

Proletarian Era

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LONG LIVE GREAT OCTOBER REVOLUTION

“ The October Revolution has opened up wide possibilities for the emancipation of the peoples of the world and opened up the realistic paths towards it; it has created a new front of revolutions against world imperialism, extending from the proletarians of the West, through the Russian revolution, to the oppressed peoples of the East. This front of revolutions has been created and developed under the brilliant guidance of Lenin and, after Lenin's death, of Stalin.”

(Mao Zedong—Revolutionary forces of the world unite, fight against imperialist aggression, November 1948)



“ Marxism-Leninism teaches man to grasp and to realize where exactly the malady lies, where the root cause of the problems lies, and what is the law governing the changes in this changing society. Only with the grasping of this law can man direct the struggle to transform the society in the correct course November Revolution has demonstrated: the working class is capable of organizing revolution. This revolution has conclusively proved that the era of world bourgeois democratic revolution has come to an end and world capitalism has entered the phase of decadence, become moribund, opposed to progress, to national freedom struggle, to individual liberty and democracy, and thus, it stands as the obstacle on the path of social progress....Countries which are underdeveloped compared to the advanced capitalist countries in the sense of capitalistic development, where capitalist state has been established and the progressive role of the bourgeoisie has been exhausted—socialist revolution is to be made successful by overthrowing the bourgeoisie forging alliance of worker and peasants under the leadership of the communist party on the soil.”

(Shibdas Ghosh—Science of Marxism is the Scientific Dialectical Methodology, SW Vol. IV)

One Nation, One Election: a sinister move to centralize political power

Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Union BJP government has approved the 'One Nation, One Election' (ONOE) proposal of a high-level committee, headed by former president Ram Nath Kovind, for conducting simultaneous polls for both the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. The government intends to pass the bill for implementation ONOE in next parliamentary session. The point is why has such a proposal been mooted at this point? Hence is required an insight into the pros and cons of the proposal.

Government's arguments and the underlying fallacies

The government's primary justifications for ONOE, as indicated above, rest on three main points: cost reduction, minimizing policy disruptions, and better allocation of security forces. Yet, these claims fall short when examined critically based on logic and due cognizance of objective reality. For one, the assertion that simultaneous elections would yield substantial financial savings lacks data-backed evidence. Similarly,

the argument that multiple polling schedules invoking periodic enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) hamper policy implementation is not substantiated by factual analyses of election impacts on governance or developmental programmes. The MCC imposes temporary restrictions only on new announcements of any new project by the government and does not put any rein on the operational projects. As for the deployment of security personnel during every election, while reduced election frequency could indeed lessen

logistical demands, these duties are a standard part of India's security operations and hardly constitute a significant drain on resources.

The underlying intent

For long, the ruling Indian bourgeoisie, an inalienable part of crisis-ridden decadent moribund imperialism-capitalism, has been trying to phase out the rules and operational procedures of multi-party democracy as it poses hindrance for concentrating all political power in the hands of the bourgeois state through a servitor government. It

bears recall that multi-party democracy evolved as a part of political superstructure of the multi-capital or *laissez faire* economy. But when capitalism entered the stage of monopoly and gave birth to giant multi-nationals, small production units were virtually devoured by the monopolist sharks entailing, in the political sphere, weakening and abolishing the parties representing small capital. So, gradual phasing out of multi-party democracy and replacing it by a single or two parties pliant to the class interest of the ruling monopolists is what they desire. Initially, the attempt was to replace the multi-party democracy by a two party democracy so that people

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▲ Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), offering revolutionary tribute to great Lenin and Stalin on 7 November, at Shibpur Party Centre, West Bengal



▲ Comrade K Radhakrishna, Senior Polit Bureau member, addressing after paying floral tribute at Lenin statue in Kolkata on 7 November, on the occasion of 107th anniversary of historic November Revolution

One Nation One Election

The move is intended to rob the country of whatever little vestiges of democratic practice are still prevalent

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have no option but to choose between one of the two contenders, both servitors of ruling capitalism, during election, as is the case with the USA, UK and some other countries, and thus the rule of capital never faces any true political challenge. In fact, such bipolar contests have virtually been put in effect in the country. With the help of the pliant media and administration, the ruling class, during the election, cunningly bring to the fore two parties or combinations as the main contestants while it is a virtual blackout of other parties. Even, in the process of so-called electoral reforms, the changes brought about in the code of conduct and other rules and regulations from time to time, have all, in fact, been decisively working against the relatively smaller parties in terms of the numbers of MLAs and MPs. The main objective is to put up insurmountable hurdles before the revolutionary party upholding the cause of the poor and have-nots, in fighting electoral battles. Raising deposit money, imposition of so many stipulations about furnishing information during the electoral process, it is practically leading to a situation in which a genuine revolutionary party might well be prevented from contesting any election. Thus, the two-party polarization narrows political choices for the electorates and erodes the democratic principle of due representation by the electorates by being properly apprised of diverse political views and ideals of various parties. Such media-driven administration-propelled polarization moves the country closer to a controlled, homogenized political environment rather than a much-clamoured "vibrant democracy".

Next attempt of polarization and centralization by the ruling class was by way of floating the idea of a presidential form of government. In the late 1960s and 1970s, this idea was nurtured by many as if that would free the electoral system from all ills and ills. But that idea could not be pushed through much as the

examples of USA proved to be deterrent since alteration of power between the presidential nominees of the two main parties made no impact, let alone bringing changes, on the policy directives of the government. All these moves, as shown long back by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, Founder General Secretary of the SUCI(C) and an outstanding Marxist thinker of the era, have been driven by the class necessity of decadent moribund crisis-ridden capitalism for clamping fascism which is growing into a general order in all capitalist countries, whether advanced or less developed, in the post-second world war period.

Although this transition did not materialize at the outset for some peculiarities of Indian situation like role of regional capital which we would discuss later, there is a renewed attempt on the part of the ruling bourgeoisie to centralize political power by way of ONOE, not for so called efficient governance but aimed at political centralization by essentially turning elections into bipolar contests dominated by one or two parties or at the initial phase, by two combinations of servitor parties of the ruling monopolists. This shift would marginalize smaller, regional parties that represent regional capital and diverse local voices and electoral choice to two main bourgeois contestants, now the BJP and to some extent, its bête noire, the Congress and their respective alliance partners.

Role of regional parties

As indicated above, a peculiar feature of the Indian economic-political scenario is presence of regional capitals. These regional capitalists have a contradiction with the big monopoly houses and multinationals centring on market. So, the regional parties launched by these regional capitals and espousing regionalism have a role in elections as well. Many provinces now have governments of the regional outfits. This also constitutes a hurdle against abolition of multi-party system and foisting all out fascism.

But with much enfeeblement of

the Congress due to factional feuds, groupism, absence of an accepted leader and so forth, a trend is seen among the regional parties, aspiring to be afloat at national level, to tilt towards alliance mode, both among themselves as well as with either the BJP or the Congress. This propensity is also tacitly supported by the ruling class as it conduces to firming up the two party parliamentary democracy.

Five constitutional amendment needed to implement ONOE

There is another view in support of ONOE that earlier, after independence, elections to the assemblies and parliaments used to be held simultaneously. So, it is argued that why could not that tradition be revived? Apparently, alienated from the concrete objective situation prevailing in the country now, it looks like a sound argument. But then what is the reality? Due to multifarious factors, like fall of both central and state governments midway because of defection, withdrawal of support by a section to the ruling dispensation and so forth, midterm elections have been warranted from time to time, be it at the Centre or in some or other states. So, the tenures of various governments have been different. If the ONOE is to come into force, the tenures of many state governments would have to be cut short midway which would be a gross injustice and militate against constitutional provisions. Pertinent to recall that Shibban Lala Saxena, a distinguished member of the Constituent Assembly during the period of drafting the constitution in 1949, observed: "In our Constitution, all the elections will not synchronize, but they will be at varying times in accordance with the vote of no-confidence passed in various legislatures and the consequent dissolution of the legislatures." "Our Constitution does not provide for a fixed four-year cycle like the one in the United States of America. The elections will probably be almost always going on in some province or the other," he added. He also made it very clear that "our

Constitution provides for the dissolution of the legislature when a non-confidence is passed" and presciently remarked, "So it is quite possible that the elections to the various legislatures in the province and the Centre will not be all concurrent."

R.K. Sidhwa, another prominent member of the constituent assembly, pointed out that "We shall have now about 4,000 members in all the provinces and there will be bye-elections. Surely, every month there will be two or three elections—some will die, some will be promoted to high offices—some will go here and there...In this Constituent Assembly, during the short period, we have had a number of bye-elections although we had nothing to do with them, but in the places from which they have come there have been a number of elections." Shri Sidhwa did not pay heed to those who flagged that more expenses would be incurred for that purpose. Rather he pleaded for an Election Commission empowered to conduct elections with impartiality, fairness and integrity. Assertion of Shri Saxena and Sidhwa that "in our Constitution, all the elections will not synchronize" clearly reflected the legislative intent of the Constituent Assembly for not conducting elections simultaneously.

Precisely for that, the BJP government will have to amend the last five articles of the Constitution to hold simultaneous polls in the country. This includes amendments to Article 83, which governs the term of the Lok Sabha, and Article 172, which covers the tenure of state assemblies.

ONOE threatens India's federalism

So, ONOE in fact, threatens India's federalism by pushing a one-size-fits-all electoral process on states with unique political landscapes and seeks to dilute the diversity of political representation in favor of a monolithic, authoritarian state that aligns with corporate interests and central authority, moving India closer to a system that prioritizes control over true democratic engagement.

Moreover, in parliament elections, the national issues get priority, whereas during assembly elections, many important local and regional issues feature as main plank of electoral contest. Concurrent parliament and assembly elections would prioritize national over many important regional issues which would not only undercut the diversity of India's electorate but also heighten dependency on centralized governance, limiting states' ability to push back against policies that may not serve their local necessities. Thus

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AIDSO launched a well-knit movement against UBDT (University of Brahmappa Devendrappa Tavanappanavar College of Engineering), Karnataka, who decided to impose a staggering Rs 97,000 fee on fifty percent of its seats which was totally meant for the poor meritorious students in this eminent college since its inception in 1951. People from different walks of life joined the movement. Over 45 organizations came out with full support. A mass deputation was led to the state education minister followed by a successful Davangere Bandh on 16 October. Threats from the government as well as the college authority as well as arrest of the leaders failed to bow down students and people. But overcoming all impediments, the movement is continuing.



Imposition of government control over Waqf properties defies justifiability

Under Islamic law, Waqf is a charitable endowment of movable or immovable property for religious, pious, or charitable purposes. Waqf properties which comprise physical assets such as mosques, land, homes, hospitals, offices, buildings, and any other assets, are private properties acquired through legal means and then dedicated as Waqf by the Waqif (the legal owner). Endowments in cash are invested in immovable or financial assets first and the revenue generated is channeled to the beneficiaries. Once a Waqf is established, it is permanent, irrevocable, and cannot be bought back, gifted, inherited, or sold. The beneficiaries of Waqf are the poorer and marginalized sections of the whole populace, irrespective of being Muslim and non-Muslim. Waqfs are governed by Waqf Act 1995 and Mussalman Waqf Act, 1923. Under the latter Act, provisions are made for better management of Waqf properties and for ensuring the keeping as well as publication of proper accounts in respect of such properties

Proposal to amend Waqf Act 1925 and repeal the Mussalman Waqf Act, 1923

On 8 August last, the BJP-led central government has introduced a Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024 in the Indian Lok Sabha. The Bill seeks repeal of the Mussalman Waqf Act, 1923, and amendment to the Waqf Act, 1995. Because of serious objections against the amendment of laws pertaining to religious matters, the Bill has now been referred to a 31-member Joint Parliamentary Committee led by BJP MP Jagadambika Pal for further scrutiny. Not only the ruling party, even some of the opposition parties are engaged in spreading a flawed propaganda over the Bill to buttress their respective sectarian political interests. It is crystal clear that the ruling party has a sinister motive behind bringing in such a Bill. Since India's is a multi-religious society comprising Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs and many other religious sections and communities, any reform in any of the religious laws is bound to be a sensitive one and hence needs to be examined carefully on the anvil of scientific logic, reason, historical background and proper appraisal of the prevailing socio-political context. So, the proposed Waqf amendment Bill which is now under scrutiny of a Joint Parliamentary Committee headed by a BJP MP needs to be

under scanner for a proper examination of and understanding its justifiability or unjustifiability free from any bias, misconception or preconception.

A brief recap of history

Way back in 1817, the East India Company, the then rulers of India, passed a Madras Regulation Act to bring the temples under its control. But when the Christian missionaries raised objection to such takeover, a Religious Endowment Act-1863 was promulgated to form local supervisory committees to look after the temples and mosques. In 1925, Sir Pangandi Ramray Nigay, the first prime minister of the then Madras Residency, took initiative to maintain and supervise the temples and got Hindu Endowment Act passed for that purpose. After independence, the Hindu Religious and Charitable Act (HRCE)-1959 was enacted to create a legal framework for Hindu shrines within the precepts of the Constitution.

But Waqfs are separate autonomous bodies approved by the state just as the Sikh Gurdwaras and Christian churches are governed by "Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC ACT-1925) and India Church Act., 1927 respectively. We know that if someone makes a financial contribution for establishment of a Hindu temple, installation of a deity and bears the expenses for worshipping, that property is classified as religious endowment. As per law, the deity is considered as a judicial person. The custodians of the property are known as *sebayats* (worshippers).

On the other hand, the Mussalman Waqf Act, passed in 1923 governed the management of waqf property and the keeping and publication of accounts for such properties. The Act defined waqf as the dedication of property by a Muslim for causes considered religious, pious, or charitable under Muslim law. After Independence, it was considered appropriate to have a separate body for the governance of the Waqf institutions at the state level following which the Waqf Act of 1954 was enacted. This Act has also been amended several times to cope with the emerging needs. The last amendment was in 1995 to provide for better administration of Waqf and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The validity of the Waqf laws was time and again upheld by the Supreme Court.

In fact, the Justice Sachar Committee report of 2006 which in its finding had given a detailed account of the shocking spectacle of abject poverty, massive illiteracy, non-availability of the benefits of various government-run schemes like prevention of starvation, etc., thus lower access to education, lower representation in public and private sector jobs, lower availability of bank credit for self-employment, denial of minimal healthcare, high maternal mortality, high incidence of underweight children, pathetic slum-dwelling in most unhygienic condition in urban pockets and so forth that characterize the life of the toiling Muslim population, also had suggested more empowerment of the Waqf boards and tribunals. So, any initiative to curtail the powers of Waqf board or tribunals go against the recommendation of this government-sponsored report.

Government and religious shrines

Before focusing on the proposed amendments to the Waqf and Mussalman Acts, certain factual positions need to be referred to. First, the legal position. The democratic norms and principles stipulate that all religions are to be recognized as equal before the state and no religion shall be given preference over the other. All persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practise, and propagate their respective religious beliefs without any interference of the state. The state will neither promote nor oppose any religion. All religious denominations should be allowed to manage their own affairs in matters

of religion in a just and democratic way.

The Indian Trusts Act of 1882 provides a robust legal framework for the governance of public and private temples. Waqfs are also permanent Islamic religious endowments. The basis of Waqf Act is *shariah* law while other religious acts are mainly based on Indian Trust Act 1882. The 'Indian Church Act, 1927' govern the churches while the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925 governs the administration of Sikh Gurdwaras in India. A democratic government, if true to its defined character, ought to pursue secular principles and hence ought not to have any direct control on management of the temples churches or gurdwaras or mosques. The autonomy of the religious institutions ought to be ensured within the orbit of democracy with the help of public opinion. In other words, governing principle should be that such religious shrines remain under public control. There should not be any legislative intervention. The legislature is to ensure that these shrines and institutions run properly free from any aberration.

Indian reality

But what is the reality in India? A total of 4 lakh temples including Tirumala Venkateswara Temple (TTD), Vaishno Devi temple, Kashi Vishwanath temple, Guruvayur Devasom, Dwarka temple and many others are under government control, directly or indirectly. So, one of the unexplained conundrums of independent, 'secular' India is the unabashed involvement of the government in the management of Hindu places of worship all over the country. But what is desirable is that these religious shrines undertake some welfare activities in their respective places and for that, framing of proper law is justified.

It is pertinent to mention that as per the codes of operation of democracy, preservation of auto-

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15 December 1:30 PM Inaugural Session

ALL INDIA UNITED TRADE UNION CENTRE

Waqf

Government ought not to intervene in functioning of religious shrines

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nomy of all voluntary organizations including religious shrines is *sine qua non*. Autonomy means the right of the people who are stakeholders of such organizations to formulate and implement the policy and decision on all aspects of the concerned organization. But, ever since political independence, the governments of our country—both at the Centre and in the states, as a part of the colonial legacy, had never sanctioned complete autonomy of the voluntary organizations, academic institutions, democratic bodies like UGC, Election Commission, etc. None of the ruling parties, irrespective of hues, has ever opposed governmental control in general, provided it is they who hold the reins. Many new ploys have been woven to either topple or weaken relative independence of the autonomous bodies, using the bogey of monitoring accountability, code of conduct, disciplined functioning, etc., etc. Now, in the latest move of introducing the Waqf Amendment Bill, the government is out to not only intervene in the management of Waqfs with a view to controlling their functioning as well as opening avenues for grabbing their lands and properties but also to subverting autonomy of the voluntary organizations like the religious shrines. Let us have a brief overlook of the proposed amendments.

Proposed amendments in Waqf Act

In short, the proposed amendments seek to

- a) make the Waqf Board a toothless organization.
- b) nullify finality of the verdicts of Waqf Tribunals which are regular civil courts with a serving District judge as presiding officer and follow the same procedure as in the civil courts, whereas in case of Hindu temples, there is a Hindu Endowments Tribunal, constituted, in case of Telangana, under section 162 of the Telangana Charitable and Hindu Religious Institutions and Endowments Act, 1987. Similar procedures exist in respect of other Hindu shrines as well. So evidently there is a discrimination.
- c) curb right of a non-Muslim individual to donate his or her legally owned properties to Waqf. Such religious discrimination in regard to charity is totally unjustified, if not spurred by communal angularity.

- d) prevent the Waqf Boards from seeking legal recourse to remove alleged encroachers who have occupied Waqf properties for 12 years or more.
- e) subvert the constitutional guarantee of every religious denomination or any section thereof of the right to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes, to acquire property and administer it free from any interference.

Clearly, all these are against the principle of democratic functioning and keeping the religious organizations free from interference of the government or legislature.

What prompted this amendment

As we have already said, if the Indian government claims itself to be democratic, it cannot and should not infringe upon the autonomy of religious organizations whether those are of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism or Jainism. But the government is directly patronizing Hindu shrines, taking initiative to establish Hindu temples and involving itself in all kinds of Hindu religious activities and rituals with alacrity. The very doctrine of arch communal Hindutva which the RSS-BJP espouse and practise, prescribes wide spreading of anti-Muslim activities. The communal undertone of the policies of the BJP government is becoming increasingly pronounced with every passing day in different forms and acts. It is thus evident that the intention is now to bring the Islamic institutions more and more under government control on the pretext of curbing anti-national activities and corruption. This suits the class design of ruling capitalism to keep toiling people divided based on, apart from other things, religion. Hence, it is currying favour with and enjoying backing of the ruling class. So, this Hinduization has virtually been converted into a naturalality by the RSS-BJP in recent years.

Hollow argument of curbing corruption

But to hide the hideous underbelly of the amendment proposal, the RSS-BJP leaders have found out another fallacious argument. They say that there is raging corruption in the Waqfs and hence the need of government intervention. How far is this argument tenable? There is no denying the fact that the country is mired in rampant corruption in all spheres including the government. The BJP government itself is sitting on scams after scams. Top political

leaders accused of embezzling thousands of crores of rupees are escaping unscathed if they switch to or align with the ruling BJP. Bribes, cut money, extortion, embezzlement of public money, willful tax evasion, stashing black money abroad, usurping bank loans, recycling idle capital through shell companies in tax havens to artificially jackup share prices—these all have become commonplace. The government administration is simply blindfolded to such thriving crimes.

In such a milieu, Waqfs are also not free from that aberration. Even some eminent Muslim personalities have expressed their discontent over instances of corruption involving Waqfs. But are those so serious and so big in numbers that the government suddenly thought of disbanding the autonomy of the Waqfs? Are the Hindu religious shrines free from corruption? Temple lands have been hugely encroached and even illegally transferred in the absence of strong supervision by the authorities. Hindu religious trusts and temples in Maharashtra were alleged to have grabbed over 23 lakh sq ft of land on Belapur hill encroachment. In Bihar, priests are alleged to have seized substantial landed property. Odisha has a sizeable number of temples having land. But complaints of fund embezzlement and illegal property acquisition are being reported about temples including the Lingaraj temple land of Bhubaneswar, 'debottar' property (property dedicated to an idol) of Dhenkanal and Shri Jagannath temple, Puri. Around 60,426 acres of land recorded in the name of Lord Jagannath has been identified in 24 districts of the State. CAG in his report in 2020 on general and social sector tabled before the Odisha assembly said that out of total 12,767 acres of land of 13 temples, about 4,500 acres of landed property of six temples were under encroachment. Added to this, more than 395 acres of land illegally occupied for decades have been identified in States of West Bengal, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Bihar. The land grabbing cases are being reported from almost all states. Lack of transparency and accountability in financial management has led to various allegations of corruption and mismanagement of temple funds. Just the other day, a surprise inspection conducted by endowments commissioner at Kanaka Durga temple in AP has landed the officials of the temple in a spot. The Laddu controversy of Tirupati temple also smacks of corruption. People who visit Kashi Vishwanath temple often complain of extortion and

overcharging for offering Pujas in various ways. Has the government moved its punitive machinery to curb such corruptions?

Another feature is also worth noting. In the past two decades, India has witnessed rise of so called "godmen" (and "godwomen"). The bourgeois media openly publicize the huge money power the charismatic Hindu religious leaders possess. Some of these "godmen" openly back the ruling party and even take part in its electoral campaigns. Using religion as a tool, they have amassed enormous fortunes. To take just a few of the most eye-popping examples: when the godman Sathya Sai Baba died in 2011, his holdings were valued at more than \$ 9 billion. Another godman, Asaram Bapu, has a trust with an annual turnover of \$ 49 million—which may seem like a lot, but pales in comparison to the over \$1.6 billion in annual revenue earned by a company called Patanjali, controlled by yet another godman, Baba Ramdev. If asked, the godmen and their supporters say that their empires have been built on a combination of legitimate contributions and business, and that the funds are used for supporting spiritual and charitable activities. But in fact, there is ample evidence that the fortunes of these propped up religious figures are tainted by extensive corruption, tax evasion, and money laundering. One of the most common functions that godmen perform in the illicit economy is the conversion of so-called "black money" (unaccounted off-book money, often from illegal sources) into "white money" (or goods or services), in exchange for a hefty fee. Ramdev who is often pulled up by the court for marketing of adulterated products or false claim about benefits thereof, enjoys full backing of the Hindutva brigade. Launch of his spurious drug Coronil, advertised as a cure for Covid 19, was inaugurated by Union BJP health minister without caring for any authentic proof.

Godmen are able to get away with all these malpractices due to inappropriate features of India's religious trust laws, which are opaque and riddled with loopholes, and leave Hindu religious trusts largely unchecked and unsupervised. India's law does not sufficiently regulate anonymous donations to religious trusts. Many trusts are not filing income tax returns properly and misusing tax exemption clauses. These pits in the system make the self-styled godmen, who run such religious trusts benefit from this corrupt system, enjoy a significant political advantage and amass

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PM Modi and former CJI Chandrachud's claims of divine intervention—underlying implications

In a democracy which at least in paper professes secularism, religion is to be viewed as a matter of personal belief and non-interference in state and social affairs should be sacrosanct. Yet, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Former Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud appear to be weaving narratives that challenge this basic principle, invoking a mysticism that defies reason, rational governance, and India's constitutionally enshrined secularism. Hon'ble Justice Chandrachud on 24 October 2024 said that he had prayed to God for a solution to the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute and asserted that God will find a way if one has faith. The Chief Justice of India (CJI) who superannuated on 10 November last was addressing residents of his native Kanherisar village in Khed taluka where he was being felicitated. *"Very often we have cases [to adjudicate] but we don't arrive at a solution. Something similar happened during the Ayodhya [Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute] which was in front of me for three months. I sat before the deity and told him that He needs to find a solution,"* the recently retired CJI added.

As the CJI, his admission that he decided the Babri Masjid dispute in favour of the 'Hindus', after he prayed to god has raised critical questions about the fairness of the judgment itself. His conduct in inviting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to his residence to participate in Ganesh Puja celebrations in public view, has also invited flak from his former colleagues in the Court and from the Bar.

It is pertinent to recall PM Modi during a media interview before filing his nomination papers from the Varanasi Lok Sabha constituency on 14 May last was asked why does he not get tired. In reply he said: *"When my mother was alive, I used to believe that I was born biologically. After she passed away, upon reflecting on all my experiences, I was convinced that God has sent me. This energy could not be from my biological body but was bestowed upon me by God. I believe God has given me abilities, inspiration, and good intentions for a purpose... I am nothing but an instrument. That's why, whenever I do anything, I believe god is guiding me."* While on an electoral campaign in favour of the BJP candidate in Uttar Pradesh's Basti on 22 May, he tried to exalt himself and evoked once again a

connection with the divine by saying, *"Those who will vote (for BJP) will get the punya of good works. I will do."* PM Modi's suggestion that he is "not born biologically" and is but a figure of divine will "destined to rule till 2040" veers into mythical territory. Going from mixing faith and asking for votes in the name of God, arrogating the 'near-status' of an *avatar* (descent) to PM Modi was indeed a leap. And now the CJI of India also opines that his verdicts were divinely ordained. These statements prompt serious questions: Can India's political leaders and judicial heads reconcile their religious fervour with the demands of proper governance? Or is the thin line separating faith from public duty in danger of being dissolved altogether?

Modi's mystical mandate

PM Modi's divine rhetoric extends beyond mere personal belief—it plays into a deeper narrative aimed at solidifying a Hindu nationalist jingoism. By positioning himself as a figure of divine origin, Modi aligns his leadership with a cosmic mandate, seeks to reinforce 'Hinduization' of Indian state and thereby switch to theocratism as against secular principles of a civilized democratic state. In democracy, political leaders are supposed to be bound by the democratic principles that discard domination of any religion in the state affairs and governing norms, and the sovereignty of the parliament is contingent upon sovereignty of the people who elect their legislators. India is a multi-religious multi-nationality country and hence functioning of the government here precludes advocacy of a particular religion. But the PM Modi's pronouncement implies that his authority comes from a higher, unknown, unexplained supernatural force—one beyond the reach of the stipulated checks and balances of the democratic system. So, when the head of the government hints at a divine mandate articulated through him, it negates the laid down democratic codes of guaranteeing equality and accountability to the people. It suggests that in PM Modi's vision, the country's leadership is no endowment of the democratic system but a matter of divine right which cannot be challenged.

Divine directive to the judiciary(!)

As unsettling as PM Modi's claims may be, former CJI hon'ble Y S Chandrachud's alleged spiritual communion poses an equally complex dilemma for Indian judicial machinery. The CJI occupies an august position that is ostensibly

bound by the constitutional framework and legal principles. Laws are framed by elected representatives of the parliament. These representatives are no apostles of god or do not communicate with god before framing legislations. Secondly, all the legislators do not profess Hinduism. So, if a Muslim member of the parliament states that laws should be in conformity with *sharia* or Islamic code, would that be acceptable? Similarly, if an hon'ble judge is a Christian and claims that his verdicts are scripted as per the gospels of the Bible, would that be acceptable? CJI Chandrachud's claimed spiritual consultation regarding the Ayodhya judgment, a decision that allocated a contested religious site to Hindu claimants, did cast a shadow over judicial impartiality. If the god is 'omniscient' and 'impartial', how could he validate demolition of a masjid which even the 5-member Bench of the Apex Court (including Justice Chandrachud) called an offence? The Supreme Court Bench observed that the damage to the Babri mosque in 1934, its desecration in 1949 leading to the ouster of the Muslims and the eventual destruction on 6th December 1992 constituted an egregious violation of the rule of law and the wrong committed must be remedied. But then it ruled that temple would be constructed on the site of destroyed mosque. Why, because, as the bench observed in its ruling: *"faith and belief of the Hindus as depicted by the evidence on record clearly establish that the Hindus belief that at the birth place of Lord Ram, the Mosque was constructed, and three-dome structure is the birth place of Lord Ram."* Naturally this verdict has made BJP and Sangh Parivar jubilant as they could find out a judicial justification for their criminal act of destroying a historical monument. But it has caused serious concern and agony among the democratic, secular minded, saner section of the people of the country and created doubt about the neutrality and impartiality of the judiciary. Nowhere in the history of democratic jurisprudence has religious faith been placed above law and historical evidence.

The judiciary, like the government, is meant to be independent of religious influences to ensure that justice is fair and unbiased, especially in a country as religiously diverse as India. For a Chief Justice to suggest that his legal decisions may be influenced by

divine insights risks tipping the scales toward a faith-influenced interpretation of law. Such implications are not merely unconventional—they strike at the heart of judicial objectivity and the separation of religious belief from judicial functioning. It was opined by many that the Ayodhya verdict was authored by hon'ble Justice Chandrachud. Now, an alibi in favour of this "questionable" judgment is found in his pronouncement of that ruling having been decreed by god.

Role of the judiciary in democratic framework

As an institution, the judiciary represents a pillar of reason and objectivity in a democratic society. When judges allow personal beliefs or mysticism to influence their rulings, they compromise this objectivity and erode public trust. Chandrachud's alleged spiritual consultation before the Ayodhya verdict is a case in point. By invoking divine insight, even symbolically, he risks embedding religious or mystical considerations into a decision that should rest solely on legal principles and secular justice. Allowing mystical beliefs to seep into judicial reasoning fosters a bias that favours certain religious perspectives, which is fundamentally incompatible with the secular nature of a state meant to serve citizens of all beliefs equally.

Executive functioning being premised on blind spiritualism

Similarly, the invocation of mysticism by no less a person than country's Prime Minister serves a dual function: fostering irrationality, religious blindness and bigotry as against scientific thought process based on objectively verified truth and methodology and shifting people's attention from the government's material failures and subservience to ruling capitalism that breeds all evils and aberrations. India faces a number of concrete challenges: economic disparity, an agrarian crisis, and a high rate of unemployment. For the working class and marginalized communities, these issues are real and urgent.

PM Modi's mysticism offers them no solution but an illusion that his rule is preordained, that current hardships are part of a 'divine plan'. By portraying himself as divinely sanctioned, PM Modi, as an obedient political manager of ruling capitalism which shields itself from scrutiny and criticism, has sought to use mysticism to distract the masses from probing into the root cause of the growing inequality, dysfunction of the democratic institutions, privations, deprivations and material contradictions. Likewise, it is unfortunate that this weird theory of divine endorsement or theological

Contd. on page 6

One Nation One Election

The proposal aims at firming up political centralization

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local issues would be subordinate to national issues and also minimize the importance of regional parties. A byproduct of ONOE is, therefore, the marginalization of regional parties, whose contradiction with national monopoly capital have traditionally acted as deterrent to imposing all-out fascism.

Recognizing this intent and its potential consequences is crucial for preserving the pluralistic and federal ideals that have defined India since independence. So, elections must be held whenever and wherever they are due, or when governments fall. They should be in accordance with current constitutional injunctions, regardless of what "inconvenience" it causes to the proponent of ONOE.

Another hideous underbelly

For long, the BJP government, obviously at the dictate of the ruling monopolists, has been trying to streamline economic, social and political spheres by raising the slogan of "oneness". It talks of one nation. Is the nation really one or divided between handful of rich and myriads of poor, separated by caste-creed-religion-region-ethnicity-language and plagued by communal-parochial-chauvinist thoughts? Is the social life in India free from encumbrance of religious fiats, obscurantist thoughts, honouring and protecting the dignity of others, making no discrimination between male and female, no distinction between persons of different faiths or ethnicities, etc.? Only a downright ignorant or a motivated person would say so.

Secondly, the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), branded under the slogan "One Nation, One Tax," provides an instructive precedent. Rather than simplifying tax structures, GST paved the way for economic centralization and made the states more reliant on the central government for revenue earning. This reliance disrupted India's federal balance and compromised the relative economic autonomy of the

states.

Pertinent to recall that placing his report before the Seventh World Congress of Communist International in 1935, Georgie Dimitrov, leader of Bulgarian Communist Party, observed that "before the establishment of a fascist dictatorship, bourgeois governments usually pass through a number of parliamentary stages and adopt a number of reactionary measures which directly facilitate the accession of power of fascism". It is by following the trail that the proposal of ONOE has been mooted. As could be seen, all these moves are aimed at economic-political-social centralization at the hands of the bourgeois state.

Fascist forces often project a superman

There is every possibility of another slogan "One Nation, One Leader" to be in the offing. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our great leader, teacher and guide, had said way back in 1949 that "*in order to create confusion in mass mind and wean them away from class struggle, projection of the ideal of a superman as if divinely inspired, and above conflicting class interests and the myth of his supra-class outlook and character is done and constantly propagated (by the fascists).*" [Quoted in the publication "On Fascism" by SUCI(C)] Later he further reiterated: "*The idea of class harmony, union of all classes or of supra-class national interest as advocated by the fascists requires a concrete expression for presentation to people. Fascism sometimes, therefore, propagates the idea of the superman, the superman being the embodiment of national will and interests. No wonder that decaying capitalism is falling back, more and more, on absolutism and mysticism, overt and covert...*" (Call of the Hour SW Vol II) By giving democratic principles a burial, a sham image of national unity embodied in a projected

PM and former CJI claims of divine intervention

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justification is now being invoked by judiciary as well as implying that blind religiosity could eclipse reason in matters of public policy and legal judgment, undermining public trust in institutions intended to serve all citizens impartially.

Through their pronouncements, PM Modi and former CJI Chandrachud have attempted to sidestep accountability and delivering justice. This mystification serves not

as a revelation, but as an ideological screen that obscures the underlying interests of the ruling monopolists. India's future hinges on restoring a secular foundation rooted in reason, transparency, and tangible justice-principles that resist being overshadowed by mystical distractions. Only a conscious united organized mass movement based on rationality, higher ethics, culture and morality can foil this capitalist conspiracy.



A political class of AIMSS organized at Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought Study Centre, Ghatsila on 10-12 November 2024 was conducted by Comrades Soumen Basu, Comrade Amitava Chatterjee, both politburo members, and Comrade K Uma, Central Committee member, SUCI(C). Comrades Keya De, President and Chhabi Mohanty, General Secretary respectively of AIMSS were also on the dais.

omnipotent authoritarian leader is highlighted and his utterances propagated as gospel truth.

Nazis portrayed Adolf Hitler as a charismatic superman and man of the people through a propaganda campaign known as the "Führer-myth". Mussolini was presented as a universal man, capable of all subjects. We had earlier seen Indira Gandhi having been projected as "apostle of emancipation of Asia". At present, the RSS-BJP, besides propagating religious blindness, bigotry and mysticism and trying to retrograde the rational thought process, are projecting a "larger than life" image of PM Modi who himself claims that the kind of energy he embodies couldn't have come from a "biological sharir" (biological body) and that God has imparted him with "urja" (energy) because the Almighty wants to get some job done by him, the chosen one.

One nation, one culture?

Next in the line would be the slogan of "One nation one culture". Let us recall what M S Golwalkar, the Hindutva ideologue, observed in his "Bunch of Thoughts": "*Our concept of Hindu Nation is not a mere bundle of political and economic rights. It is essentially cultural. Our ancient and sublime cultural values of life form its life-breath. And it is only an intense rejuvenation of the spirit of our culture that can give us the true vision of our national life, and a fruitful direction to all our efforts in solving the innumerable problems confronting our nation today... The work of rejuvenating these ancient and life-giving features of our culture has assumed a new urgency and paramouncy not only in our present national context but in the international context as well... Our real national regeneration should therefore start with the moulding of 'man', by instilling in him the strength to overcome human frailties and to stand up as a shining symbol of Hindu manhood... real essence of our glorious nationhood... the Sangh has taken up... a great process of true national regeneration of Bharat... It is a divine trust... given*

to the charge of the Hindus by Destiny." Exposing the intent of such observation, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had shown that "*The essence of all religion is blind faith in personified or abstract supernatural forces exercising control over worldly things and events... The exploiters and the ruling class always conspire to dupe people with the opium of religion in order to prevent them from correctly diagnosing the cause of their present exploitation ... Fascists... preach spiritualism for keeping this blind faith in religion alive... combining religion with politics...*" (SW Vol IV).

Concluding remarks

ONOE, as shown above, is part of that gameplan. It is not merely an administrative reform; it reflects a broader strategy to consolidate political power and transform India's democratic landscape. By limiting the space for regional voices and increasing dependency on a centralized government, ONOE undermines the very essence of India's democratic and federal structure. It threatens to dilute the diversity of political representation in favour of a monolithic, authoritarian state that aligns with class interest of the ruling monopolists. The intention of the BJP government which is now fully backed by the ruling monopolists and dedicated to operationalizing all sinister bourgeois designs in total subversion of democratic norms, codes and practices bringing in its wake complete political centralization, a drift toward full-fledged fascist autocracy. Our Party, guided by the revolutionary thoughts of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin-Shibdas Ghosh, has clearly stated that this deceptive move is intended to rob the country of whatever little vestiges of democratic practice are still prevalent in country's election system and establish a highly centralized election system with a view to further squeezing the people whatever miniscule scope they still have in expressing their fair opinion in election. We urge upon all democratic-minded people to imbibe this truth and staunchly oppose the proposed ONOE by raising united voice of protest.

Economy growing but people are pushed to precipice of ruination: an enigma indeed

For the last few years, PM Modi and his cabinet colleagues have been claiming that the economy of the country is on the ascent to reach \$5 trillion and become the third highest in the world. (P.I.B., 12.11.2022) According to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, this robust growth is due to political stability and transparent governance. India has become a fast-paced economy. He also said that due to the poverty alleviation programmes of the Modi government, economic condition of common people has so improved that more than 60 crore people in India have come into the mainstream of the economy. The country's marketplace which was earlier made up of 70 crore people has been expanded to 130 crores, he added. (Source: Speech at Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit, 11-01-24) Question is if the economy is galloping so fast, how is it that reports of the various sectors of economy indicate a steady decline? Common people do not know how many zeroes make a trillion. But when they go to the market to buy items of daily use including food articles or look at their wallet, they find the much-clamoured growth story is a hoax. They go to the market with whatever little money they could earn through hard toil, and return with almost empty bags.

Household consumption is dipping, so is middle class

As indicated by the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES), household consumption in India has slowed down in recent years and is estimated at 57.2% of GDP below the level of the pandemic year of 2020-21. This means that people

are gradually losing their purchasing power. Why is that? Because priceline is soaring sky-high while income avenues are getting more and more squewed, if not vanishing, in the capitalist economic system that ensures swelling purse of a handful of super-rich at the cost of continuous, pauperization of the toiling millions including middle-class. It is clear that despite all the talk of recovery from the so-called pandemic induced economic slowdown people do not have sufficient buying power in their hands to create the necessary demand in the economy which, in turn, would lead to more investment, more production, more jobs and thus an overall recovery. Remember: this is the situation when the economy (GDP) is stated to record a growth rate of over 7%.

Of course, PM Modi is very optimistic and presented a 'novel' economic concept. "Size of the cake matters. The larger the cake, the larger pieces are that people will get. So we have set a target of making India a USD 5-trillion economy. Larger the size of the economy will be, the larger prosperity will it bring for the country," he said. Citing global examples, he said countries have leapfrogged from developing to developed status on the back of a jump in per capita income." India can also do that. The target is not difficult," he added. But, what he has not disclosed is rise in per capita income does not mean prosperity of all. It is a statistical average virtually having no meaning in the context of uneven distribution of wealth. If five super rich earn Rs 10,000 and five destitute Rs 100, the per capita income is Rs1010. Is it any

measure by any count?

Fairy tale of galloping Indian economy

Sput in prices of essential items including food articles: Food accounts for nearly 40% of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and historical data underscores that overall inflation cannot be effectively controlled without addressing food price inflation. Food inflation has been a persistent issue for the Indian economy since 2023. Government data itself indicates staggering year-on-year inflation rates, with vegetables at 28%, pulses at 17%, cereals at 8.6%, meat and fish at 8.2%, spices at 7.8%, and eggs at 7.1%. Some of the vegetables like tomato and potato have registered over 50% growth in price. Rural and urban consumers are both feeling the pinch, with rural inflation spiking to 5.66% from 5.3% a month ago, and urban inflation rising to 4.4% from 4.2%. Whatever may the official data say, the retail market is almost double of the wholesale price index, meaning that hoarding, black marketing, cut money realization by the middlemen are going on unabated. Can it happen if the punitive machinery of the government instead of remaining alert and active to book the price manipulators and unscrupulous traders, connive with the culprits? Even the reluctance on the part of RBI to lower interest rates (as per textbook bourgeois economics, lower interest rate means more borrowing entailing more circulation of money adding to inflation) confirms no rein on spiralling inflation.

Increasing Debt: In 2022-23, liabilities zoom up to a jaw-dropping

level of Rs.15.8 lakh crore implying that people particularly middle class which is main targeted audience of consumer goods industry are increasingly becoming indebted. A recent survey revealed a startling statistic—77% of working professionals in India rely on personal loans to make ends meet. But what are the primary reasons behind this widespread reliance on debt? Unplanned expenses (like sudden medical emergencies, or unexpected family commitments), rising costs of living, spurt in healthcare and education cost are forcing people to bridge the rising gap between income and expenses. But in the process, they become debt-ridden as absence of income debars them from repayment, and then either liquidate their hard earned savings (like bank deposit, insurance etc.) or lose the mortgaged assets (like house, land etc.) Bank deposits make up about 35% of these assets, followed by provident and pension funds including PPF (22%), life insurance funds (18%), and small savings (excluding PPF) (7%).

This causes their net financial assets (red line) to sharply decline to Rs.13.8 lakh crore. Net financial assets of households have sunk to just 5.1% of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in 2022-23, according to latest data available from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The net financial savings of households in India has fallen to a five-decade low of just 5.1% of the GDP in FY 2023. The liabilities of households rose by Rs 6 lakh crores to Rs 83.65 lakh crores, data from the Reserve Bank of India showed. A rise in debt suggests people may have borrowed to spend on basic needs and also to pay off any past loans. The consumption of goods and services is the key driver of the economy, but it appears that people are eating into their savings for buying essentials.

Medical Inflation: A particular mention alongside food price rise is the increasing cost of medical care in India. Following reckless privatization and the policy of viewing medical service as a commercial commodity to be sold for highest profit, meeting medical expenses has become a significant financial burden for many households. In 2023, India's medical inflation rate was 14%, which is the highest rate among Asian countries. 62% of healthcare costs in India are paid out-of-pocket. India's drug pricing authority has increased the costs of certain essential drugs by 50%. These medications, most of which are low-cost, are vital for treating conditions like asthma, glaucoma, thalassemia, tuberculosis, and mental health disorders. The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) hiked these prices in the mid of October. The cost of diagnostic investigations is going up astronomically. Simple 'Complete blood count test' is now priced at

Conference of electricity consumers of eastern region against installation of anti-consumer pro-corporate Smart Metre

On demand of withdrawal of anti-consumer pro-corporate Smart meter installation a huge convention of electricity consumers of eastern region of India was held on 28th October at District Library Auditorium in Guwahati under the banner of All India Electricity Consumers Association.

The convention was presided over by Swapan Ghosh, president of AIECA. Inaugurating the convention Bimal Das, retd. Deputy General Manager of Assam Power Distribution Company Ltd said that installation of Smart Meter in prepayment mode in Domestic category consumers is anti-people. Large scale Smart Meters in Assam have been purchased without Testing and

Inspection which is a basic requirement. The Smart Meters in Assam have been installed without following any SoP and more so without intimation to consumers.

Prof. Wandell Passah, Ex HoD, department of Electronics, St. Edmund College, Shillong as an invited speaker said that experiences of smart meter in developed countries are very much bitter. In our country when seventy percent of people do not have mobile phone then smart meter in prepayment mode is not justified. In the

presidential address Swapan Ghosh said that Indian profit monger Capitalist Class want to control over the electricity sector. The government has launched this smart meter scheme only from the interest of big corporates.

He appealed to build up sustained movement against this heinous design of the government. Other speakers included leaders of All India Power men's Federation and electricity consumers' movements of West Bengal, Assam, Tripura, Bihar and Odisha.



Comrade Swapan Ghosh, President, AIECA, addressing in the convention. 28 October, Guwahati

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State-level AIUTUC conference held in Mysore. Comrade K Radhakrishna, President, AIUTUC, addressing the gathering

Daily group reading of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's works in Nagpur before going out for election campaign



People are pushed to ruination

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around Rs 400. Average X-ray cost ranges between Rs 200 and Rs 2000. Cost of angioplasty has doubled from Rs 1-1.5 lakh in 2018 to Rs 2-3 lakh in 2024. Kidney transplant costs are expected to surpass Rs 20 lakh by 2030. Healthcare costs in India are increasing at an annual rate of 14%, the ACKO India Health Insurance Index 2024 shows. 6.3 crore Indians are pushed into poverty because of rising healthcare costs every year—almost two people every second. The Indian government is flogging a dead horse. It is deriving comfort by propagating that healthcare is adequately covered by health insurance. But here to, the premium tariff is soaring. For 52% of health insurance policy owners, the premium has increased by over 25% in the last 12 months, according to a survey by Local Circles. This becomes critical for people buying a new health insurance policy or servicing an existing policy to factor in future premium hikes before committing to long-term health coverage. Health insurance premium shot up over 25% last year for 52% policyholders, Now further hike in premiums is in the offing.

Education Costs are soaring: The cost of education in India is rising at a higher rate than general inflation. The rate of inflation for education which is also turned into profitable commodity in course of privatization spree is, around 8-10%, while general inflation is around 5-5.6%. This means that the cost of education could double every 6-7 years.

Pauperization of middle class

Official spin masters attempt to suggest that the Indian middle-class is getting prosperous citing higher sale of two wheelers to more expensive SUVs. But, report says that auto car dealers are sitting on an unprecedented inventory of 7 lakh vehicles valued at Rs.86,000 crore. As per the data generated by the American Pew Research Centre (APRC), India's middle-class was roughly 50 million to 70 million in 2010 and this grew to 150 million to 200 million by 2020.

Moreover, FMCG giants like Hindustan Unilever, Godrej, Marico, ITC and Nestle reported a decline in margins in the July-September quarter. CMD of Nestle India has attributed this fall to a "shrinking middle-class" as his company experiences a severe slowdown in sales growth in the urban segment.

Growing inequality is a sign of disease, not health

We know, just 1% of the richest Indians own about 40% of the country's wealth while the bottom 50% own just 6.4% of the country's wealth. According to the National Health Survey, 19 crore people in India go to bed hungry every night. Approximately 4,500 children die every day under the age of five years in the country due to hunger and malnutrition. 100 crore Indians or 74% of the country's population cannot afford a healthy meal. So, India ranks 111 out of 125 countries in the 2023 Global Hunger Index (GHI). This is just a glimpse of "March towards \$5 trillion economy".

Corrigendum: On p6, column 2, 2nd line of P Era dated 1 November 2024, please read Hamas attack on Palestine as Hamas attack on Israel. Mistake regretted

Waqf

Amendment to the Waqf Act be dropped at once

Contd. from page 4

massive fortunes with the help of crooked politicians and businessmen. The saffron government of the RSS-BJP silently abets such misdeeds and reckless corruption and collects huge money from them from time to time.

It is not that corruption in the temples *per se* justifies corruption in Waqfs. But what is worth noting is the discriminatory attitude of the BJP government. While it is a silent spectator, if not an indulgent onlooker, to the offences of the Hindu shrines and self-styled Hindu religious gurus, it is now training the guns on the Waqfs. Hence, the argument of changing Waqf Act to curb corruption is a misnomer.

Only united powerful mass movement can foil capitalist conspiracy

It is clear from the above discussion that under the guise of reforming the functioning of the Waqfs, there is a vile attempt to establish control of the Hindu religion-oriented state which blatantly subverts the principles of secularism and is totally violative of the aspirations of the democratic-minded toiling millions of India. To any discerning person, the series of moves of the BJP government during last ten years to the detriment of the Muslim minorities cannot escape notice. After the fanatic Hindutva goons (euphemized as karsevaks) ran into the walls of the historic Babri mosque like a battering ram and razed it into rubble within hours in the presence of top brass of the RSS-BJP, the saffron brigade is now after destroying other mosques like Gyanvapi Masjid in Varanasi, Shahi Idgah in Mathura and others raising an unhistoric motivated argument that all these mosques were set up by demolishing Hindu temples.

Lately, PM Modi is showing hurriedness to forcibly impose a Uniform Civil Code disregarding absence of a congenial socio-cultural milieu in multi-religious, multi-nationality and multi-ethnic India full of socio-cultural diversities, different laws for marriage, divorce, adoption, and succession, based on religious affinities and ethnicities and personal laws like Hindu Marriage Act, Muslim Personal Law, etc., formulated based on the religious texts and customs. The bogey of 'cow slaughter' has licensed cow vigilantes, the musclemen of Hindutva, to mercilessly lynch minorities on the pretext of eating beef. A false notion of Muslims overtaking Hindus in the immediate future because of very high birth rate is being aired though that is bogus and baseless. Compilation of a National Citizens' Register (NRC) in Assam, unilaterally declaring *bona fide* Indian citizens, as foreigners and illegal intruders has led to persecution of a large number of Muslim Indians. All these acts and steps are part of anti-Muslim hate campaign and agenda of Hinduization.

Therefore, the apprehension that amendment of Waqf Act has been spurred by this narrow sectarian communal outlook and would exacerbate Hinduization cannot be ruled out. This raked up Waqf issue, one can easily understand, would further foment anti-minority hate campaign, exacerbate communal divide and then seek to control Waqf lands and properties through the backdoor.

Not the parliamentary route, only way to stem this wrecking of the unity and solidarity of the Indian citizens, irrespective of caste-religion-ethnicity-region, is by building up a united organized sustained powerful movement centring on the burning problems of the toiling millions, and rising above all divides under correct revolutionary leadership. The truth that ruling capitalism is at the roots of all evils, and that to wedge a divide into the fighting unity of the oppressed masses is a class design of the ruling bourgeoisie and the forces subservient to it, ought to dawn upon the suffering countrymen in course of their participation in this movement.

More capitalism would move towards extreme monopolization, more will it trample underfoot democratic norms and principles, subvert autonomy of various organizations and regulatory bodies (like Election Commission, UGC, etc.,) and bring one after another policies to fragmentize people and the nation. People must take up cudgels against the forces and faces trying to divide them and wean them off from the path of movement. It mandates reiterating that no major reform, particularly in regard to the very sensitive question of religion and religious practices can be undertaken without uniting the toiling millions irrespective of religion-region-caste-ethnicity and then developing a consensus on the concerned issue. Otherwise, national unity is jeopardized. Hence such arbitrary and unilateral decisions of the central government cannot but be opposed tooth and nail.

Our Party, the SUCI(C) strongly denounces such cunning as well as ill-conceived schemes, demands that any amendment to the Waqf Act be dropped at once and calls upon the suffering countrymen to come forward to develop the desired mighty movement in right earnest to force the BJP government retract from this noxious move of amending Waqf Act and pursuit of Hinduization. We also call upon our Muslim brethren to rise to the occasion, not from any sectarian religious outlook but being spurred on by legitimacy of opposing the move, raise the democratic demand with their fellow countrymen to withdraw the highly undemocratic Waqf Amendment Act. At the same time, we earnestly urge upon them to come forward and, along with all other citizens, rising above all divides, raise the just demand for democratic reform of the functioning of the Waqfs.

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