

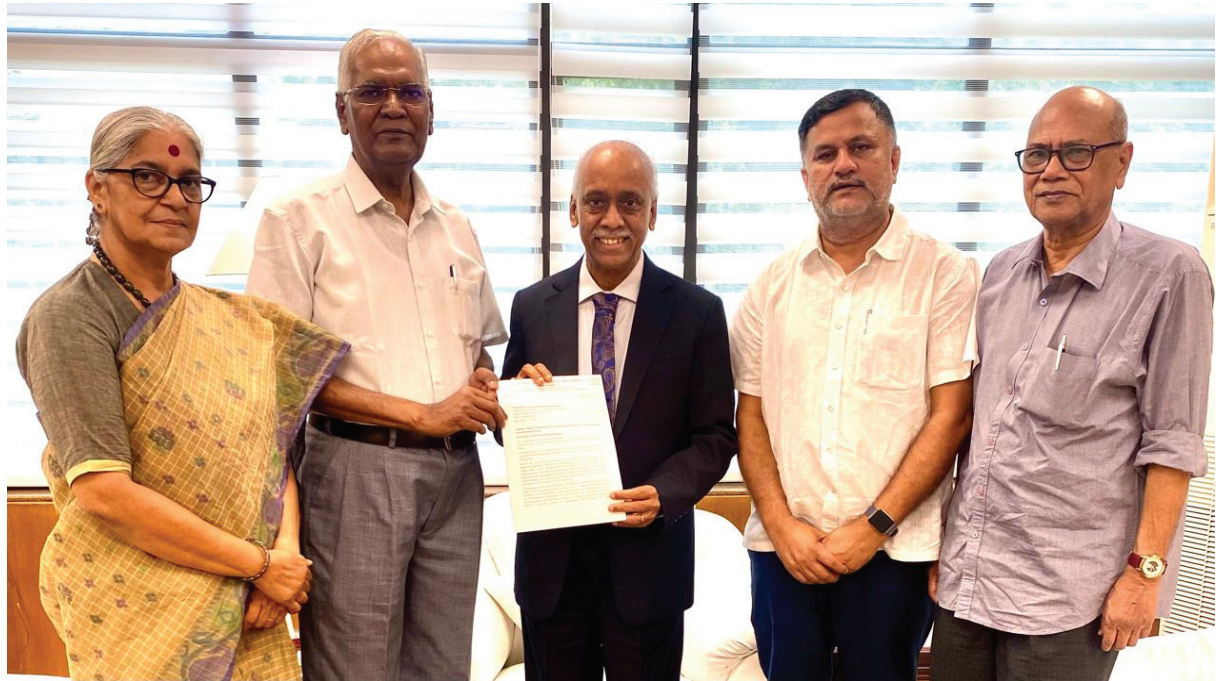
CPI Memorandum to NHRC

Demands Action Against Caste Atrocities

CPI Delegation Submits Memorandum to NHRC Chairperson, Demands Immediate Action in Cases of Caste Atrocities in Odisha and Uttar Pradesh. The National Secretariat of the Communist Party of India issued today (June 27, 2025) the following statement:

A delegation of the Communist Party of India, led by General Secretary D. Raja and comprising National Secretariat members Pallab Sengupta, Rama Krushna Panda, and Annie Raja, met Honourable Justice V. Ramasubramanian, Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and submitted a detailed memorandum demanding urgent intervention and strict action in two shocking incidents of caste-based violence that have once again exposed the grim and persistent reality of caste oppression in India.

In the representation to the NHRC Chairperson, the CPI expressed deep outrage over the recent incident in Dharakote block of Ganjam district in Odisha, where two Dalit men were brutally beaten, forcibly tonsured, made to eat grass, and compelled to drink drain water — an appalling act of inhuman caste humiliation. In an equally disturbing incident in Etawah, Uttar Pradesh, two OBC men were tonsured, assaulted, and subjected to having urine sprinkled on them by members of dominant castes. The Party stated that these heinous crimes, though occurring in different states and affecting different oppressed social groups, reflect the same entrenched and dehumanising caste order that continues to degrade and brutalise vast sections of Indian society.



CPI delegation led by general secretary D Raja, national secretaries Annie Raja, Rama Krushna Panda and Pallab Sengupta submitting memorandum to NHRC chairperson Justice V Ramasubramanian

The memorandum pointed to the alarming figures released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), which recorded 57,571 cases of atrocities against Scheduled Castes in 2022 alone. This growing trend highlights not just individual cases of violence but a systemic and structural failure in upholding constitutional guarantees of equality and dignity. Despite legal safeguards under the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, the ground reality remains dismal due to weak enforcement, institutional apathy, and political silence.

The CPI demanded that the NHRC should ensure strict and time-bound action against the culprits, recommend exemplary

punishment, and push for full protection and rehabilitation of the victims. The Party also urged the Commission to call upon state governments to implement concrete preventive, punitive, and sensitisation measures in full adherence to constitutional morality and the NHRC's own mandate. In turn, NHRC Chairperson Justice V. Ramasubramanian assured the CPI delegation that urgent remedial action will be taken by the Commission.

The CPI reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the fight for social justice, equality, and human dignity and cautions that justice delayed or diluted in such cases not only fails the victims but undermines the very foundations of India's constitutional democracy.

CPI Demands Justice, Accountability, Worker Safety

Sigachi Factory Tragedy a Grim Wake-Up Call

The Communist Party of India is deeply shocked and saddened by the devastating incident at the Sigachi Industries unit in Sangareddy district, Telangana. With at least 45 workers reported dead, many injured, and several still missing, this stands as the most tragic industrial disaster in the

history of the state. The CPI conveys its heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased and expresses its solidarity with the injured and those anxiously awaiting news of their loved ones.

This catastrophe is not an isolated accident but the result of persistent negligence, disregard for safety procedures, and

the absence of regular maintenance protocols. It is a grim reminder of the dangers posed when industrial units, especially those handling hazardous substances, operate without stringent safety norms and oversight. The incident also highlights the consequences of policy shifts that have progressively weakened

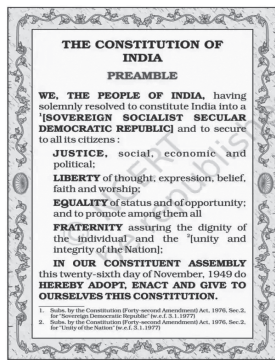
regulatory frameworks, no inspections, and eroded institutional mechanisms meant to safeguard workers' rights and well-being.

The weakening of labour laws and the marginalisation of trade unions — the frontline defenders of workplace safety — has led to an environment where safety

concerns are ignored, precautions are bypassed, and workers are left unprotected. When profit becomes the overriding priority, human lives are treated as collateral.

It is incumbent upon both the Government of Telangana and the Union Government to take ur-

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Dattatreya Hosabale, the general secretary of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, has proposed to remove the words “socialist” and “secular” from the Preamble of the Constitution. All the words in the Preamble constitute the core value of the Constitution. Supreme Court has upheld that the Parliament can amend the Preamble without changing the basic structure of the Constitution. Demand to remove the words “Secular” and “Socialist” from the Preamble amounts to an attack on the Constitution. It exposes the long-standing objective of RSS to subvert the Constitution and transform India into a Hindu Rashtra.

The Constitution of India is a living testament to the sacrifices and dreams of countless freedom fighters who valiantly struggled against colonial rule. The inclusion of “socialism” and “secularism” in the Preamble is not an arbitrary addition; it reflects the core values for which freedom fighters stood and sacrificed their lives. Their ideals are embedded in every provision of the Constitution. The insertion of these words by Indira Gandhi government in 1976 merely affirmed that legacy. The Preamble constitutes the core values of the Constitution. Any attempt to alter the preamble would be nothing but subversion of the Constitution.

Hosabale’s argument that the word “secular” was not there in Ambedkar’s constitution is also false. Even before the inclusion of the word “secular” in the Preamble, the word existed in the Fundamental Rights section enshrined in part III of the Constitution. The word “secular” is mentioned under clause (2)(a) of Article 25 dealing with the freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion. Therefore, the word already constituted one of the core values before it was included in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution.

As a matter of fact the RSS is uncom-

Threat to Constitution

fortable not just with the Preamble but with the entire Constitution. It cannot tolerate the values cherished by our freedom fighters and the founding fathers of the Constitution. The reason is simple: the RSS played no role in the freedom movement. If anything, it only collaborated with the British and tried to weaken the national movement by creating a divide among Indians on basis of religion. That way, the RSS rather helped the colonial rulers’ strategy based on divide and rule policy.

This is not the first time that the RSS has expressed its intent to subvert the Constitution. It has been doing this from time to time through its words and deeds. In the run up to the Lok Sabha election of 2024, several BJP leaders started making boastful claims that the Constitution would be changed if their party won 400-plus

Editorial

seats. These claims caused country-wide concerns and generated widespread debate. In fact, the concern around this gained such a huge traction that Amit Shah had to publicly display his love for the word “secular” in the Preamble in his election campaign speeches and deny the BJP leaders’ claims that this term would be removed from the Constitution if their party got 400-plus seats. As is well known, the BJP’s tally came down from 303 to 240 in the Lok Sabha election of 2024.

This time round, too, as soon as the RSS general secretary proposed to remove the words “socialist” and “secular” from the Preamble of the Indian Constitution, several BJP leaders, including union ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Jitender Singh and Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, have also joined the call. Vice president Jagdeep Dhankar went to the extent of saying that the inclusion of the words “socialist” and “secular” in the preamble was “sacrilege to the spirit of sanatan”. Such a concerted move expresses their intent to assail the Constitution which BJP and RSS

have recurrently done.

As a matter of fact, the entire Constituent Assembly had worked for establishing the Indian State anchored in secularism. Speaking in the Constituent Assembly on October 14, 1949, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel declared: “I make it clear that this Constitution of India, of free India, of a secular State will not hereafter be disfigured by any provision on a communal basis.”

Another member of the Constituent Assembly, T.J.M. Wilson, outlined the importance of the secular state on November 23, 1949: “The greatest achievement, however, of our Constitution is its secular character, and the secular State that emerges therefrom”. He then added, “We have achieved this secular character of the State and we have provided for it in the Constitution.” He also cautioned: “But the clouds are gathering and are threatening to darken the secular character of the State and obliterate it. I only pray and trust that the progressive forces of this country, under the guidance and leadership of our great and beloved Prime Minister (Jawaharlal Nehru) will clear away those clouds and shall not allow our country to pass once again through that destruction and misery which most of the nations of Europe and Asia had to pass before they could accomplish this great achievement of a secular State.”

Even the Supreme Court has also upheld the inclusion of the words “socialism” and “secularism” in the Preamble of Indian Constitution. On the eve of the 75th anniversary of the Constitution in November 2024, the Supreme Court dismissed a batch of petitions challenging the inclusion of the words “socialist” and “secular” in the Preamble and held that the addition of these terms could not be invalidated merely on the ground that the Preamble in the original form did not contain them at the time of the adoption of the Constitution. The Supreme Court bench comprised of Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and justice P.V. Sanjay Kumar.

Sigachi Factory Tragedy...

From Front Page

gent and comprehensive measures to ensure that such tragedies do not recur. The manufacture and processing of hazardous chemicals must be governed by the highest safety standards, not only for the protection of workers but also for the safety

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of surrounding communities. This incident must serve as a wake-up call.

The CPI demands immediate compensation of ₹ 50 lakh to the families of those who lost their lives and appropriate compensation to those injured, along with access

to medical treatment and long-term support. Those responsible for lapses in oversight and safety must be held accountable through a fair and transparent investigation. Many families are left without their breadwinners, and their grief must not be compounded by injustice or neglect. The safety and dignity of workers must be restored at the centre of industrial policy.

In Tamil Nadu, where tradition of worship of Murugan has been rooted deeply for centuries, the RSS outfits have turned their attention to Tirupparankundram hill in Madurai, seeking to disrupt the region's long standing interfaith harmony.

Historically, Rama worship has not taken hold in Tamil Nadu, where the focus has traditionally been on Murugan.

In ancient Tamil Nadu, the land was divided into five types. Kurinji (Mountains) 'Mullai' (forests), 'Marutham' (agricultural fields) 'Neithal' (Coastal region) and the land which loses its fertility and turns barren is called 'Palai' (desert).

Each of these landscapes had a chief deity. The lord of the Kurunji land is Murugan.

A local proverb underscores this connection: "Where there are hills, there is Kumaran (Murugan)." The six sacred abodes of Murugan — including Tirupparankundram — have been central to Tamil religious and cultural identity for more than two millennia.

On June 22, in Madurai, considered Tamil Nadu's cultural capital, the Sangh Parivar organized a Murugan devotees' conference. The stage featured facades of temple towers from Murugan's six sacred abodes, crafted to resemble movie sets.

The choice of Madurai was strategic: just six kilometers away stands Tirupparankundram hill, celebrated in Sangam literature dating back 2300 years.

Tirupparankundram is a microcosm of religious diversity. The hill hosts Jain beds and sculptures from the 1st century BCE, an 8th century Murugan temple (originally believed to be a Jain shrine), a 16th century expansion by later rulers, the Kasi Viswanathar temple with its perennial spring, and the Sikandar Badusha Dargah at the summit.

Despite such layered history, the communities around the hill have lived in peace, sharing festivals and traditions across religious lines. Lord Murugan has festivals all year round. Especially during the Panguni festival, a few lakh people participate to honor Murugan. Likewise, Muslims commemorate Murrat-e-Sikandar Badusha annually by carrying out the 'Sandanakoodu' festival, which also draws participation from local Hindus.

A longstanding tradition on the hill involves sacrificing goats and chickens, and offering cooked food to the gathering without any communal divide. However, the RSS has sought to portray these practices as sacrilegious, claiming they pollute Murugan's hill and demanding that Muslim customs be curtailed. They also called for permission to light a Murugan lamp atop the hill near the Dargah.

Legal disputes over ownership of the hilltop stretch back a century. A lawsuit examining hun-

dreds of documents and witness testimonies resulted in a 1926 Madras High Court ruling that the hilltop, including the Dargah, belonged to the Muslim community. In 1931, the Privy Council in London reaffirmed this decision. Despite this, the Sangh Parivar has spent the past decade reigniting tensions, attempting to hold protests demanding a ban on animal sacrifices and the removal of the Dargah.

Most recently, the RSS staged a protest at the Tirupparankundram Murugan temple itself, waving BJP flags — despite a court ruling limiting demonstrations to a place, 4km away from the temple.

RSS mouthpiece 'Organiser' carried a detailed story on that demonstration. It said, the deity named as 'Subramanyam Swamy' known as Murugan in Tamilnadu'.

According to them, it is the Vedic god Subramanya Swamy. They superimpose it on the Tamil god Murugan. But to incite a riot, they call it Murugan in the vernacular. Murugan, the leader of the tribes, must have eaten meat. But after he was made a Vedic god, he became a vegetarian!

They also filed petitions seeking a ban on animal sacrifices and distributing cooked meat food.

On June 24, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court delivered a split verdict.

T M Murthi

Justice Nisha Banu's judgment emphasized the importance of preserving inter-religious harmony and noted that animal sacrifices are a part of certain Hindu traditions. She directed the authorities to take action against individuals and organizations attempting to disrupt the peace and harmony at Thiruparankundram.

In contrast, Justice Srimathi held that there was no evidence to support the claim that animal sacrifices were traditionally performed at the dargah on the hill. She also noted that the marriage halls in Thiruparankundram do not allow non-vegetarian food to maintain the sanctity of the temple but forgot to note that in almost all houses meat is being cooked.

Around Thiruparankundram hill, there are many local deities, including the Karuppannaswamy temple. Animal sacrifice is a tradition here. If a blanket ban on animal sacrifice is imposed, it will affect not only Muslims but also Hindus.

98 per cent of the people in Tamil Nadu eat meat. The remaining two percent are upper-caste Hindus who try to make them feel guilty that eating meat is degrading and of low-quality.

Since it is a split verdict, judges themselves requested to refer it to a third judge. No matter

what the verdict is, the people of Thiruparankundram and the people of Tamil Nadu will never throw away their social harmony!

With less than ten months to go before the Tamil Nadu assembly elections, the BJP, apparently allergic to rational debate, has dusted off its favorite old playbook: communal division. Lacking the firepower to take on the secular-progressive alliance with anything resembling ideas, they have decided Murugan might do the trick, because why bother with policy when you can stir the religious pot instead?

Meanwhile, the main opposition party, the Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, once proud torchbearer of Dravidian ideals, now looks more like a cowering branch office of the NDA. After some quality time with the Enforcement Directorate and Income Tax Department, AIADMK leaders have meekly shuffled into the BJP's waiting arms, call it democracy, 2025 edition.

At the recent Murugan conference, the slogan was not exactly subtle: "Muruga, come and eliminate Dravida!" — because apparently divine intervention is the only campaign strategy left on the table. In an irony thick enough to cut with a sickle, conference speakers branded Periyar and Anna — founders of the Dravidian movement — as enemies

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India Will Defeat Onslaught on Preamble

The Preamble of the Indian Constitution declares India as a "SOVEREIGN, SOCIALIST, SECULAR, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC," but it is facing renewed criticism from the RSS and BJP. The RSS, which has historically rejected the Constitution, views it as 'alien' to the ethos of 'Bharat' and has sought its abolition.

A concerning trend has emerged with calls for a review of the Preamble, particularly the terms "SECULAR" and "SOCIALIST." Dattatreya Hosabale, General Secretary of the RSS, recently called for a review during a speech marking the 50th anniversary of the emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi. Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar referred to the inclusion of these terms as "sacrilege to the spirit of Sanatana."

In 2020, multiple petitions were filed in the Supreme Court challenging these terms inclusion, led by Dr. Subramanian Swamy and others, who argued that they violated the Constitution's intent and imposed unnecessary constraints on policymaking. However, the Supreme Court upheld that these words did not obstruct governance, reflect the evolving democratic ethos, and affirmed Parliament's authority to amend the Preamble under Article 368 as long as the Constitution's basic structure remains intact.

The bench ruled that Indian secularism signifies equal respect for all religions, rather than hostility toward religion. It also clarified that India's version of socialism advocates for economic justice. Justices Khanna and Sanjay Kumar upheld the inclusion of the terms "Secular" and "Socialist."

Secular and Socialist as Cardinal Constitutional Commitments

"Secularism" is central

Vahida Nizam

to the idea of India. In the Indian Constitution, 'secular' means that the state treats all religions equally and guarantees the freedom to practice, profess, and propagate any faith. It aims to integrate religious diversity and is not anti-religion.

"SOCIALIST" reflects the state's commitment to being a welfare state, ensuring justice and equal opportunity for all. This principle seeks to prevent wealth concentration and promotes fair resource distribution.

Some claim that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar rejected "Secular" and "Socialist," a view often expressed by the RSS and BJP. However, this perspective is overly simplistic. From the Objective Resolution proposed by Jawaharlal Nehru to the Constitution's founding principles, secularism has always been a vital aspect of India's governance.

The Supreme Court has explained why the terms "secular" and "socialist" were not included in the Constitution. For "secular," the Court noted that in 1949, the term was considered imprecise, as some interpreted it as opposing religion. India has since developed its own interpretation, where the State neither supports nor penalizes any religion.

Regarding "socialist," the Court stated that the Constitution does not specify a particular economic policy. Instead, "socialist" signifies the State's commitment to being a welfare state and promoting equality of opportunity.

The debates in the Constituent Assembly and the reply of Dr B R Ambedkar

During the Constituent Assembly debates on No-

vember 15, 1948, Professor Khushal T. Shah proposed adding "secular" and "socialist" to Article 1, suggesting that India be described as a "Secular, Federal, Socialist Union of States."

K.T. Shah emphasised that since the state is repeatedly declared to be secular, the term should be included in the Constitution to avoid misunderstanding. He also defended adding the term "socialist" as an aspirational goal for India, stating it indicates assured equal justice and opportunity for all. However, this motion was rejected.

Brajeshwar Prasad, a Member of the Constituent Assembly from Gaya (Bihar), argued for referring to India as a "secular cooperative commonwealth" to establish a socialist order, stressing that the word "secular" should be included in the Preamble. Similar proposals, including Maulana Hasrat Mohani's suggestion to call India the Union of Indians Socialistic Republics, were also dismissed. H.V. Kamath called for clearer references to socialism and secularism, but these proposals were rejected in favour of broader language that didn't commit India to any particular ideology.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the chief architect of the Constitution, opposed explicitly stating these values, arguing that secularism was already inherent in the Constitution and that policy directions like socialism should be left to future governments. He believed that the principles of socialism were already embodied in the Constitution, making the amendment unnecessary.

India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, who laid the foundation

for the Constitution through his "Objective Resolution," strongly advocated for secularism and socialism. He supported religious liberty, state neutrality, and economic redistribution, but chose not to include these specific terms in the Preamble, believing the Constitution should serve as a neutral framework for democratic evolution.

42 nd Amendment added "SECULAR, SOCIALIST" and "INTEGRITY (with UNITY)" to the preamble. This amendment was brought in to reinforce the commitment to the core values. The implicit essence of the constitutional ethos are explicitly stated in words. "Secular" reaffirmed equal respect for all religions, "Socialist" indicated that India would aim to reduce inequality which signalled Indira Gandhi governments focus on welfare policies and poverty eradication embodied in her slogan 'Garibi Hatao'. "Integrity" was a symbolic message of one India that augments national unity.

Where are the aberrations? What and why should there be any problem for bolstering the committed values?

There is no dispute to the claim that before the 42 nd amendment in 1976 India was, in no less words, Secular and Socialist in practice and principle. Though the words were missing in the preamble the spirit and ideas were reflected in the governance and its policies. But, the 42 nd amendment has not in the least affected or marred the preamble in its letter or spirit. It has only reinforced the quintessence. Then why this hue and cry?

Political and Ideological Battlelines

The controversies created by the BJP are seen as attempts to undermine the values of secularism and socialism, which stand in stark opposition to the Hindutva ideology. The

RSS and BJP fundamentally oppose the concept of secularism. Their Hindutva ideology is dedicated to establishing a Hindu Rashtra, with the laws of 'Manu' forming its foundational structure. 'Manusmriti' promotes and reinforces the birth-based inequalities of the 'Varnasrama Dharma.' For this unscientific and abhorrent ideology, principles like "Secular" and "Socialist" are considered anathema and fundamentally incompatible.

For decades, they have spread hostility and hatred, distorting secularism as "minority appeasement" and labelling it as pseudo-secularism. In 2015, the BJP government sparked nationwide controversy by using an image of the original Preamble (without the amendments made in 1976) in a Republic Day advertisement. This incident revealed their intentions more clearly. The BJP seems set to intensify its assault on the Constitution and its core principle of secularism, believing that secularism does not represent the essence of Indian culture. This is a dangerous perspective.

Secularism is ingrained in the DNA of India. The country has never been mono-religious or mono-cultural. The numerous invasions and incursions throughout its history have contributed to a rich mosaic of religious, cultural, and linguistic pluralism. Indian society has continually evolved, becoming increasingly complex and enriched at every historical phase. From the edicts of Ashoka in the 3rd Century BCE to Akbar's Din-i-ilahi in the 16th century, and right up to modern secularism, India's secular framework has withstood various challenges. Now, however, this onslaught is taking place within the confines of the Constitution, aiming to dismantle it. The challenge we face is formidable, but India will fight to preserve its cherished ethos.

NEW YORK: Political lightning struck New York City last night. Against all expectations, 33-year-old democratic socialist and third-term state assemblyman Zohran Mamdani took a commanding lead in the first round of ranked-choice votes against former New York governor Andrew Cuomo, the primary's front-runner. By the end of the night, Cuomo conceded defeat to his young rival.

The race has the potential to reshape national politics, upsetting the balance of forces within the Democratic Party and pointing the way to a new era of possibilities for the Left.

Even before the results started rolling in yesterday, it was clear the race had taken on major political significance, both locally and nationally. Mamdani had overcome a huge deficit in name recognition and outside campaign spending to narrow the gap with Cuomo, with some polls in recent weeks showing the two more or less in a dead heat. Almost none of the polls, however, predicted Mamdani besting the former governor in the first round, and by a large margin.

How did Mamdani pull off “the biggest upset in modern New York City history,” as a Democratic Party strategist put it? He ran an exceptional campaign, one that the Left and their opponents will be studying for years to come. Unfailingly focused on the city's cost-of-living crisis, Mamdani proposed a handful of bold reforms that involved redistributing wealth and expanding the public sector, including fare-free buses, city-owned grocery stores, free childcare, and a massive, publicly driven expansion of affordable housing stock — issues that spoke to the most urgently felt needs of New York's working class. The campaign ran a savvy and infectious social media operation that communicated in an upbeat and accessible way about material issues and Mamdani's proposed solutions.

Mamdani also made important inroads with the city's

labor unions, a constituency that makes for a natural ally for the democratic socialist but that has historically tended to be more conservative in its political endorsements. And the campaign boasted a massive field operation, powered in no small part by the New York City chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America, that sent tens of thousands of volunteers to canvass for Mamdani across the five boroughs.

Attempts by opponents and the massive super PACs supporting them to paint Mamdani as a dangerous radical who hates Israel and wants to defund the police fell flat. The socialist candidate proved both principled and politically adroit. Rather than getting bogged down in sectarian disputes or unnecessarily associating himself with maximalist far-left rhetoric likely to confuse or unsettle voters, Mamdani spoke about Israel-Palestine and public safety in terms that were both commonsense and universalistic. Instead of falling into the trap laid by talking heads who asked him whether Israel had “a right to exist,” Mamdani asserted, simply, that it had a right to exist “as a state with equal rights” for all its citizens. And on policing and public safety, Mamdani rejected the language of “defund” and “abolition,” arguing that police had a “crucial role to play” in public safety but that police are currently expected to do the work of social workers and mental health professionals, work that they are not trained or well-suited to do.

For all the strengths of his campaign and his platform, Mamdani is also personally a charming presence and effective communicator, the likes of which the American left has rarely seen. He also had the for-

Nick French

tune of running against a weak opponent in the disgraced Cuomo, who attempted to revive his political life after a slew of sexual harassment allegations forced his resignation. (Those allegations, of course, were just the tip of the iceberg of a corrupt, scandal-ridden career.)

Cuomo ran a campaign marked by very few public appearances, which relied on boatloads of outside spending to fund a deluge of attack ads against Mamdani in the race's final stretches. And Mamdani was able to form tactical alliances with principled progressives like Brad Lander, the third-place candidate in the race, to advance their shared aim of stopping Cuomo.

Though Cuomo conceded defeat last night, the race is far from over. The later-round votes in the ranked-choice system still have to be counted. And Cuomo has set himself up to run as an independent in the general election. Whether he does or not, in the general, Mamdani will have to face off against the current mayor, Eric Adams, who skipped the Democratic primary to run on his independent (and absurdly named) “End Antisemitism” ballot line.

Mamdani will almost certainly confront a flood of cash from the pro-Israel lobby, real estate interests, and other wealthy opponents on a scale that exceeds the massive amounts they spent in the primary.

Mamdani has made what could have been a depressing mayoral contest of mostly local interest into a national and international political phenomenon. By running a

campaign centered on ambitious egalitarian proposals to make the city affordable for working-class New Yorkers, he is forcing establishment politicians and their supporters in the media to engage the Left on questions of class and the distribution of material resources. By defending universalism and Palestinian human rights when it comes to Israeli crimes, he is exposing the moral bankruptcy at the core of US foreign policy. By drawing big money and national political figures — including even former president Bill Clinton, who endorsed Cuomo in the final days — into the race, he is revealing the deep divides within a Democratic Party torn between fealty to corporate interests and a genocidal warmongering, on the one hand, and righteous democratic socialists like Mamdani on the other.

In this way, Mamdani's mayoral campaign has captured some of what made his acknowledged political inspiration Bernie Sanders's presidential campaigns so exciting. The campaign is forcing people to pick a side: for or against corruption, for or against big money in politics, for or against human rights, for or against a program that actually serves the material needs of workers.

Mamdani and those who side with him will face considerable resistance in advancing their pro-worker vision in the general election. But the coalition that has already cohered around Mamdani and delivered an astounding blow to the political establishment is a promising sign that a better world is, in fact, possible.

600 Million Jobs Needed by 2030 to Absorb Global Workforce

World celebrated Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) day on June 27, 2025. The celebrations have acquired a special significance this year since the world has a great task to create 600 million jobs needed by 2030 to absorb the growing global workforce. MSMEs employ for nearly 2.3 billion people globally, though it has been suffering from persistent barriers.

As for India, to address the job gap, the country will need to create between 90 million and 115 million jobs. IMF has even estimated it to be 148 million. Indian MSMEs employ a little over 110 million workers, accounting approximately 62 per cent of the total employment, in the formal sector.

At global level MSMEs account for 90 percent of businesses, 60 to 70 percent of employment and 50 percent of GDP worldwide. As the backbone of societies everywhere they contribute to local and national economies and to sustaining livelihoods, in particular among the working poor, women, youth, and groups in vulnerable situations. MSMEs hold the potential to transform economies, foster job creation, and promote equitable economic growth if given adequate support.

In emerging markets, most formal jobs are generated by SMEs, which create 7 out of 10 jobs. Nevertheless, access to finance is disproportionately difficult for smaller firms in the least developed countries (LDCs), with 41 percent of SMEs in LDCs reporting access to finance as a major constraint to their growth and development, by comparison to 30 percent

in middle-income countries (MICs) and only 15 percent in high-income countries (HICs).

In his message UN Secretary general has called for unlocking full potential of MSMEs. He

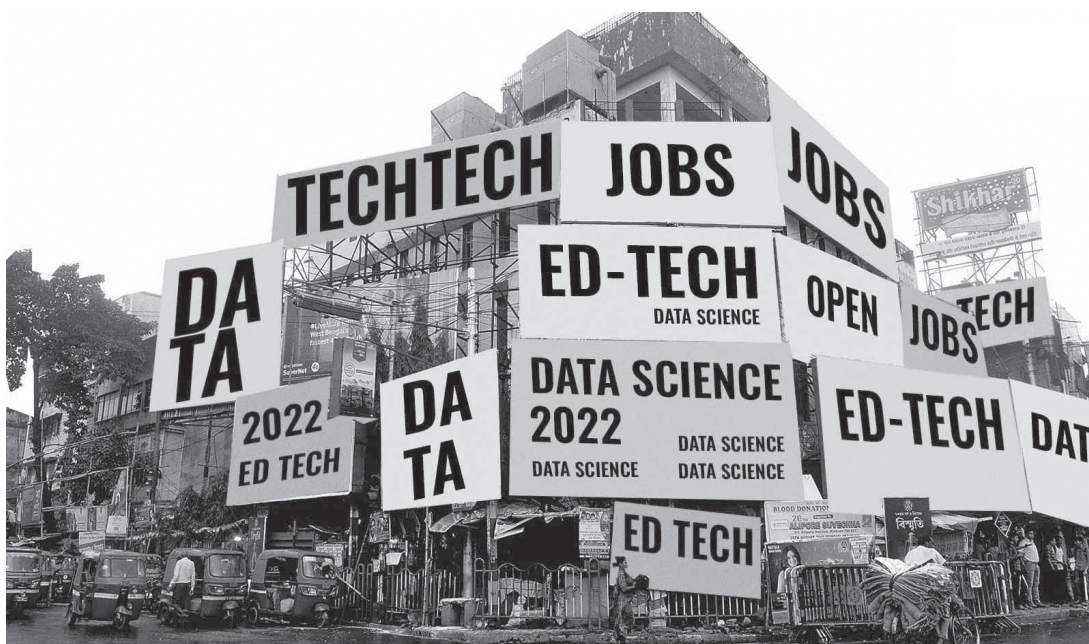
MSMEs through inclusive policies, better access to finance, skills, innovation, and decent work.

MSMEs are not merely engines of growth, they are also catalysts for social justice. By generating employment for nearly 2.3 billion people, particularly for women, for youth, and marginalized communities often excluded from formal economic structures, MSMEs are crucial in

nearly 70 per cent compared to large firms, making them more vulnerable in times of crisis.

ILO believes that MSME are crucial for social justice. Their competitiveness and sustainability must go hand in hand with decent work and respect for fundamental principles and rights at work.

ILO has called for Stronger social dialogue to develop inclusive



said, "We must invest in their success by increasing availability of affordable financing, opening market opportunities, and strengthening digital infrastructure and skills. ... Together, let us commit to unleash the transformative promise of micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises as drivers for sustainable development and innovation."

ILO Director General Gilbert F. Houngbo highlighted the crucial role of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in creating jobs and advancing social justice. He calls for bold, coordinated action to empower

advancing inclusive growth, productive employment and decent work, Houngbo said.

Despite their vital role and prospects, MSMEs face persistent barriers. Globally, over half of MSMEs' financing requests remain unmet, in stark contrast to just 7% for larger enterprises. In emerging economies, 70 percent of MSMEs lack affordable financing, thus hindering their growth potential, he said. The digital divide, shortage of skilled human capital, and poor working conditions further exacerbate their challenges, contributing to a productivity gap of

MSME policies; Tailored support to formalize enterprises and extend sustainable protections; Investments in skills, innovation, and digital access; And financing strategies that make capital more accessible to small enterprises, especially those led by women youth and underprivileged groups.

Here in India, MSME Day 2025 was observed as Udyami Diwas. 'Udyami Bharat - MSME Day' theme for 2025 focused on "Enhancing the role of MSMEs as drivers of Sustainable Growth and Innovation." While government has showcased its achievement in the MSME sector, it is

well known how this sector has been suffering since last decade.

One can just recall the budget speech of the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who labelled MSMEs of India as the second engine in the growth story of India, and boasted of significantly helping the sector under PM Narendra Modi led government, and announced several new schemes for them. However, in reality the Centre has been cutting allocations for the Union Ministry of Micro, Medium and Small Enterprises since 2022-23, and the level of allocation for the financial year 2025-26 is still lower than actual expenditure in 2022-23. Definitions for all categories for MSMEs has also been changed to help bigger enterprises, while smaller ones have been struggling for help.

It should be recalled that the Centre has announced Employment Linked Incentives for employers in the Union Budget 2024-25, but it has miserably failed. Now the EPFO has extended the deadline for Universal Account Number (UAN) activation and Aadhaar seeding with bank accounts to June 30, 2025. MSMEs in India, are clearly not getting the government support that is required by them, and the ELI is an example.

Even the NITI Aayog report on "Enhancing MSMEs Competitiveness in India" delves into the array of challenges confronting MSMEs - ranging from financial constraints and technological gaps to skill shortages and regulatory hurdles. India must do more than merely celebrating MSME day.

India's Education Crisis

The Decline of Government Schools

Over the past decade (2014–2024), India has lost 89,441 government schools, an 8 percent drop from 1,107,101 in 2014–15 to 1,017,660 in 2023–24, according to Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) Plus data. Driven by low enrollment, poor infrastructure, and a policy push for school mergers, this trend threatens access to education, especially for low-income and marginalized communities. Meanwhile, private schools have surged by 14.9 percent (42,944 schools), raising concerns about compliance with the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which ensures free education. Critics blame the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government, influenced by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), for promoting privatization. This article examines the scale, causes, impacts, and political dimensions of this crisis, noting the lack of specific data for January–June 2025.

The closure of 89,441 government schools has been stark. Uttar Pradesh led with 25,126 closures and plans to merge 27,764 more by November 2024. Madhya Pradesh saw 29,410 closures, while Odisha recorded 7,478. Other states like Assam, Jharkhand, and Nagaland faced declines, though Bihar and West Bengal saw slight increases. Private schools grew from 288,164 to 331,108, with Uttar Pradesh contributing 19,305 new schools. For January–June 2025, no precise data on permanent closures exists, though

temporary closures occurred for summer vacations (e.g., Delhi: May–June) and security concerns in Border States like Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab in May 2025.

The RSS-BJP regime, both Union and state governments, has been linked to closing 89,441 government schools from 2014–2024, driven by rationalization policies, underfunding (2–3% of

enhancing infrastructure, teacher training, and technology integration. Over 464.4 crores has been allocated for school upgrades, with 513 buildings renovated and 50,000 classrooms modernized. Kerala's 96.2 percent literacy rate reflects decades of focus on public education. Despite criticisms of tribal school closures, the LDF emphasizes equitable access, aligning with the RTE Act, unlike BJP-led

alternatives are distant.

■ **Falling Enrollment:** Student numbers dropped by 2 crore from 2020–21 to 2023–24, driven by economic distress, migration, and a shift to private schools.

■ **Poor Infrastructure:** Many government schools lack basic facilities like computers and internet, with 10 lakh teacher posts vacant, undermining quality.

■ **Underfunding:** Education spending is 2–3 percent of GDP, below the 6 percent recommended by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, pushing parents toward private options.

■ **COVID-19 Impact:** The pandemic closed schools nationwide in 2020, affecting millions. Some never reopened, and economic hardship forced many children out of education.

Closures disproportionately harm Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs), who rely on government schools. Enrollment rates fell from 92.1 percent to

83.3 percent at the elementary level between 2020–21 and 2023–24. In rural and tribal areas, distant alternatives increase dropout rates, child labour, and early marriages, as seen in an Odisha study. Private schools, often charging high fees, are unaffordable, and rapid private school growth in states like Bihar lacks regulation, excluding the poor.

Critics argue that BJP policies, shaped by the RSS, promote privatization through NEP 2020's public-private part-



STUDY & STRUGGLE

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nerships and relaxed regulations, alongside 89,441 school closures and 42,944 new private schools. Discontinued scholarships like the Maulana Azad National Fellowship limit access for marginalized groups. However, closures occurred under the prior UPA government, and non-BJP states like Odisha also pursue mergers. Direct evidence of RSS-driven closures is scarce, with its schools (e.g., Saraswati Shishu Mandirs) operating separately.

To address this crisis, India must:

■ **Increase education funding** to 6 percent of GDP to improve infrastructure and hire teachers.

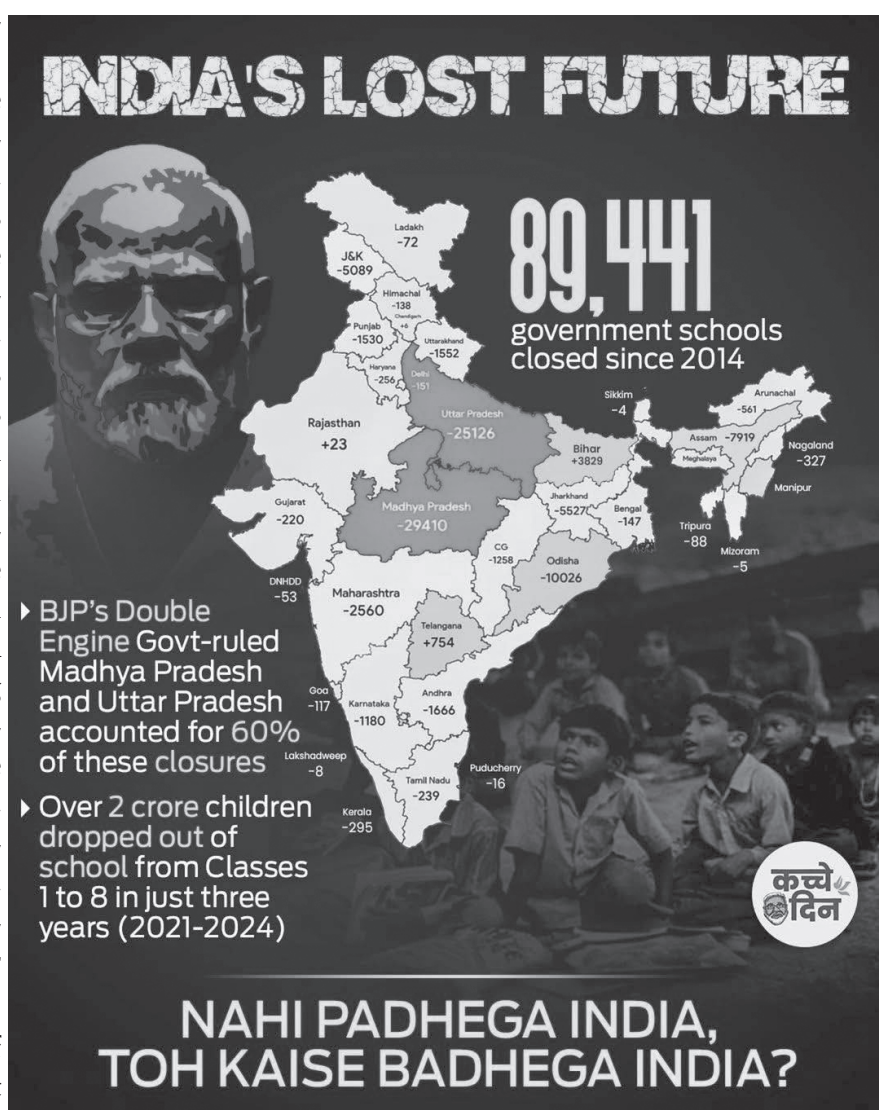
■ **Map school accessibility** before mergers to ensure RTE compliance and reopen rural schools.

■ **Regulate private school fees and quality** to protect low-income families.

■ **Introduce remedial learning and digital tools** to recover pandemic losses.

The closure of 89,441 government schools from 2014–2024, driven by BJP-led policies, has deepened educational inequities for SCs, STs, and OBCs. While the RSS's role is debated, privatization has surged, side-lining the poor. Without 2025-specific closure data, the crisis demands urgent action to restore public education and ensure RTE compliance.

New Age Weekly



GDP), and privatization, notably in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Critics argue this violates the RTE Act, though closures predate BJP rule.

The Communist-led LDF government in Kerala has bolstered government schools through significant investments and reforms, countering the national trend of 89,441 closures from 2014–2024. The "Comprehensive Quality Improvement" program, launched in 2025, aims to transform schools into centers of excellence by

privatization and commercialisation trends.

Several factors drive this trend of closing of schools:

■ **School Rationalization Policy:** Since 2016, backed by NITI Aayog, the BJP-led government has merged low-enrollment schools to cut costs. States like Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have aggressively pursued this, but critics argue it violates the RTE Act's mandate for schools within 1 km for primary students, especially in rural areas where

State Must Make General Welfare of Community Its Prime Duty

Ever since the notion of political community has entered the lexicon of human civilisation, scholars from different walks of time and space have interpreted this phenomenon. The idea of a 'political community' can take various forms, depending on how power is structured between the rulers and the ruled. For us, the most familiar version of the political community is the State.

The emergence of the State as an acceptable form of political community was reached through a basic understanding concerned with the establishment and regulation of governing authority and the preservation of the rights of the population. The arrangement to preserve a sovereign authority over a defined territory and people was justified as a means to promote peace and sociability. Thus, sovereign power, which was deemed to be exclusively exercised by the State, became the locus around which the modern governmental ordering was regulated.

While the notion of sovereign power has been interpreted in multitudes, a few foundational credentials remain powerful tropes of modern political thought. French jurist Jean Bodin's counsel on political laws of governmental development continues to hold relevance today. Writing in 1576, Bodin argues that every viable state must possess a single, supreme centre of authority (sovereignty) containing all governmental powers. However, he also contends that in order to sustain the state, it is essential to maintain a separation between legislature and executive, arguing that the more limited the power of sovereignty is, the more assured it is. Bodin's investigation of the political community marks an important shift in orientation from Roman law, where he shifted the focus from the rulers to the political constitution of the people or nation.

Almost 200 years later, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's writings on the nature of state-building

gave a concrete shape to the contemporary understanding of the State, sovereignty, and political freedom. For Rousseau, a stable political community is marked by a social contract in which humans exchange their natural freedom for 'higher' political freedom. Thus, the political equality and equal liberty granted to the people within the political community reconcile freedom and government. The contemporary notion of popular sovereignty could be derived precisely from these arrangements. Bodin and Rousseau's interventions serve as crucial precepts to understand the reconfiguration of sovereignty that contemporary

Swarati Sabhapandit

develop and apply shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programs to shape the evolution and use of the digital environment. It essentially involves the establishment of a framework that guides the equal and responsible use of digital technologies, which benefits all the stakeholders (emphasis added).

As democracies increasingly lean towards e-governance, it is crucial to take stock of the aspired goal and the lived experience these polities encounter. Let's take the example of India, the world's largest democracy, a country going through a substantial 'digital revolution' in governance.

With the introduction of the Unique Identification Author-

distribution — would be significantly reduced. However, the decade that followed was marked by intensive data collection, persistent breaches of civil rights, fragile digital safeguards, and an added layer of indignity for the poor and disadvantaged.

Despite early warnings about possible damages, the lack of a legal framework, and multiple court rulings to prevent mandatory implementation and instances of legislative evasions, the Aadhaar project was rapidly expanded and hailed as a major success in the State narrative. While the project began without much understanding of the problem it was expected to solve, the available evidence points towards a substantial profit for private entities. Although Section 57 of the Aadhaar Act, 2016 had permitted private entities to use Aadhaar authentication, the Supreme Court of India, in Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (I) (2018) struck down this provision to prevent such usage. In a striking violation of this ruling, however, the State amended the Aadhaar rules in February 2025 to allow private entities to use Aadhaar authentication for service delivery, citing the goals of promoting 'ease of living' and improving 'access to services'.

While Aadhaar is possibly the largest and most powerful infrastructure of surveillance and data mining any democratic state has ever built, the scope and nature of this infrastructure are gradually expanding. Ministry of Civil Aviation, in 2017, launched DigiYatra, an opt-in service at Indian airports to make airport travel 'seamless, contactless, hassle-free, and paperless' for all passengers. The service enables digital processing of passengers at airports by using facial recognition technologies ('FRT') and Aadhaar-linked credentials to

"An initiative aimed initially at improving transparency and efficiency in governance has instead evolved into a system where the State holds greater access to our private lives than we do to its functioning. While informed consent is widely recognised globally as a cornerstone of privacy and data protection laws, India's approach to data governance has significantly blurred these boundaries. Under the Aadhaar regime, citizens lack the autonomy to freely choose whether or not they wish to identify themselves with the government."

democracies are witnessing today.

Over the past two-odd decades, governance has undergone a major shift with the rise of the digital revolution. Our relationship with the State is now increasingly mediated and controlled through digital technologies. The United Nations defines digital governance or e-governance as the process by which governments, the private sector, and civil society

ity of India (UIDAI), colloquially known as Aadhaar, which issues a unique digital identity to each resident of India, the State claimed that India entered a new age of digital transformation. The initiative was introduced to increase efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness in the distribution of welfare services by the State. It was also anticipated that the issue of intermediaries and pilferage — considered a significant obstacle in welfare

authenticate them as opposed to the conventional use of boarding passes. While the Ministry's DigiYatra Biometric Boarding System ('DYBBS') policy clarifies the voluntary nature of the application, consent of the passengers became paramount due to privacy and surveillance concerns, as well as the inaccurate nature of the technology being used.

However, more recently, concerns have been expressed about the unlawful and undignified manner in which DigiYatra is being deployed in the airports. Passengers are reportedly being coerced by private airport personnel and security staff into signing into DigiYatra service and scanning their faces at multiple airport checkpoints. A recent report by The Hindu revealed that among 21,000 domestic passengers flying out of Delhi, 21 percent signed up for DigiYatra without realising it, and only 15 percent used the service knowing 'the benefits it offered'. While DigiYatra remains considerate of the notion of 'consent', some domestic airports have integrated 'paperless biometric technology', raising severe privacy and surveillance concerns.

Another flagship technological intervention integrated by the State during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic was AarogyaSetu. AarogyaSetu is a mobile-based application developed under the State's e-governance initiative to 'track and sensitise' the citizens regarding the spread and possible precautions for COVID-19. Although the central government initially mandated the installation of the application only for its employees, in the post-pandemic period, it became widely embedded in the digital devices of the general public, primarily to access services related to travel, healthcare, and accommodation.

Like Aadhaar, the sweeping imposition of AarogyaSetu was accompanied by legal lacunae, privacy concerns, excessive collection, processing, and possible sharing of non-consensual

data, absence of statutory backing, and utter lack of transparency and accountability on the part of the State. In a report published by Internet Freedom Foundation (2020), a non-profit organisations working towards defending digital

rights, it is noted that while the benefits of the app remain unclear and questionable, the Central government itself has apologised for the opaque and 'irresponsible' behaviour with respect to the app.

When Aadhaar was introduced in 2010 as a voluntary initiative through an executive order and immediately made compulsory to access social welfare services, the legislature was kept completely out of this exercise. When the initiative received much backlash due to privacy concerns and the unimaginable pain it inflicted on the poor and downtrodden, the Aadhaar Act was introduced in Parliament

as a money bill to circumvent the Rajya Sabha's constitutional role. Since the incumbent government already had a majority in the Lok Sabha, the entire exercise was a farce that undermined the legislature's

"Power needs restraints as people seek to live self-determined lives in conditions absent from the perpetual threat or use of violence, and sovereignty appears to be a good place to think about these aspirations. The State legitimises its exercise of sovereign power that often imposes a homogenised and unitary nation upon a diversity of human identities and experiences. People disappear, or if they appear at all, they appear subjugated. It is against such an arrangement that the constitutional document plays a balancing act by recognising the diverse identities under the constitutive category of citizen."

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So, how do these concerns related to privacy, surveillance, and inequality lead us to interrogate the State's sovereign power today? This is due to the direct correlation between the

integration of these technologies in everyday governance and a simultaneous inflation of sovereign power exclusively exercised by the State.



Let's try to unpack this puzzle through two arrange-

ments of constitutional liberal democracies: constitutional rights and a set of rules that regulate the institutions of the state.

authority and violated multiple court orders that reiterated the voluntary nature of Aadhaar. The State's actions raise important concerns about the organisation and distribution of sovereign power in constitutional democracies. Although the constitutional framework envisions a balanced distribution of sovereign power across various state institutions, the political executive often appears to function as the primary wielder of this power.

Second, while in 2017, the Supreme Court of India upheld the validity of the Aadhaar Act, it simultaneously entrenched the right to privacy in the lexicon of constitutional rights in India. In the following years, the State has consistently undermined this constitutional framework by integrating technologies that significantly compromise privacy and contribute to a 'chilling effect' — where citizens begin to self-censor out of fear of potential legal liabilities. Even more concerning is the growing involvement of private actors in this expanding 'data ecosystem,' now increasingly supported and legitimised by legal mandates.

Third, contrary to the UN definition of digital governance, which emphasises the involvement of multiple stakeholders for responsible use of digital technologies in governance, what was witnessed in India's case was a complete disregard for civil society, political representatives, and, most importantly, the citizens who are at the receiving end of these initiatives. An initiative aimed initially at improving transparency and efficiency in governance has instead evolved into a system where the State holds greater access to our private lives than we do to its functioning. While informed consent is widely recognised globally as a cornerstone of privacy and data protection laws, India's approach to data governance has significantly blurred these boundaries. Under the

On Page 12

Iran Nukes: Severe Hits, But Not Wiped Out

Asad Mirza

It has been almost one week since US bombers conducted “Operation Midnight Hammer” against Iran and its nuclear development sites. However, it is still not clear whether Iran’s capabilities have been damaged; if yes, then to what extent? Further, it also puzzles one with Iran’s obsession with continuing a nuclear program.

US President Donald Trump has repeatedly said the US attack on Iran obliterated its nuclear program and prompted the ceasefire. However, a US official briefed on the Defence Intelligence Agency’s initial assessment told USA TODAY the core components of Iran’s nuclear program appeared to remain intact.

An outraged Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth on Thursday (June 26) countered by calling the bombings a “resounding success” and accused some media outlets of “trying to make the president look bad.”

Iran’s Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, maintained that the bombings “failed to achieve anything significant,” forcing Israel and the US to abandon their attacks. “They could not accomplish anything,” he said. “They failed to achieve their goal. They exaggerate to conceal and suppress the truth.”

Rafael Grossi, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), took a middle path, saying the Iranian program suffered “enormous damage.” He said three primary sites – Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan – were hit hard

but that other locations were not affected at all. The nuclear program can be rebuilt, he said, but he declined to put a timeline on it.

As far as Iran’s response to the Israeli attacks were concerned, R Swaminathan, Governor of India to the IAEA, Vienna, in his article for the Indian Express has rightly summed it up by saying that the most striking feature of Iran’s response was not what it did, but what it deliberately avoided – it did not withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and refrained from activating its regional proxies or disrupting the Strait of Hormuz. Further, the Supreme National Security Council has not yet endorsed the decision of Iran’s Parliament to suspend its cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Meanwhile, Times of Israel’s report on the issue, based on a The Times’ report assessed that Iran’s ability to store enriched uranium remains intact, with most of Iran’s estimated stockpile of some 400 kilogrammes (900 pounds) of nearly bomb-grade Uranium was likely moved before its facilities were bombed, according to one preliminary classified US intelligence report.

The US administration has rejected such assertions, saying the Uranium is thought to have been buried by the strikes. But, on the other hand Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz has said Israel does not know

the whereabouts of all of Iran’s enriched Uranium.

Iran’s ability to convert enriched uranium into solid metal form, which is necessary for assembling a nuclear warhead, was possibly destroyed, as the facility where that process occurs was in Isfahan, reported The Times.

Still, one expert told The Times that Iran may possess the capability at other secret sites locations, as it has converted Uranium to solid metal at other locations in the past.

While Israel said it had severely damaged Iran’s ballistic missile infrastructure during the campaign, The Times assessed that it is unlikely Iran no longer has missiles capable of carrying a nuclear warhead.

Meanwhile, there is a bigger question why a country with large oil reserves feels such the need to have home-grown civil nuclear energy?

A persuasive new account by Vali Nasr, entitled Iran’s Grand Strategy, helps unlock the key to that question by placing the answer in Iran’s colonial exploitation and its search for independence, reports The Guardian.

Nasr wrote, “Before the revolution itself, before the hostage crisis or US sanctions, before the Iran-Iraq war or efforts to export the revolution, as well as the sordid legacy of Iran’s confrontations with the west, the future supreme religious guide and leader of Iran valued independence from foreign influence, as equal to the enshrining principles of Islam in the

state”. Khamenei was indeed asked once what the benefit of the revolution, and he replied, “now all decisions are made in Tehran.”

Nasr argues that while many of the lofty ideals of the revolution, such as democracy and Islam has been eroded or distorted, but the principle of Iranian independence has endured.

The quest for sovereignty, he argues, arose from Iran’s benighted history. In the 19th century, Iran was squeezed between the British and Russian imperial powers. In the 20th century its oil resources were exploited by British oil companies. Twice its leaders – in 1941 and 1953 – were removed from office by the British and Americans.

The popular prime minister Mohammad Mosaddegh was removed in a CIA-engineered coup in 1953 due to his demand to control Iran’s oil resources. No event in contemporary Iranian history is more scarring than Mosaddegh’s toppling. For Khomeini it confirmed Iran still did not control its destiny, or its energy resources.

Although civil nuclear power and the right to enrich became a symbol of independence and sovereignty after the revolution, Ellie Geranmayeh from the European Council on Foreign Relations points out that it was the British and the Americans themselves who introduced nuclear power to Iran in what was named an “atoms for peace” programme.

The Shah of Iran, with US approval, embarked on a plan to build 23 civil nuclear power stations, making it possible for Iran to export electricity to neighbouring countries and achieve the

status of a modern state.

In an interview with the Washington Post, Henry Kissinger later admitted that as US secretary of state, he raised no objections to the plants being built. “I don’t think the issue of proliferation came up,” he said.

However, the shah recognised the dual use for nuclear power, and in June 1974 even told an American journalist that “Iran would have nuclear weapons without a doubt sooner than you think”, a remark he later denied. Gradually, the US became more nervous that the shah’s obsession with weaponry might mean Iran’s civil programme turning military.

Before the strikes, all believed Iran had developed a large stockpile, and at a sufficiently enriched level, to sustain a nuclear reaction that could be used in a bomb if it decided to. But how quickly Iran would have been able to “sprint to a nuclear weapon” as General Michael E Kurilla, Commander of the CENTCOM put it on June 10, is also a matter of dispute, and estimates ranged from one week to one year.

While military confrontation has paused for now, the geopolitical stakes remain high. Iran still retains a significant portion of its long-range missile arsenal, and airstrikes alone cannot permanently dismantle a nuclear program.

But it also forces us to question, who gave the right to Israel, itself a nuclear power, the right to act as the big daddy and strike Iran. Perhaps Bibi needed this more to ensure his win in the next polls and divert the global attention from Gaza.

Consolidated state government finances as per the data for provisional accounts witnessed deterioration in 2024-25. The consolidated Gross Fiscal Deficit (GFD) to gross state domestic product (GFD-GSDP) ratio of states rose in 2024-25 owing to a shortfall in tax revenue and lower grants from the centre.

The State of the Economy presented in the latest bulletin (June 25, 2025) of Reserve Bank of India has said that the moderation in revenue receipts outweighed the decline in revenue expenditure, leading to a widening of the revenue deficit.

However, it says that the capital expenditure, as a per cent of GSDP, remained stable, aided by a significant year-end surge in most states. For 2025-26, states have budgeted a GFD-GDP ratio of 3.3 per cent, along with a rise in capital outlay to 3.0 per cent of GDP, reflecting a continued focus on enhancing the quality of expenditure within a calibrated fiscal path.

As for the Central government finances, RBI says that the provisional accounts for 2024-25 released on May 30, 2025, confirmed that the fiscal indicators are more or less in line with the revised estimates (RE). The gross fiscal deficit (GFD) of the union government stood at 4.8 per cent of GDP, lower than the initially budgeted estimate (BE) but slightly above the revised estimate (RE).

On the other hand, the revenue deficit (RD), at 1.7 per cent of GDP, was lower than BE and RE. The moderation in revenue expenditure, along with robust growth in revenue receipts paved the way for fiscal consolidation.

On the receipts side, the gross and net tax revenue posted healthy growth of 9.5 per cent and 7.4 per cent, respectively. Gross tax revenue stood at 11.5 per cent of GDP in 2024-25. While the growth in the corporation tax was higher than RE, the growth in income tax was slightly lower than RE. Although the union excise duty and custom duty collections were broadly in line with RE, their growth rate contracted from the previous year.

revenue expenditure to capital outlay (RECO) declined to 4.2, lower than RE (from 4.4 in 2023-24), which bodes well for the quality of public expenditure.

Central government finances for April 2025 indicated an improvement in GFD and RD – both in absolute terms and as per cent of BE – vis-à-vis the corresponding period of the previous year, aided by substantial growth in non-tax revenue, and non-debt capital receipts (including disinvest-

Dr Gyan Pathak

However, rural demand improved as evident from the increase in the retail sales of two-wheelers.

During May 2025, household demand for work under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) picked up, following the pursuit of alternative avenues for employment in the pre-sowing lean agricultural

and financial services – while sectors like insurance, real estate, oil and gas and emerging technologies recorded growth. However, the PMI employment diffusion indices signalled strong job creation in organised manufacturing and services, with 14 per cent of firms reporting increased payrolls.

Overall economic activity remained robust in May 2025, with key high-frequency indicators like E-way bills, Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue, toll collections, and digital payments showing strong growth. GST revenue collections surpassed the Rs 2 lakh crore mark for the second consecutive month in May, boosted by import-related GST receipts. Petroleum consumption expanded for the first time in the last four months, driven by petrol. Unseasonal rains and premature onset of monsoon, however, led to a reduction in electricity demand.

India's merchandise exports contracted by (-) 2.2 per cent (y-o-y) to 38.7 billion US dollar in May 2025 due to an unfavourable base effect. Exports of 13 out of 30 major commodities (accounting for 59.0 per cent of the export basket in 2024-25) contracted on a y-o-y basis in May, 2025.

Merchandise imports also contracted by (-) 1.7 per cent. Imports of 10 out of 30 major commodities (accounting for 51.5 per cent of import basket in (2024-25) contracted on y-o-y basis in May 2025.



Apart from higher surplus transfer from the Reserve Bank, higher dividend transfer from central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) pushed non-tax revenue growth in 2024-25 above RE.

The total expenditure of the Union government registered a growth of 4.8 per cent in 2024-25 over 2023-24. As per cent of GDP, while revenue expenditure declined in 2024-25 vis-à-vis RE, capital expenditure remained broadly unchanged. The growth in interest payments moderated, while that of subsidy outgo saw a contraction during 2024-25 in line with RE. Furthermore, the ratio of

ment receipts). While revenue expenditure recorded a contraction due to a decline in interest payments, capital outlay grew by 20.9 per cent.

The provisional estimates of GDP show India's real GDP growth at 6.5 per cent. Private final consumption expenditure contributed 4 percentage points and gross fixed capital formation contributed 2.4 percentage points.

High-frequency indicators for May present mixed signals on aggregate demand. Urban demand showed signs of moderation as passenger vehicle sales declined with a sharp drop in entry-level segment.

period and an increase in MGNREGS wage rates.

Employment indicators in May 2025 present a mixed picture. As per monthly Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), the all-India unemployment rate rose to 5.6 per cent in May from 5.1 per cent last month, with a sharper increase in rural vis-à-vis urban areas. Increase in unemployment was partly driven by seasonal agricultural patterns and extreme heat in some regions, limiting outdoor work.

Organised job listings, as per the Naukri Job Speak Index, moderated – dragged down by information technology (IT), retail, and banking

State Must Make General Welfare...

From Centre Pages

Aadhaar regime, citizens lack the autonomy to freely choose whether or not they wish to identify themselves with the government.

Fourth, the modern state system is marked by a set of rules known as public law, which dictates the arrangement between the sovereign and the people so that citizens' political freedoms are fully recognised while sovereign power is least exercised. As a result, requirements of transparency are held to be directly proportionate to power. Since the State has the exclusive right to exercise sovereign power, which creates an unequal power relationship between the sovereign and its citizens, digital technologies should enable closer scrutiny of the State and its institutions, which will serve a legiti-

mate public interest rather than increasing surveillance over its citizens.

Fifth, Aadhaar and other technologies were developed in the absence of data protection laws and with an absolute disregard for privacy rights. While more than a decade later, in 2023, the Digital Personal Data Protection Act ('DPDPA') was passed, much of the damage related to privacy, security, and inequality has already been done. While the new act nominally advances data protection, it simultaneously grants sweeping administrative powers to the executive under broad categories like sovereignty, national security, and public order. More importantly, the law does not classify 'sensitive personal data' as a distinct category needing additional safeguards and caution. Global in-

struments such as the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation ('GDPR') identify data gathered through biometric and facial recognition as a 'special and vulnerable' category requiring higher processing standards.

Additionally, the State has been manipulating the existing legal provisions to blur the requirements of trans-



parency in the guise of protection of the right to privacy. The DPDP was proposed to safeguard and balance peoples' right to privacy and their right to information, which are fundamental rights flowing from the Constitution. Unfortunately, the Bill fails on both counts. Section 44(3) of the DPDPA seeks to discard Section 8(j) of the Right to Information Act, 2005 by putting a blanket exemption to the disclosure of personal information of public servants. It also discarded Section 8(1) of the RTI Act, under which any information accessible to Parliament or a state legislature could not be denied to the public. Through a selective interpretation of privacy and transparency concerns, and without any independent oversight, the State has effectively established a covert security apparatus armed with an abundance of power and data at its disposition.

Since the State is the

primary processor of the data accumulated through the digital governance platforms, the security of our personal data is conditional primarily to the discretion of the State. At this stage, faith in the State's goodwill appears to be the only accessible solution to its citizens. But can faith alone truly define the contractual relationship that underpins the very foundation of the modern state system? These

reflections should be anchored in a foundational democratic principle — popular sovereignty, which is rooted in a social contract wherein citizens confer legitimate authority to the government in exchange for protecting their rights.

Therefore, the concept of sovereignty must be grounded in the principles of accountability and transparency, which serve to restrain the exercise of power. To reflect Bodin's counsel, sovereign power is best preserved when it is exercised sparingly. Yet, we are witnessing a stark departure from this order today. The State and its institutions are relentlessly pushing the boundaries of sovereign power under the banner of progress, welfare, and technological advancement. The consequences of this unchecked expansion — censorship, criminal profiling, surveillance, financial fraud, and rising inequality — are steadily becoming

apparent.

Democracy has something important to say to and about the more egregiously permissive and self-referential formulations and practices of sovereignty. Power needs restraints as people seek to live self-determined lives in conditions absent from the perpetual threat or use of violence, and sovereignty appears to be a good place to think about these aspirations. The State legitimises its exercise of sovereign power that often imposes a homogenised and unitary nation upon a diversity of human identities and experiences. People disappear, or if they appear at all, they appear subjugated. It is against such an arrangement that the constitutional document plays a balancing act by recognising the diverse identities under the constitutive category of citizen.

Matthew S. Weinert's (2007) counsel on 'democratic sovereignty' might offer an important insight. Weinert argues for an alternative notion of sovereignty where one should shift the focus away from sovereignty's agent (the State) to sovereignty's content. Here, the legitimisation of the State and popular sovereignty practices is measured through common good and democratic principles like human rights, the rule of law, and environmental protection, or principles that preserve and advance the general welfare of the political community and its constituents. It is precisely such principles on which our democracies are founded that call for an interrogation of the expanding sovereign power today.

Courtesy: The Leaflet

Communal Harmony under Siege...

From Page 03

and traitors, while the AIADMK (whose very name honors Anna and Dravidianism) stood onstage, heads bowed, like extras in a bad political theatre production.

Truly, if hypocrisy were currency, this lot could pay off the national debt. There are not even ten months left for the Tamil Nadu assembly elections. The BJP cannot face the secular progressive alliance with politically positive debates. The communalist gang has taken Murugan in hand to divide people on the basis of religion and caste.

The leaders of the main opposition party, Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, have already been intimidated by the Enforcement Department and the Income Tax Department and have been dragged into the NDA.

The slogan of the Murugan conference was "Muruga, come and eliminate Dravida"! Periyar and Anna were branded as enemies and traitors in this conference.

The worst thing is that the AIADMK, which has put the name of Anna and Dravida in its party name, took part in this conference with its head bowed and in vain!

Jeannette Jara, a Beacon of Progressive Hope for Chile's Future



*Diary of
International
Events*

C. Adhikesavan

Jeannette Jara, a dedicated member of Communist Party of Chile and former labour minister, has secured the left-wing coalition's presidential candidacy for the November 2025 election. Her resounding victory in the Unity for Chile (Unidad por Chile) primary on June 29, 2025, with 60.31 percent of the vote, outshone rivals like former Interior Minister Carolina Tohá. Jara's triumph reflects a unified progressive commitment to counter the rising far-right with a vision of social justice, economic fairness, and democratic renewal. Her candidacy underscores her proven leadership, dedication to workers' rights, and ability to inspire hope amid Chile's economic challenges and social polarization.

Born into a working-class family on Santiago's outskirts, Jara's roots give her an authentic connection to the struggles of ordinary Chileans — workers, women, and youth. As labour minister under President Gabriel Boric, she drove transformative reforms that reshaped Chilean society. Her landmark achievement, reducing the workweek from 45 to 40 hours, improved quality of life for countless workers, granting them more time with family and community. Jara also championed raising the minimum wage and advancing pension reforms, providing relief to those facing economic hardship. These efforts earned her widespread support from grassroots movements and labour unions, with Karen Palma, vice president of Chile's main labour federation (CUT), praising her for promoting the 40-hour workweek, pension reform, and minimum wage increases.

Jara's approach blends pragmatism with principle. Less dogmatic than some Communist Party peers, she has shown diplomatic skill in navigating complex legislation while staying true to progressive ideals. Her pension reform, passed through careful concessions to the opposition, exemplifies her

ability to balance ambition with practical governance. This skill has positioned her as a unifying figure capable of rallying diverse progressive factions, drawing comparisons to former President Michelle Bachelet, a symbol of female empowerment and progressive leadership.

Jara's campaign platform, centered on "redistribute to grow," aims to address economic inequality through progressive taxation and increased public investment in infrastructure, education, and technology. Her focus is on delivering tangible improvements: fair wages, safe communities, and a responsive state. In her victory speech, Jara

steadfast. Her campaign emphasizes public security with a social focus, tackling organized crime by empowering communities rather than relying on repression. Her health policy prioritizes strengthening the public system through investments in primary care and support for health workers, rejecting privatization in favour of accessible, quality care for all.

Jara's ability to distance herself from the Communist Party's more controversial positions, such as support for regimes like Cuba and Venezuela, has broadened her appeal. Her approachable demeanour and focus on practical solutions echo Bachelet's leadership style. As President Boric noted,



honoured Bachelet, stating, "She was the one who showed us the path that nothing is impossible." This nod underscores her goal to build on Chile's progressive legacy while forging a path toward inclusivity and equity. Her call for a "broadest possible front" against the far right reflects her understanding that Chile's future depends on collective action and solidarity.

The 2025 election is a critical moment for Chile, with far-right candidates like José Antonio Kast gaining ground. Kast, often compared to authoritarian populists for his praise of the Pinochet dictatorship, pushes tax cuts for the wealthy, anti-immigration policies, and rollbacks of progressive reforms. Jara, however, remains

"Jeannette knows about tough battles," highlighting her resolve against the far-right's divisive rhetoric.

Her primary win marks a historic milestone: the first time a Communist Party member has led Chile's entire left-wing coalition as its presidential candidate. Grassroots leaders like Lautaro Carmona, president of the Communist Party, praise her as an experienced leader with "proven capabilities in state affairs" and a "deep commitment to the transformation and rights of the vast majority, especially workers." Despite economic challenges — 8.8 percent unemployment and 4.8 percent inflation in early 2025 — Jara's redistributive policies and public investment plans

offer a compelling alternative to the far-right's austerity-driven agenda.

As Chile nears the November 16, 2025, election, Jara faces challenges in overcoming the Boric administration's declining popularity, hampered by economic stagnation and public concerns over crime. Yet her decisive primary victory demonstrates her ability to galvanize support. Backed by a coalition including the Communist Party,

Socialist Party, and Broad Front, Jara is poised to lead a united progressive front. Her message of hope, dialogue, and unity, paired with her track record, makes her a formidable candidate.

If elected, Jara would be Chile's first Marxist president since Salvador Allende, whose 1970 victory ended with the 1973 Pinochet coup. Her candidacy honours that legacy while building a resilient progressive movement. As she declared, "Today begins a new path that we will walk together, with the conviction to build a fairer and more democratic Chile." Jara's leadership offers Chile a chance to reject the far-right's authoritarian drift and embrace a future of progress, equity, and hope.

Scrap Anti-Worker Labour Codes

AITUC sends condolences to the families of victims of the recent ghastly deaths of 40 workers and several in the fire accidents in Sigachi Chemical Factory in Sangareddy, Telangana, four deaths in an illegal factory in Rithala, Delhi, and another four in a firecracker factory in Shivakasi, Tamil Nadu. We demand compensation of fifty lakh rupees to the family of each deceased person and five lakh rupees to each of the severely injured persons leading to disabilities.

The responsibility of these accidents does not lie only with the owners/employers, but more with the government of the day. The Modi government, for the last eleven years, has been diluting the labour laws against workers to the advantage of employers in the name of "Ease of Doing Business". The inspections have been done away with, decriminalisation of the violations by employers, increase in working hours, snatching the right to strike, providing not only the laxity in procurements of NOC for environment protection, but even moratorium for some years on these laws, ignoring the rights of workers as well as the lives of people living in the vicinity of these industrial establishments.

The NDA government, led by Mr Narendra Modi is treating the workers as guinea pigs and all the aims of labour law changes are directed at legalising the existing violations happening at the workplace.

In this background, it becomes more significant to prepare for the forthcoming Nationwide General Strike on 9th July against the anti-worker, anti-farmer and anti-national policies of the government to make it a grand success to be followed by sustained struggles.

AIPSO Tamil Nadu, demands immediate Ceasefire in Gaza

All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation (AIPSO) organised a demonstration in Chennai on July 2, demanding that Israel stop the genocide in Gaza immediately. Since October 7, 2023, Israel's attacks on Palestine have killed over 57,000 innocent Palestinians, including more than 30,000 women and children.

Key Demands:

- Israel must immediately stop its military offensive on Gaza;
- The U.S, Britain, and their allied nations continue to provide military and financial aid to Israel, which is highly condemnable;
- The Zionist Israeli government must stop the mass killings of Palestinian people, recognise Palestine, and grant citizenship status to Palestinians;
- The United Nations and the Red Crescent, along with other service organisations, must ensure the immediate and fair distribution of international food and relief supplies under their supervision;
- The U.S. and Israel must cease escalating war tensions in West Asia;
- The U.S. and Israel must stop



violating Iran's sovereignty and international laws by acting against the country; ■ All wars and armed conflicts worldwide, including the Russia-Ukraine war, must be resolved immediately through dialogue; ■ European nations like Britain, France, and Germany, along with NATO, must stop instigating Ukraine to prolong the Russia-Ukraine war; ■ Nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction must be completely

eradicated from the Earth; ■ The governments of around the world should redirect the trillions of rupees spent every year on the military and weapons toward education, medical facilities, housing, employment opportunities, and development schemes for the people.

The protest was led by A. Gopanna, State President of AIPSO, Tamil Nadu and State Vice President of the Tamil Nadu Congress committee.

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Left, Democratic Unity...

From Page 16

the Constitution of India was born out of the long struggle of people against the colonial rule of the British Empire. And it was Dr Ambedkar who framed it. Despite his historical contribution, there were formidable challenges and he could not contest from his home state for the Constituent Assembly. He said that Dr B R Ambedkar had to come from the state of West Bengal with the support of leftists. He was elected as the Chairman of the drafting committee on the basis of his knowledge and sheer dedication to the field of jurisprudence.

Adv. Jaybhay informed that RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) opposed the Constitution, tooth and nail from the day of its inception, simply because it was not based on 'Manu Smriti'. RSS opposed the principles of equality and fraternity.

They stood against all ideas of women's liberation. He said the Communists have given their blood for the freedom of India, and hence it is natural that the people expect them to save the Constitution in this tough situation. The only way to save the Constitution is by educating people about it. "Constitutional literacy is very important to save our democracy", he concluded.

On the second day after the plenary session, in a special programme organised at the venue of the conference, central secretariat member of CPI and the former state secretary of Maharashtra, Dr. Bhalchandra Kango received the prestigious 'Freedom fighter Com. Madhavarao Gaikwad Life-time Achievement Award', at the hands of well known writer and intellectual of Maharashtra Dr Rao Saheb Kasbe. Well known author, editor and former member of Parliament

Kumar Ketkar was the chief guest of the function, while National Council member of CPI Tukaram Bhasme presided over the programme.

Kumar Ketkar speaking on the occasion, touched many issues of national and international importance. He asked the ruling party at the Centre as to why they are silent on the issues of security lapses in Pulwama and Pahalgam. "Whom is the BJP shielding?", he asked. Speaking after the felicitation, Dr. Rao Kasbe hoped for the unity of all left forces in the country. He said the day all left parties unite, fascists will have to retreat.

At the felicitation programme, Rajan Kshirsagar, the kisan leader gave a short introduction of the awardee. Introductory remarks were also made by Sadhana Gaikwad, while the vote of thanks was given by Raju Desle.

Receiving the award Dr Kango said, the present

BJP regime tries to colour every happening as a Hindu-Muslim issue. In the name of progress (Vikas) the BJP Government is taking away the land from the farmers. We are not at all opposed to development. We are opposed to the pauperisation of farmers that happens in the name of development. Dr Kango reminded that Modi Government had promised to write off Rs 22,00,000 crores (22 Lakh Crores) worth loan during the Corona period, but no concession was given to the farmers, lamented Dr. Kango! Surprisingly this Government wrote off corporate loan of Rs 20 Lakh Crore and Rs 2 lakh crore of capitalists. Dr Kango said while concluding, "We stand with the farmers and workers in all their struggles!"

On the third day at the concluding session, Amarjeet Kaur and Dr Bhalchandra Kango addressed the delegates. Amarjeet called to strengthen the organisation for the political battle ahead. Dr.

Kango called upon the cadre to activate the branches and the fractions that form the base of the party.

Presenting the credential report, chairman of the committee, Dr Yugal Rayalu proudly informed the delegates that the CPI in Maharashtra has beaten the rhetoric that the youth are not coming to the party. He said that twenty six percent of the delegates in the conference were below the age of 30! Not only this but in many districts young people are now becoming the office bearers of CPI, he informed. The credential report indicated that the participation of women in the conference was below twenty percent, which needs a serious attention.

Subhash Lande was re-elected as the state secretary while Raju Desle and Shyam Kale were elected assistant secretaries. The conference ended with a high level of confidence and revolutionary dreams for a bright future for common people!

On Record ...

A blue signboard saying "Jeevika Foundation" hung outside the flat till about a year ago, say neighbors near the A Block parking lot of the resettlement colony in East Delhi's Trilokpuri. No one knows who put the board up, or who removed it — the flat has been unoccupied for long, they say.

What they also don't know is that this faceless outfit with the missing signboard stands today as a symbol of how leading banks and their officials who are meant to track money flows dropped the ball even as cyber scammers passed crores of stolen money right under their noses through ghost accounts opened by fictitious outfits.

On August 8, 2024, there were 1,960 transactions in the account with Rs 3.72 crore credited and Rs 3.33 crore debited. The opening balance for that day: Rs 556. Police records show this was the day when a 78-year-old retired IAF officer, Biren Yadav, was ensnared in a digital arrest scam and forced to transfer Rs 42.5 lakh via RTGS to the account. In all, records show, the scammers coerced Yadav into transferring a total of Rs 1.59 crore to sus-

pected "mule accounts" in four banks.— *The Indian Express*, June 30.

Thousands of people from different parts of the country gathered at Patna's Gandhi Maidan on Sunday to take part in a protest to oppose the Waqf Amendment Act. Several politicians, including MPs and MLAs, also attended the protest organised under the banner of Imarat-e-Shariah, a Muslim organisation active mainly in Bihar, Odisha and Jharkhand. Tejashwi also alleged that attempts were being made to disenfranchise the poor and those in minority communities by making changes to the electoral rolls. "Your land is being taken away and now they are going to take away the voting rights of the poor, backward, Dalit, extremely backward, and poor from the minority communities.— *The Indian Express*, June 30.



The Pahalgam attack seems to have cast a shadow on the upcoming Amarnath Yatra, with lieutenant governor Manoj Sinha confirming a drop of over 10 per cent in pilgrim registrations this year so far.

Sinha sounded confident as he said that the numbers would rise, but his claim came on a day security forces were locked in a gunfight with militants in Udhampur district, highlighting the security challenges amid large deployments for the safety of pilgrims right from Kathua in Jammu to the cave.— *The Telegraph*, June 27.

— Compiled by C. Adhikesavan

25th Maharashtra CPI Conference Calls Left, Democratic Unity Against Fascism

Dr Yugal Rayalu

At a time when speaking against Modi Government is beyond the reckoning of most of the politicians, members of Communist Party of India in Maharashtra had no hesitation in calling a spade a spade. Speaker after speaker spoke openly against the fascist methods of the Modi regime at the Centre.

The 25th Maharashtra State Conference of Communist Party of India gave a clarion call for the unity of all left and democratic forces of the country to fight against the anti democratic and anti secular fascist Government under the leadership of prime minister Narendra Modi.

The conference began with a grand red flag rally organised in the heart of the Nashik Town. A bike rally of youngsters brought hundred flags to Dwarka Square. The bike was led by an open jeep on which the national secretaries Amarjeet Kaur and Dr. Bhalchandra Kango were standing to greet the people. From Dwarka square, thousands of Communist Party members and sympathisers marched to the conference venue with red flags in hand. The rally was led by the Central Secretariat members Amarjeet Kaur and Dr. Bhalchandra Kango, who were accompanied by the state secretary Subhash Lande and other members of the State Secretariat. Few hundred lady members of the party walked in the front of the rally.

A group of students with drums gave a dynamic rhythm to the rally. This band has been raised by the Nashik district committee of the party. One special feature of this rally was a traditional folk band that was playing folk music as people marched in rhythm.

At the venue of the conference, Amarjeet Kaur hoisted the red flag to mark the beginning of the conference. AIKS leader Passya Padma and Dr. Bhalchandra Kango were prominently present on the occasion.

Delivering the inaugural address at the hall



Raju Desle Subhash Lande Shyam Kale

named, Karmveer Dadasaheb Gaikwad auditorium, Amarjeet Kaur emphasised that the future of India lies with the communist ideology. Comparing today's international situation with the times of Hitler, Amarjeet Kaur said that at that time the armament producers in search of markets for their products created the second world war. At that time only communists could challenge and defeat Hitler and saved the world from a catastrophe. Today also similar situation is emerging where the role of communists has become very important, she said. Speaking about the Indian scenario, she lamented about the widening chasm



between the rich and poor, wealth being concentrated with few corporate houses.

Speaking on the occasion, state secretary, Subhash Lande said that

the party units in the state will organise demonstrations all over the state opposing the Citizens Safety bill proposed by the state government. He said this proposed bill is an assault on the democratic rights of people. Assistant secretaries of the state council Prof Ram Baheti and Raju Desle also addressed. The dais of the conference was dedicated to former General Secretary of the party A B Bardhan. The venue of the conference was dedicated to former secretary of state council, Madhavrao Gaikwad.

Several left party leaders attended to extend greetings to the state conference of the Communist party. Peasants and Work-

ers Party leader, MLA Jayant Patil called the CPI as the elder brother while giving the best wishes. State secretary of CPI(M) Dr. Ajit Nawale extended greetings on behalf of his party and called for a broad unity of left and democratic parties. Leader of Satya Shodhak Communist Party Kishor Dhamale recalled the sacrifice of Com. Govind Pansare while extending greetings to the conference.

A five member Presidium was elected

Sonarkar.

In the evening after the inauguration of the conference a special lecture programme was organised on the subject, "Constitutional Literacy - The Core of Democracy". Well known legal luminary Adv. Jayant Jaybhav, member, National Bar Council, was the main speaker while legal activist Suresh Savant, presided over the programme. In his hour long highly informative lecture Adv. Jaybhav in-



unanimously to run the delegates session, comprising of Smita Pansare, Shyam Kale, Madhuri Kshrisagar, Hiralal Pardeshi and Ashok

formed the delegates and guests about the background and the history of the birth of the Indian Constitution. He said that

On Page 15