proposed by the Hindu Mahasabha leader Savarkar, and later endorsed by the Muslim League and finally concurred in by the Congress under the compromising leadership of the national bourgeoisie. Based on that fallacious theory, the power-hungry bourgeois leaders of both future India and Pakistan in collusion with British imperialist design became instrumental in the partition of the country. Following that, Pakistan was formed as an Islamic theocratic state, while India declared itself to be a non-theocratic state with avowal of adherence to democratic principles. After partition, all the princely states were given option to either continue to stay independent or accede to India or Pakistan. Pakistani leaders claimed that since Kashmir was a Muslim-majority state, it should come to Pakistan. But Sheikh Abdullah, the undisputed leader of the Kashmiri people's movement to gain azaadi (freedom) from feudal autocracy, and who was spurred by liberal democratic values, felt natural inclination towards India, which unlike Pakistan spoke of building the country on the bedrock of modern democracy. So, he convinced the Kashmiri people that their future and aspiration of development would be best served by way of accession to India. Thereafter, overcoming strong religious appeal of Pakistan as well as discarding the criterion of the British imperialists of accession based on religion of the majority of the people, and persuading the ruling Hindu king, who initially lent support to the claim of Pakistan, and repelling an armed invasion by the Pakistani army, Kashmir acceded to India in October 1947. Article 370 was incorporated in the Constitution as a condition of this accession so that the special status of the state was maintained to facilitate voluntary integration with the Indian nation in course of developing oneness with the Indian nation through mutual exchanges and close association. Till that time, Jammu and Kashmir was to be conferred the status of an autonomous state.

## **Tweaking terms of accession and unleashing a reign of terror**

But the Indian bourgeois rulers and their trusted political managers like the Congress and subsequently

the BJP systematically eroded the provisions of Article 370, tried to force Jammu and Kashmir to accept status of an Indian province forthwith and thereby flagrantly violated the conditions of accession. Even Sheikh Abdullah who was unanimously chosen prime minister of autonomous Kashmir state in terms of the conditions of accession was wrongfully taken into custody by the Indian government and replaced by their own puppets who were meant to be instrumental in materializing vile class intention and interest of the Indian bourgeoisie in the valley. Obviously the Kashmiri people were first disappointed, then aggrieved and finally enraged at the way there was increasing interference with their rights and liberties in an unjust, arbitrary and unabashed manner in betrayal of the terms of accession. These accumulated grievances finally gave rise to large scale resentment which started getting expressed in protest rallies and demonstrations in various forms. But the Indian capitalist rulers and their government, instead of opting for a peaceful political solution of the problem brought about on their own, instead preferred to adopt a militarist approach to handle the situation. Even a communal outlook was also glaringly manifest on the part of the Indian government, earlier led by the Congress and now by the BJP, in particular, in tackling the Kashmir issue. Obviously, with people's dissent gaining momentum, the reactionary fundamentalist forces and various terrorist as well as separatist-secessionist groups many of whom are backed by the Pakistani rulers began to fish in the troubled water and tried their level best to mislead innocent Kashmiris. And the BJP-led Indian government further aggravated the situation by practically unleashing a reign of terror with its military and paramilitary forces, blinding countless protesting and at times stone-throwing youths by targeting their eyes with pellet guns, killing and torturing innocent people, torching village after village, raping and molesting women, arresting people indiscriminately and looting properties, in the name of combating terrorism, controlling militancy and suppressing insurgency. In fact a brutal state terrorism was let loose to bully the Kashmiri people into submission.

## **Exacerbation of brutal coercive measures**

So, Article 370 was neither a 'historic blunder' nor an impediment before 'integration' of Kashmir with India. In fact, revocation of Article 370 is destined to bring in its wake not 'integration' but further alienation of the Kashmiri people who despite deepening sense of injury and growing feeling of alienation have still not fallen victim to communal-fundamentalist preaching nor do they nurture any ill-feeling about the common Indian people. They do consider themselves as Indians and possess fraternity with the common masses. Their ire is against the Indian government and Indian army. All available informations and experiences attest to this fact. Aware of this and anticipating further worsening of the situation following the step to make Article 370 defunct, the BJP government put the valley under siege. And immediately thereafter, starting from the prime minister and home minister down to the RSS-BJP leaders of various levels and administrative heads are on a propaganda spree claiming that Kashmir is totally normal and there is no more any agitation there. Conflicts and clashes between common people and the army have also come down. Equally reduced are the incidents of stone throwing at the army. They claim that 99 percent of examinees had appeared in their annual examinations, and that at the initiative of the central government, the development in Kashmir is about to commence in full swing.

But, the Kashmir valley and parts of Jammu have been under a security, political and communications lockdown from a day before the constitutional provision was declared null and void. Thousands of troops began manning the entrances and exits to the homes of the Kashmiri people as well as the schools and universities. Mobile phones were blocked and internet snapped, though landlines, claimed to have been partially restored, have been of little use as their penetration is negligible. Trade and commerce has come to a grinding halt since that fateful day. People have not been in a position to move freely and virtually forced to live a captive life, being surrounded by barbed wire fencing everywhere

on the streets in the state including the capital city, Srinagar. Students are unable to go to their schools and colleges for studies. With internet and mobile services suspended for long six months, on-line supply of items of daily need including life-saving drugs is non-operational. Ailing persons have been denied necessary medical treatment. Higher studies, research work and all India examinations also continues to remain out of reach of Kashmiri students. Even people could not obtain any information about the whereabouts of their kith and kin as well as acquaintances in a communication-snapped, transport-disrupted, curfew-clamped situation. Normal life was completely paralyzed. Political and social activists, particularly those who have strongly opposed and criticized the BJP-led government's unilateral decision to abolish decades-old Article 370, have been debarred from entering the state. Later also, the movement of a few of such activists, who were allowed to enter the state for meeting their acquaintances, was restricted and placed under surveillance. If the situation is normal as claimed, why is then the BJP-led central government keeping even its former coalition partners under detention, not releasing other detainees, including former CMs Farooq and Omar Abdullah, and denying people from outside Kashmir the right to visit the state? Many political activists of Kashmir are reported to be in jail in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana and other states, particularly the BJP-ruled ones. It is also reported that one Kashmiri leader has died in a prison at Naini in Uttar Pradesh. For the journalists, too, in the region, the blockade is unprecedented as even in most turbulent times they were able to file stories and reports, unlike now. In the face of such an unprecedented communication shutdown, clearly the Indian government's persistent refrain that all is normal in the region sounds hollow. Except the government propaganda channels and a handful of pliant media-houses, the rest of news media, print or electronic, have been turned mute by the inviolable walls of prohibitions.

If the situation in Kashmir is normal as claimed by the prime minister, home minister and the

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# The Principles of Communism

## Frederick Engels

[As part of observance of 200th birth anniversary of Frederick Engels, the great leader of world communist movement and Comrade-in-arms of great Marx, we publish one of his celebrated articles titled "Principles of Communism", penned in October-November 1847, in instalments. This is the first instalment.]

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### What is Communism?

Communism is the doctrine of the conditions of the liberation of the proletariat.

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### What is the proletariat?

The proletariat is that class in society which lives entirely from the sale of its labour and does not draw profit from any kind of capital; whose weal and woe, whose life and death, whose sole existence depends on the demand for labour – hence, on the changing state of business, on the vagaries of unbridled competition. The proletariat, or the class of proletarians, is, in a word, the working class of the 19th century.<sup>[1]</sup>

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### Proletarians, then, have not always existed?

No. There have always been poor and working classes; and the working class have mostly been poor. But there have not always been workers and poor people living under conditions as they are today; in other words, there have not always been proletarians, any more than there has always been free unbridled competitions.

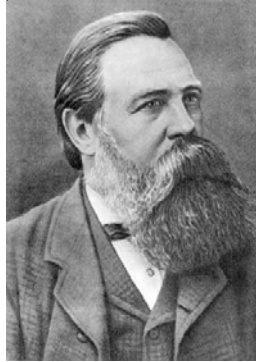
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### How did the proletariat originate?

The Proletariat originated in the industrial revolution, which took place in England in the last half of the last (18th) century, and which has since then been repeated in all the civilized countries of the world.

This industrial revolution was precipitated by the discovery of the steam engine, various spinning machines, the mechanical loom, and a whole series of other mechanical devices. These machines, which were very expensive and hence could be bought only by big capitalists, altered the whole mode of production and displaced the former workers, because the machines turned out cheaper and better commodities than the workers could produce with their inefficient spinning wheels and handlooms. The machines delivered industry wholly into the hands of the big capitalists and rendered entirely worthless the meagre property of the workers (tools, looms, etc.). The result was that the capitalists soon had everything in their hands and nothing remained to the workers. This marked the introduction of the factory system into the textile industry.

Once the impulse to the introduction of machinery and the factory system had been given, this system spread quickly to all other branches of industry, especially cloth- and book-printing, pottery, and the metal industries.



28 November 1820 – 5 August 1895

Labour was more and more divided among the individual workers so that the worker who previously had done a complete piece of work now did only a part of that piece. This division of labour made it possible to produce things faster and cheaper. It reduced the activity of the individual worker to simple, endlessly repeated mechanical motions which could be performed not only as well but much better by a machine. In this way, all these industries fell, one after another, under the dominance of steam, machinery, and the factory system, just as spinning and weaving had already done.

But at the same time, they also fell into the hands of big capitalists, and their workers were deprived of whatever independence remained to them. Gradually, not only genuine manufacture but also handicrafts came within the province of the factory system as big capitalists increasingly displaced the small master craftsmen by setting up huge workshops, which saved many expenses and permitted an elaborate division of labour.

This is how it has come about that in civilized countries at the present time nearly all kinds of labour are performed in factories – and, in nearly all branches of work, handicrafts and manufacture have been superseded. This process has, to an ever greater degree, ruined the old middle class, especially the small handicraftsmen; it has entirely transformed the condition of the workers; and two new classes have been created which are gradually swallowing up all the others. These are:

(i) The class of big capitalists, who, in all civilized countries, are already in almost exclusive possession of all the means of subsistence and of the instruments (machines, factories) and materials necessary for the production of the means of subsistence. This is the bourgeois class, or the bourgeoisie.

(ii) The class of the wholly propertyless, who are obliged to sell their labour to the bourgeoisie in order to get, in exchange, the means of subsistence for their support. This is called the class of proletarians, or the proletariat.

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### Under what conditions does this sale of the labour of the proletarians to the bourgeoisie take place?

Labour is a commodity, like any other, and its price is therefore determined by exactly the same laws that apply to other commodities. In a regime

of big industry or of free competition – as we shall see, the two come to the same thing – the price of a commodity is, on the average, always equal to its cost of production. Hence, the price of labour is also equal to the cost of production of labour.

But, the costs of production of labour consist of precisely the quantity of means of subsistence necessary to enable the worker to continue working, and to prevent the working class from dying out. The worker will therefore get no more for his labour than is necessary for this purpose; the price of labour, or the wage, will, in other words, be the lowest, the minimum, required for the maintenance of life.

However, since business is sometimes better and sometimes worse, it follows that the worker sometimes gets more and sometimes gets less for his commodities. But, again, just as the industrialist, on the average of good times and bad, gets no more and no less for his commodities than what they cost, similarly on the average the worker gets no more and no less than his minimum.

This economic law of wages operates the more strictly the greater the degree to which big industry has taken possession of all branches of production.

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### What working classes were there before the industrial revolution?

The working classes have always, according to the different stages of development of society, lived in different circumstances and had different relations to the owning and ruling classes.

In antiquity, the workers were the slaves of the owners, just as they still are in many backward countries and even in the southern part of the United States.

In the Middle Ages, they were the serfs of the land-owning nobility, as they still are in Hungary, Poland, and Russia. In the Middle Ages, and indeed right up to the industrial revolution, there were also journeymen in the cities who worked in the service of petty bourgeois masters. Gradually, as manufacture developed, these journeymen became manufacturing workers who were even then employed by larger capitalists.

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### In what way do proletarians differ from slaves?

The slave is sold once and for all; the proletarian must sell himself daily and hourly.

The individual slave, property of one master, is assured an existence, however miserable it may be, because of the master's interest. The individual proletarian, property as it were of the entire bourgeois class which buys his labour only when someone has need of it, has no secure existence. This existence is assured only to the class as a whole.

The slave is outside competition; the proletarian is in it and experiences all its vagaries.

The slave counts as a thing, not as a member of society. Thus, the slave can have a better

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existence than the proletarian, while the proletarian belongs to a higher stage of social development and, himself, stands on a higher social level than the slave.

The slave frees himself when, of all the relations of private property, he abolishes only the relation of slavery and thereby becomes a proletarian; the proletarian can free himself only by abolishing private property in general.

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## In what way do proletarians differ from serfs?

The serf possesses and uses an instrument of production, a piece of land, in exchange for which he gives up a part of his product or part of the services of his labour.

The proletarian works with the instruments of production of another, for the account of this other, in exchange for a part of the product.

The serf gives up, the proletarian receives. The serf has an assured existence, the proletarian has not. The serf is outside competition, the proletarian is in it.

The serf liberates himself in one of three ways: either he runs away to the city and there becomes a handicraftsman; or, instead of products

and services, he gives money to his lord and thereby becomes a free tenant; or he overthrows his feudal lord and himself becomes a property owner. In short, by one route or another, he gets into the owning class and enters into competition. The proletarian liberates himself by abolishing competition, private property, and all class differences.

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## In what way do proletarians differ from handicraftsmen?

In contrast to the proletarian, the so-called handicraftsman, as he still existed almost everywhere in the past (eighteenth) century and still exists here and there at present, is a proletarian at most temporarily. His goal is to acquire capital himself wherewith to exploit other workers. He can often achieve this goal where guilds still exist or where freedom from guild restrictions has not yet led to the introduction of factory-style methods into the crafts nor yet to fierce competition. But as soon as the factory system has been introduced into the crafts and competition flourishes fully, this perspective dwindles away and the handicraftsman becomes more and more a proletarian. The handicraftsman therefore frees himself by becoming either

bourgeois or entering the middle class in general, or becoming a proletarian because of competition (as is now more often the case). In which case he can free himself by joining the proletarian movement, i.e., the more or less communist movement. [2]

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## In what way do proletarians differ from manufacturing workers?

The manufacturing worker of the 16th to the 18th centuries still had, with but few exception, an instrument of production in his own possession — his loom, the family spinning wheel, a little plot of land which he cultivated in his spare time. The proletarian has none of these things.

The manufacturing worker almost always lives in the countryside and in a more or less patriarchal relation to his landlord or employer; the proletarian lives, for the most part, in the city and his relation to his employer is purely a cash relation.

The manufacturing worker is torn out of his patriarchal relation by big industry, loses whatever property he still has, and in this way becomes a proletarian. [Selected Works, Volume One, p. 81-97, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969]

*(To be Continued)*

## Columbia is on the boil for sometimes now

Colombia, the Latin American country, is on the boils for some time now. It has aggravated in recent months despite brutal state repression. Decadent capitalism has given rise to all kinds of crises in Colombia and that's the reason people are coming down on streets again and again.

A few facts we give below about the movements going on in Colombia. On 21 November 2019, Colombians, in an estimate to be about one million, protested throughout the country, with the government responding by deploying 1,70,000 troops. The government also closed all of its borders. On that day three people were killed, 98 arrested and many injured. On 22 November, thousands of protesters gathered at Plaza Bolivar in the capital Bogota, where they were later dispersed with tear gas. After the previous night's curfew, protesters returned to the streets on 23 November, in the capital's National Park and being dispersed with tear gas. Till 27 November number of deaths were 4, injuries 533 and arrested 500. People's movement is continuing. Over 100,000 people participated in the mobilization on 8 December last which was called for by artists and cultural workers. On 10 December, police and ESMAD personnel violently attacked students protesting at the National University of Colombia with tear gas, batons, and unconventional weapons. The attacks continued for hours and at night. Alarms were sounded that two students had been kidnapped by police agents and were taken away in unmarked cars. In the case of a female student who was kidnapped, people managed to free her.

Despite the historic nature of the size and frequency of the mobilizations, the attempts to enter into dialogue with the government over the list of demands have not been successful.

21 January, marking two months since the

beginning of the popular uprising, saw people from diverse sectors of the society in thousands upon thousands flooded on streets of cities across the country against the rule of the far-right President Ivan Duque Marquez and his party Democratic Centre. That was the day of country-wide strike.

The immediate burning issues that have made people restless are (1) back bending pro-capitalist economic measures, (2) assassinations of social leaders, human rights defenders, indigenous people and Afro-descendant people, (3) President Ivan Duque's spy agency's huge scandal of wire-tapping journalists and other important people, (4) extremely militarized and violent brutality on students and other protestors which has been responsible for several deaths, protestors losing eyesight, and other grave injuries due to arbitrary firing of tear gas canisters, stun grenades, non-conventional weapons and batons, (5) massacre of 18 children by bombing and shooting by the Colombian military, about which they boasted that "criminals have been killed", (6) militarization of territories: constant visible presence of soldiers, army bases, and tanks in cities and high ways, in the mountains, in small villages and in the countryside. Colombo has the second largest army in Latin America and is one of the top three spenders on defence in the region along with Brazil and Mexico. This militarization of territories threatens the lives of communities while military spending deprives Colombian people of minimum spending on education and health.

Colombia is not alone. Entire Latin America is rising. The rebellions against the neoliberal measures in Ecuador and Chile, as well as the brave resistance of the Bolivian people against the racist, right-wing *coup d'etat*, have given Colombian movements not only the momentum to

continue the continental uprising, but also the confidence and will to confront the violent repressive state.

But what can really bring an effective movement that not only can change the exploitative government, but overthrow the system that generates exploitation? That is the moot question of the movements in Colombia, and all over the world. Everywhere people's movements are rising. And nothing can be otherwise. Hunger is a stern master. Humanity cannot be destroyed, and oppressed people will struggle and struggle, that's the historic truth. But to bring the fundamental change revolutionary uprising is the call of history and that is possible when genuine communist party remains at the helm of mass movements and class struggles. It is incumbent on the fighting people of all countries including Columbia to seek for the correct revolutionary leadership on the movements so that they do not fizzle out midway or are conducted in a rudderless manner but develop along right track as immensely powerful organized assertion of people's power that is conducive to accomplishing anti-capitalist socialist revolution, historically destined to bring about the desired emancipation of oppressed mankind. If such a genuine revolutionary leadership in the form of a correct communist party is present on the soil, then it has to be strengthened, both ideologically and organizationally, to provide leadership to the surging movements. In case there is no such party, the working class needs to build up such a party following correct process based on Leninist model. This is the prime task today in all the countries when people everywhere are spontaneously coming out to protest as well as seeking to resist the escalating capitalist oppression tearing them apart.

# 4th All India Women's conference held in Kolkata with great enthusiasm and resolve

On 21st January 2020 Kolkata, the West-Bengal capital, witnessed a rally unique in nature. It was a rally of women walking to attend the AIMSS All India Conference. Starting from the Lenin statue at Esplanade to reach Ramlila Park at Moulali in the central part of the city, the streets reverberated with slogans raised at a rally of no less than ten thousand women. A host of women of all age groups keeping to the fore, included students of colleges and universities, lawyers or research-scholars as well as working women and even women from the peasantry. They belonged to different states, many carrying babies in their arms. Bold and strong slogans demanding an end to all atrocities on women starting from rape, gang-rape and murder, ban liquor altogether, and giving a call for opposing NRC-NPR-CAA were raised at the rally; toiling women who had put off the day's work to join the ranks and constituting a big part of it. People thronging both sides of the streets were astonished as also inspired: indeed, such an awakening among the women gives us the hope that all attacks on the part of the government can be resisted!

The rally presented a remarkable spectacle reflecting an India in miniature that has overcome disparities in religion, race and language, comprised of women imbued with a noble ideology, unwavering in their pledge.

From 25 states—Himachal Pradesh in the north to Kerala, Karnataka from the farthest south—thousands of women had arrived in Kolkata to attend the 4th All India Conference of All India Mahila Sanskritik Sangathan (AIMSS). The open session of the Conference was held on 21 January at Ramlila Park.

The occasion was significant too, because the day commemorated the 96th Death Anniversary of Lenin, great leader of the proletariat and leading light of emancipation of the toiling people including women. It is after garlanding the statue of Lenin that the rally set off to reach the venue. As the park was not big enough, women thronged all over the footpath and spread over the total area outside. Distinguished social activist Medha Patkar inaugurated the open session. In her address, she first congratulated AIMSS for the movement it is carrying on in support of the oppressed and assaulted women all over the country. She added that earlier also, AIMSS was in the forefront of organized legitimate protests against the terrible atrocities committed against the protesting women by the then ruling government and its criminal brigade of the then ruling party during the historic Singur and Nandigram movements. When women power is added to some movement, it is lit up with a newer glow; it becomes resplendent, she added. Referring to the leading role women are taking in raising this movement against NRC-NPR-CAA, she gave the call to strengthen this movement still further.

Comrade Saumen Bose, SUCI(C) Polit Bureau member, was invited to speak at the conference. He said that some persons advise good people to keep away from politics. If they are to be obeyed, people will fall in the hands of

dishonest goons. This is also a kind of politics. You need to strengthen the politics that is showing the way for women to fight for real equality in the backdrop of the suppression of the patriarchal society. The BJP wants to divide the society in the name of religion so as to weaken the fight that is going on for the freedom of women. On the other hand the Congress is after the same thing under cover of its soft Hinduism. Such will be the order of the day so long as the capitalist system persists. So the movement of the AIMSS has to be conducted as complementary to the object of uprooting capitalism.

Delegates from *Bangladesh Narimukti Kendra* (Bangladesh Women's Liberation Centre) responded to the invitation sent to them and Comrade Seema Dutta spoke on their behalf.

The open session was presided over by Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee, All India President of the organization. Comrade Keya De, General Secretary, AIMSS and other state level AIMSS leaders also addressed the open session. A resolution moved against NRC-NPR-CAA was unanimously accepted.

The delegate session was held on 22 and 23 January at Howrah Sarat Sadan, adjacent to Kolkata. Along with the main resolution, a resolution in protest against revocation of Article 370 and another on the deprivation of unorganized workers including ASHA and ICDS workers were adopted. The delegates also deliberated on the Constitution of the organization.

From the Conference, Comrades Keya De and Chhabi Mohanti were elected respectively as the new President and the General Secretary

of the organization.

On the second day of the delegate session, Comrade Provash Ghosh, General secretary, SUCI(C) spoke on the duties and responsibilities of the women in carrying on women's movement.

The Conference ended with a strong resolve to carry on with the mission with greater power and wider spread.

## AIMSS condemns visit of Jair Bolsonaro, Brazilian President, as Republic Day chief guest

The 4th All India Women's Conference organised by All India Mahila Sanskritik Sangathan (AIMSS) strongly condemned the visit of Mr. Jair Bolsonaro, Brazilian President, as chief guest of Republic Day observance. Bolsonaro is known for his scant respect for women, a diehard anti-women attitude, and received condemnation the world over for his derogatory comments against Mario Do Rosario, a lady legislator of Workers' Party, Brazil. Inviting such a person with misogynic outlook as honoured guest on a national occasion by the Indian Prime Minister is a shame to all Indians, especially the women. AIMSS, on behalf of the women of India registered strong protest against inviting such a personality as the chief guest on Republic day.



Comrade Provash Ghosh addressing AIMSS delegate session (on top) and a part of the delegates (bottom)

KASHMIR**Economic and socio-cultural life of fear-stricken Kashmiri people totally shattered***Contd. from page 5*

bandwagon of the host of BJP leaders at all levels and the high-ranking bureaucrats including the Lieutenant Governor of the presently bifurcated state of Jammu and Kashmir (now under the rule of the Union government), why the political opponents are restrained in their movement or placed under arrest? Why the state is not being opened to all and sundry including the media persons? There is hardly any perceptible change in that situation even today i.e. six months after the lockdown.

**In the eyes of the beholder**

Yet, despite all attempts on the part of the ruling quarters to keep the countrymen in a state of enforced ignorance about the situation, piercing the blockade, some information has been leaked to give the outer world a feel of what has been going on in 'normal' Kashmir valley after the age-long 'error', according to the RSS-BJP and their government, has been rectified. A lady professor of Srinagar asked: "Has the government assessed the number of deaths in various hospitals due to unavailability of internet? Truly, the government is out on a murderous spree in Kashmir." Tourism is one of the main planks of business in Kashmir. Every year during the Christmas and New Year holidays, Kashmir is flooded with tourists from different parts of the country and abroad who throng to enjoy the peerless beauty of nature including snow falls. But this year even during this holiday-cum-festive season tourists visited Kashmir scantily, leaving the valley, especially the world famous ski-resorts of Gulmarg, almost vacant. Houseboats and shikaras of Daal Lake have been floating empty during the last six months. One Asian affairs journalist of the journal 'The Globe' during his visit to Kashmir valley in November 2019 after much efforts, wrote that on the green carpet at the foothills of the snow-capped silvery white Himalayas, horses grazed. But there was no tourist or pilgrim for them to carry and entertain. Naturally, the owners of these horses had practically no income since the month of August. Confirming this virtual collapse of the tourism industry, the lifeline of Kashmir's economy, one leading office-bearer of the Tourism businessmen's organization told that every year during this time the hotels and resorts used to remain totally booked. This

year only 10 to 15 percent booking was made. How could the tourists dare to visit Kashmir under so many prohibitions and such a fearful atmosphere, he lamented? According to the report of 'Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry' in the four months since revocation of Article 370, Kashmir has suffered a financial loss of Rs.17,878 crore. One Kashmiri gentleman who used to spend his days running around Srinagar signing up merchants for Paytm, a digital payments service, is now stuck in his house. He said he had not been able to contact his fiancé since the shutdown began, and his smartphone is now an inert hunk of metal. "Kashmir has become invisible even to itself," observed a senior policy officer at the Centre for Internet and Society in Bangalore. The Centre published a report last year on the social and economic toll of internet shutdowns across India.

At least 5 lakh people have lost their jobs. Kashmir is pre-dominantly an agrarian state. The rural economy of Kashmir hinges upon production and selling of fruits, flowers and vegetables. Since Kashmir valley has been in the tight grip of military, fruits like grapes, pears, cherries, apples and other produce perished and was wasted in the garden itself. Due to unavailability of transport, those could not be sent to even national markets, let alone exported overseas. The cultivators had to suffer great losses shedding tears helplessly. In the month of November last, a 7-member delegation team of all India farmers' organizations including Comrade Satyawan, President, AIKKMS, visited some of the farms of the farmers in Gandharwal, Gampol, Pulwama, Kulgam and Anantnag areas of the valley. At Kulgam one mass hearing of the farmers was held by them. The discussions they had with the fruits and flowers farmers' organizations as also with the representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry revealed that the condition of the farmers is alarmingly distressful. Teachers of private schools were found working as labourers, carrying stones at the wages of Rs.100 per day as their schools remained closed for months together. Little boys were found playing cricket on the streets since they could not go to school, closed for indefinite time. There was no traffic on the streets. Many students of colleges and universities had migrated to different parts of the country to earn their livelihood. They

had taken to selling shawls and woollen clothes in the big metropolis like Kolkata. Though annual examination was held in schools, in colleges and universities classes were practically suspended. Rows of shops were there on the roadsides, but their shutters were down. Srinagar was silent, tense. The sweet note of the lively city had vanished. Instead there prevailed a peculiar silence which could only match the silence of graveyards. It prevailed from the Daal Lake to apple gardens – nowhere was there any haste. It looked like a self-imposed 'Hartaal' or strike, which Kashmir had never witnessed for such a long time. 'I feel frustrated. There are things that I have seen with my own eyes but I cannot say anything. It feels like living in a cage', observed a physicist born in Kashmir but working outside the state.

Since 5 August 2019, the Jammu and Kashmir administration have closed down all the big mosques there. Community namaz (prayer) in big mosques has been declared prohibited. Even in the famous Jama Masjid of Srinagar, the usual Friday community namaz could not take place continuously for several weeks, till at least the last week of December. Bakr-e-Eid was observed just nominally. On the birthday of Hazrat Muhammad, the founder of the Islamic religion, near about 50,000 people used to gather at Hazrat-bal Darga. This year that was not permitted. Even people are not being allowed to attend the religious proceedings at the Sufi community Darga at Charar-e-Sharif. The common Kashmiris, as per all available reports in national and international media, hold that they are being forcibly debarred by the central government from pursuing their religious practices. They are fuming, as they call it a flagrant violation of the fundamental right to practice religion enshrined in the Constitution. Obviously, this gross injustice glaringly militates against democratic principles and values. One Khalid Basir Dua, who lives at Naohata near the Jama Masjid holds that the government of India is now apprehensive of any congregation of Kashmiri people. Veterans recall that even in 1989-90 things did not turn this bad even though the state saw a surge of maximum extremist activities and ferocious coercion and oppression on the part of the government to control that. All records have been surpassed this

year. The scenario is no different even today.

Do such collapse of economic life, total disruption of normal life, plummeting means to eke out a livelihood, measures of curbing observance of religious festivals and curtailing religious practices and persistent fear psychosis attest to claimed normalcy prevailing there? Or what is proved is to the contrary?

**Some queer admissions and revelations**

In reply to a question under the Right to Information Act, by an inhabitant of Jammu, the Home Ministry admitted that during the four months from August to November 2019, the incidence of throwing stones at army and police had increased to 1193. The Home Ministry submitted in a written reply on 3 December 2019 that during those four months 309 terrorist attacks took place in Kashmir while during previous 7 months from January to July 2019 prior to unilateral and undemocratically engineered abolition of the Article 370 the number of terrorist attacks were 282. If this admission is to be accepted, how can we believe that there is 'perfect normalcy' in Kashmir with incidents of stone pelting having dwindled perceptibly? Such self-contradictory versions are bound to tumble out of the stable of the government when there is an attempt to shield the truth with a pack of lies.

Moreover, after a lapse of five months, at last the Supreme Court had to pronounce a verdict on 101 January 2020 stating that suspension of internet for indefinite period is against the fundamental rights. The Apex Court also added that repeated imposition of section 144 is misuse of power, even extending it for long time to curb the legitimate right to speak and stage agitation is unconstitutional. It cannot be allowed. These are no great words. The people of Kashmir as well as right-thinking people of the country had been reiterating this time and again all through these months of the unprecedented ordeal the state has been facing. If this is the legal position as upheld by the Supreme court, then why should not the BJP government be held guilty of undertaking unlawful activities?

The permanency which the BJP government seeks to achieve through abrogating Article 370 is

*Contd. on page 7*

KASHMIR

# A virtual state of emergency injuring and alienating Kashmiri people

Contd. from page 6

that of annexation, force, and domination. This, however, is an illusionary permanency, as history teaches us. One noted American dissident once wrote that "The law is meant to be my servant and not my master, still less my torturer and my murderer." The same reasoning can be applied to Kashmir in the current context.

## 23 January observed as anti-communal day



Rajasthan



West Bengal



Tripura



Uttar Pradesh

*Glimpses of countrywide observance of 123<sup>rd</sup> birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, the foremost leader of the uncompromising revolutionary trend of Indian freedom struggle, on 23 January in a befitting manner by AIDSO and AIDYO by undertaking street marches with well-decorated tablaeu, wearing of Netaji badge, etc., SUCI(C) gave a call to observe the day as anti-communal day.*

## Smouldering fire of rebellion

In a full-page advertisement in all the newspapers of Kashmir the government itself wrote on 11 October 2019 that the people on their own were not opening their shops, not using the transport, not coming to the government. The government I asked, "What are you afraid of"? That question has been answered by a journalist of the 'Associated Press', an international media house, in his writing on 10 December last. He narrated that when one journalist photographer was taking photograph of the closed-door Jama Masjid in Srinagar, one of the local policemen cautioned him asking to leave the place. He confided that if the Indian armed para-military force deputed to act as watchdog to guard the 600 years old famous Jama Masjid, would have found him taking photograph, they would have subjected him to physical torture. Because, glistening on the walls of Jama Masjid, on the banks of the river Jhelum are the words "you may kill us but cannot bow us down." At the bottom of the hills of Anantnag there is a wall writing "Return our rights". Witnessing such instances of agitations during the extreme winter, one of the senior politicians of Kashmir who has been just recently released from prison has reportedly reiterated his apprehension that "It seems that the valley would see a blood-strewn summer this year ... different sources are letting out signs that bloodshed is likely to take place this summer". It is pertinent to mention in this connection that way back in 1950, Khaja Mohammad Abbas, the noted novelist and film script-writer wrote in the 'Current' magazine of Mumbai that if the government of India really wished to win the hearts of the Kashmiris, it must have to strictly and unwaveringly maintain the principles of secularism. Today's India government underlines that such a wish remains a far cry. Instead, what the Kashmiri people are experiencing is escalated coercion, deception, deprivation, communal discrimination, encounter deaths—meaning a life of paranoia. The serene

splendour of unparalleled natural beauty is now splashed with blood of the innocent, tranquillity marred by wailing of the bereaved and tortured, as dark forces of communalism-fundamentalism-separatism are being unleashed and sense of piety and fraternity replaced by suspicion and mistrust. Obviously, beneath the apparently peaceful scene of Kashmir, the heaven on the earth as it is called, the smouldering fire of rebellion is alive in a suppressed manner and might any day burst out like a volcanic eruption.

## Kashmir is under virtual emergency

Just this apprehension was expressed by SUCI (Communist) when after the unilateral revocation of the Article 370, the last vestiges self-governance of Kashmir by the Kashmiris were abolished and the people of Kashmir started to suffer from the pain at their being betrayed by the government of India. When in the name of opposing the scrapping of Article 370, the Congress and other regional bourgeois parties like the Trinamool Congress as well as the pseudo-Marxists like the CPI (M) were all swirling in the vortex of questioning the method adopted, it was only our Party, the SUCI (Communist), who unhesitatingly issued a statement on 6 August, 2019 which inter alia, stated, "when it was necessary for full implementation of Article 370 to win over the Kashmiri people, isolate and defeat Pakistan-backed secessionist forces, this unilateral scrapping of Article 370 would not only further alienate the people of Kashmir but also strengthen secessionist forces." Can the BJP leaders seated in power of the Union government read the writings on the walls they have erected in Kashmir before it is too late?

[Sources:—(India Today-05-08-19) (New York Times-14-09-19) (The Wire 07-10-19) (Huffington Post 07-09-19) (the Quartz—23-08-19) (Al Jazeera-21-08-19) (scroll.in-18-08-19) (Ananda Bazar Patrika, dated ; 26.12.2019, 01-01-2020, 01-01-20, 11.01.2020). (Bartaman, a Bengali daily dated 21.12.2019) (NDTV dated 11.10.2019) (The Hindu dated 06.01.2020).]

## SUCI (C) strongly opposes renaming of Calcutta Port after Shyamaprasad Mukherjee

Protesting the decision of the BJP-led central government to rename the Calcutta Port after Shyamaprasad Mukherjee, the Hindu Mahasabha leader, Comrade Chandidas Bhattacharjee, West Bengal State Secretary, SUCI(Communist) issued the following press statement on 13 January 2020 :

The way the prime minister suddenly declared to change the name of the Calcutta Port after Shyamaprasad Mukherjee cannot be supported on any count. Shyamaprasad Mukherjee had an utterly disgraceful role in the history of Indian independence struggle. He not only viewed the freedom movement of the country with his distorted Hindu communal view guided by the outlook and approach of the RSS- Hindu Mahasabha- Sangh Parivar, he even opposed outright the historic 'Quit India movement'. In 1946-47 he had opined that even if India could not be partitioned on religious line, he would favour partitioning of Bengal on the same line. When, during the second world war, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had founded the Azad Hind Fauz (Indian National Army) with the Indian Prisoners of war of the British-Indian Army captured by Japan in South-East Asia and some patriotic non-resident Indians and was trying to free India with the help of that army, it was Shyamaprasad, who as a minister in the then Hindu Mahasabha-Muslim League coalition government of Bengal took active initiative to persuade Indians to join the British army. It is neither rational nor desirable to rename Calcutta port after such a controversial figure. We strongly oppose this move and demand to withdraw it immediately.

# Saab Ka Saath, Sabka Vikas

*Saab ka Saath, Saabka Vikas* (Development of all together)— Yes. That was the promise of the ruling BJP when it came to power in 2014. From then onwards, the BJP leaders and ministers have been haranguing how the country is being progressing under their rule though they shrewdly avoided furnishing any proof in support of their claim. But then hollow claims are nothing but hollow. And now the hollowness is glaringly manifest in the data-based findings made public by Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (Oxfam), an international confederation of organizations working worldwide to find solutions to poverty and related injustice around the world, just before the start of the five-day World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on 20 January last. The findings show that India's richest 1 per cent hold more than four-times the wealth held by 953 million people who make up the bottom 70 per cent of the country's population, while the total wealth of all Indian billionaires is more than the full-year budget of Rs 24,42,200 crore. It corroborates what came to light a few days back. Mukesh Ambani, the industrial baron, was found to have enjoyed an amazing run in 2019 as he added almost \$17 billion to his wealth as of 23 December 2019. His total net worth now stands at a mammoth \$60.8 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index. In contrast, *two-thirds of people in India (around 800 million or 80 crores) live in abject poverty: 68.8% of the Indian population lives on less than \$2 (Rs 140) a day. Over 30% even have less than \$1.25 (around Rs 88) per day available - they are considered extremely poor. This makes the Indian subcontinent one of the poorest countries in the world; women and*

*children, the weakest members of Indian society, suffer most.*

Mukesh Ambani earns Rs 300 crores per day. Whereas, as per the latest Oxfam report, it takes a female domestic worker 22,277 years to earn what a top CEO of a technology company makes in one year. With earnings pegged at Rs 106 per second, a tech CEO would make more in 10 minutes than what a domestic worker would make in one year. It further said women and girls put in 3.26 billion hours of unpaid care work each and every day — a contribution to the Indian economy of at least Rs 19 lakh crore a year, which is 20 times the entire education budget of India in 2019 (Rs 93,000 crore).

The report also said the gap between rich and poor cannot be reduced without deliberate inequality-busting policies, and too few governments are committed to these. The governments are massively under-taxing the wealthiest individuals and corporations and failing to collect revenues that could help lift the responsibility of care from women and tackle poverty and inequality. The exchequer has been shaved off Rs 1.45 lakh crore as the government slashed corporate tax rates up to 10 percentage points, the biggest reduction in 28 years. Besides, the governments are also underfunding vital public services and infrastructure that could help reduce women and girls' workload, the report said. Direct public investments in the care economy (Public services for childcare, early childhood education, disability and long-term care, as well as elder care, are some of the areas comprising the care economy) of 2 per cent of GDP would have potentially created 11 million new jobs and make up for the reported loss of 11 million jobs in 2018. But the government has not taken any such initiative. Getting the richest one per cent to pay just 0.5 per cent extra tax on their wealth over the next 10 years would equal the investment needed to create 117 million jobs in sectors such as elderly and childcare, education and health.

This is just a glimpse of whose *vikas* (development) the BJP government is ensuring and what other than increasing poverty and misery is with *sabka saath* (with all others).

[Source:- Economic Times dated 25-08-18, 27-01-20, soschildrensvillages.canada, (India Today- 24-12-19, 20-01-20, scroll.in 20-01-20)]



*Anti-NRC-NPR-CAA movement lifting the struggling spirit of Indian people Park Circus, Kolkata [Top-left], Shaheen Bag, Delhi [Left] and Sambal [UP]*

## 21st All India CONFERENCE

of All India United Trade Union Centre (AIUTUC)

**Open Session**  
13 February, 11 AM,  
Kohinoor Maidan

**President :**  
Comrade K. Radhakrishna

**Main Speaker :**  
Comrade Sankar Saha  
General Secretary

**Speakers :** Comrade Satyawan  
All India Secretariat member  
Comrade Shankar Dasgupta  
All India Secretariat member  
Comrade Rabin Samajpati  
Secretary, Jharkhand & CC Member SUCI(C)

**Delegate Session**  
13 - 15 February

**Guest of Honour :**  
Comrade Provas Ghosh  
General Secretary, SUCI(C)

13-15

February, 2020

Dhanbad Jharkhand

All India United Trade Union Centre

## Bihar State Conference of AIUTUC



*Comrade Satyawan, Member, Polit Bureau, SUCI(C) and Secretariat member, AIUTUC, addressing as the main speaker.*

Great Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar

Against Communal Divisive NRC-NPR-CAA  
Attack on Democratic-Scientific-Secular  
Education, Atrocities on Women

1-7 February, Siliguri, Birsingha  
Karmatar to Kolkata

On the occasion of bicentennial birth anniversary of

Great Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar

Against Communal Divisive NRC-NPR-CAA  
Attack on Democratic-Scientific-Secular  
Education, Atrocities on Women

1-7 February, Siliguri, Birsingha  
Karmatar to Kolkata

Angikar Yatra Concluding Cultural Programme and

7 February **Massive Students RALLY**

College Square, Kolkata, Time-11 AM

Chief Guest  
Comrade Provas Ghosh

AIDSO

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : PROVASH GHOSH