

Proletarian Era

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Horrible spurt in crimes, cruel acts and remorseless killing endangering the fabric of civilization What is the reason behind , which way to confront and combat it

Modern life is listless without news, known through the newspapers or the round-the-clock-running radio or electronic media. But for quite some time, one may tend to shudder at the thought of reading-viewing or listening to news. The situation has come to such a pass that people are always apprehensive what horrible news they will meet on each page of the papers or in each byte of electronic media. The canvas is highly chequered. Crimes, cruel acts and spate of remorseless killings of hundred and odd types of aberrations and distortions known to mankind, involve victims and assailants of all ages, of all sections of life and people from among celebrities to pavement dwellers, armies to civilians, of any place, city or village, in the north or south, west or east in the country. These seem not to take care of any human relationship, father rapes his daughter, son kills his mother, mother her daughter, husband kills wife, wife her husband, a friend kills another. These are no isolated events

any more, but go on one after another, each day with newer and ghastlier means, going even beyond all conventional ways or conceptions.

Both crimes and criminals are swelling in number. In still alarming a way, ordinary persons with no criminal background are getting actively involved in ghastly incidents. As a result remorseless killing, brute atrocities on women-children-minorities-Dalits – all kinds of horrendous barbarism are creating such a situation in which the entire civilized world seems to have been thrown into a shambles, threatening to crumble down any moment.

Gory incidents run on ceaselessly : Murders

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) of India registers about 30,000 murders annually for nearly a decade. But figures mean nothing on face of the grievousness of the situation, for instance when somebody reads a news of a

young professor throwing off his ailing mother from the roof for property, or son and daughter –in-law murdering a 52-year old father, beheading the body and cutting it into pieces in a small town. It appears to go beyond comprehension, when one learns a lady, with or without accomplices, kills her daughter. It may tend to drive a man insane to read in morning newspapers about several accounts in each case a wife or a husband enjoying an illicit affair, neatly planning to kill his or her spouse to make the path clear. Quarrels among friends or even on streets are nothing abnormal. But it appears, these days even such altercations take ugly turn to end in gruesome murder with the killer walking out without any qualm or remorse. Thus a CCTV footage showed three students of a well known school in the capital, aged 15-16, beating up a 14-year-old fellow student to death inside the school toilet. In another case quarrel between two classmates, both Secondary examinees, went hot, one of them killed the other and left the place to sit calmly for the examination. In another hellish incident 3 friends bought a 'da', a sharp cutter, got drunk and then two of them slashed the throat of the third to kill him, all in a sequel of a quarrel, the likes of which often crop up between friends. Similarly one may be astounded to know that after an altercation between the bus conductor and his helper on one side and a passenger on the other, nothing unusual, the former killed the passenger and threw the body out on to the paddy fields beside the road. A female co-passenger informed the family. It was alleged that the police did not receive the FIR. A frenzied mob beat a sixty-year old man to death in a city when he had tried to save his son involved in an altercation on collecting water from water tanker, or a dalit youth was murdered with multiple (as many as 50) stabbing on a street in the capital by a group of around 20 people apparently for having saved a child from being thrashed by two persons for spoiling their dress with colour on *holi*. More than a decade back, the country woke up one morning to learn of the horror of a village on the outskirts of the capital, where body parts of dead children and young adults were traced to a house. It was revealed that the servant working there had been raping and killing women, often minors, even eating their body parts. It was impossible that he could carry on with his crime without the knowledge of the owner. The country could only

MHRD's graded autonomy — a travesty of autonomy of education

The Union Minister of Human Resource Development (MHRD) Sri Prakash Javadekar announced on March 20 the grant of graded autonomy to 62 higher education institutions including eight colleges. These include central universities such as Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and Delhi University, state universities such as Jadavpur University (JU) and Punjab University, and private institutions such as OP Jindal University. Colleges and varsities were divided into Type 1 and Type 2, with the former having an NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) score of 3.5 and above, and the latter having a score of 3.26-3.5. The categorisation determines the degree of autonomy the institutions may enjoy.

Calling the decision "historic" the minister stated, "A liberalised regime in the education

sector and autonomy would mean facilitating the quality of the Indian education." In the first wave of "revamping" the education system, the institutions were given autonomy on the basis of performance parameters determined by the NAAC score. Whatever may be the claim of the minister the teaching community associated with higher education as well as students and others, immediately after the announcement, burst into protests. Teachers of Delhi University, Hyderabad University, AMU, JU opposed this. The students of JNU who were protesting on 23rd March organizing a rally against the declaration of the so called "Graded Autonomy" were severely beaten and water-cannons were also used. The protesting teachers hold the central government's announcement as an "erosion of rights to get higher education" and see the move as a step towards "privatisation and commercialisation of

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Figures alarming, reality still more shocking with crimes, brutalities and remorseless killing

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wonder how could these happen under what circumstances and with what state of mind.

Honour killing has tended to become a favourite term for a section of people; in such cases a father does not hesitate to kill his daughter and throw the body in front of neighbour's house, brother along with his friends kills his sister, and likewise.

Lastly, what a child's play murder has become, comes out from the acts of a professional killer, who commits a crime, gets behind the bars, soon comes out to commit a fresh one. So far the last, he killed a man at point blank range in a market place and escaped safely. Equally rampant are political murders, as politics today has become bereft of any values or ethics. So even for petty causes, rivals even from within the same party do not hesitate to kill any opponent.

Gory incidents :

Atrocities on women

Atrocities on women are also constantly on the rise. As the NCRB records show, rape statistics in India surpassed all estimates with a six-fold increase and kidnapping for ransom going to the extent of killing doubled in three decades till 2007, for which data are released; obviously in the decade following the situation turned worse to be sure, instead of improving. Financial Express reporting a more updated information (26 February 2018) holds that such incidents in India have risen in the first 45 days of 2018 as compared to the corresponding period of the previous year; murder and rapes see a spike. The Hindu also reports in December 2017 that there is a spurt in rape cases, with states of M.P. and U. P. topping the list. Interesting, though pathetic, fallacy is that despite having a new law and a new government since 2014, the conviction rate in rape cases has gone down substantially in Delhi and elsewhere. In domestic violence, killing centring round dowry are typical for India. Though made illegal in 1961 and despite all changes in political leadership, this Indianized characteristic continues apace. Tragic consequence is that the brides are tortured, even murdered by the in-laws, but are seldom rescued by their parents for fear of ostracism and social stigma. For a decade from 2005 to 2015, an

average of 22 women, died each day in dowry-related cases. In 2015 alone, 7,634 women were killed over dowry, data show. The country also witnesses one of the highest female infanticide incidents in the world and a nearly 25 % rise in 2016 over the previous year in human trafficking; the government data putting the figure at almost 20,000 women and children as victims (Reuters, 9 March 2017).

These are nevertheless dry figures. The reality is much more blood-strewn and grisly. Every Indian remembers the name *Nirbhaya*, ascribed to the brave girl, a para-medical student who was gang-raped and brutally, rather beastly, tortured in a Delhi bus on December 16, 2012 finally to die. There was a massive movement across the country which made the government bring in some new tough law in 2013. A new government at the Centre in 2014 pronounced loud assurances of fast track trial and stringent punishment to the rapists etc. In that background, on May 11, 2017, virtually similarly mutilated body of a 23 year old woman was found again in a northern state who had gone missing from a nearby town on May 9. She was gang-raped and brutally murdered. That the case was not anything isolated was proved by events in plenty. In some, mere kids are molested, even raped by close relatives and elderly neighbours whom the victim normally and easily confide upon. In such cases even when a minor victim becomes pregnant and her family lodges FIR, the culprit, often with his family starts threatening the victim's family. Teachers, considered guardians, or even school attendants, also do not fall back from sexually exploiting students even kids. To reveal further rickety skeleton, at higher stages of schools and colleges the sanctity of relationship between teachers and students is ravaged to a dreadful void. For petty interests, to ensure class promotion, to award undue higher marks, to bring research degrees to candidates unworthy, and such others, among other factors two have become dominant, one, money and the second for girl students, sexual exploitation. A grisly example is found in the report of the Principal of a school enforcing a bribe from the father of a girl student to assure safe promotion, taking her to a private chamber and then raping her aided by 2 female

accomplices and arranging a dummy to sit for her in the examination. Again, a professor of a reputable university, apparently with a good connection with the authority was arrested on charge of sexual misconduct with students. But he got bail in a few hours. Similarly filthy have become incidents even inside families. A young man continually rapes his niece and threatens her; a father is convicted for raping his daughter.

May be taking the cue from the #Me Too movement in the western world which has brought out numerous cases of serious sexual exploitation by celebrities, a group of well established women in West Bengal spoke out in a forum to narrate how they were sexually exploited to different degrees by none other than their known persons, elder brother, uncle, much-relied upon servants, or guardian like neighbour, even father.

Equally pathetic are cases with elder women. A 40-yr old married woman, an attendant at a dhaba in a western state was gangraped by six and the video uploaded in social media. A college student was arrested in south west Kolkata when he started uploading objectionable photographs in social media after a Facebook friend turned down his proposal for marriage. A village woman had lost her mobile. A local youth picked it up and uploaded objectionable photos of the woman in social media. The woman committed suicide, with a note implicating the four youths responsible. They were arrested. The list is definitely longer; the point is however already covered.

Though the governments and sometimes the media tend to show how effectively and fast the culprits are being put to trial under the POCSO, the reverse situations are not rare, rather those make the rule. Thus rich neighbour's son or family member or even a goon in touch with the local police, may rape a poor girl. He, his friends, even relatives keep on threatening the victim and her family, if the latter dare to lodge complain with the police. The police, themselves, advise the victims to keep mum and withdraw. If the victims dare to pursue further, it may end with loss of a life in victim's family or to any well wisher taking initiative for them. Such was a case, when in a suburb locality of a city, the local gang of goons wielded power and kept the population under threat, at

the same time continuously bullying and molesting even raping young girls. A brave young man tried to organize people to stand up against this reign of terror. He was singled out and murdered. It was known to people that the all-powerful gang had the blessings of a ruling party.

Different other kinds are not lacking. Honour killings prevalent in some parts of the country always have a girl at the focus, taken to task fatally for loving or marrying a boy or man of a different religion or of different caste. In a different news it came out that an armyman and his family members fled home, after he had allegedly raped a state-level boxer in Bhilai luring her on the pretext of giving her tips on how to clear physical tests in police recruitment. At the order of Panchayat in another village in a north Indian state, the husband of a woman and two others were arrested for staging a public thrashing of the woman, for eloping with another man. They tied up the woman to a tree and then thrashed her in the open.

These data and incidents provide a glimpse of how women in India have to live in tight grip of crimes and criminals both in their families and outdoors. The situation has gone down to such a depth that it is becoming more and more unsafe for girls, both inside the family and definitely outdoors. The guardians or relatives cannot rest assured that the girl will come back home safely from work or otherwise. Mind that, this is in spite of the governments, both Union and states run by this or that political party, trumpeting loud and squandering public exchequer lavishly behind their pet schemes like *Beti padao, beti bachao* (Let girls read and let them live) or Kanyashree (beautiful daughters)-Rupashree (beautiful brides) and such others. Besides, it cannot be forgotten that families in a country like ours with a deep-rooted traditional hang-over, are very much controlled by the patriarchal attitudes and dominations. It debars family members from even accepting domestic violence as a crime, leave aside bringing it into the open.

Gory incidents : Minority bashing, Dalit lynching, human trafficking

Minority or Dalit lynching on fraudulent charges of eating beef or killing cows etc., on allegations of 'love jihad' a campaign hyped during

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Autonomy upholds governance of education without government interference

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public-funded institutions and government's slow withdrawal from funding higher education". They point out that the Public expenditure has already been slashed across the prestigious IITs, IIMs and some other front ranking institutions of learning and they apprehend further cut of government monetary-grant in education is in the offing through this new scheme.

When, to the academic community round the globe, autonomy is the cherished condition that ought to be ensured for free and unrestricted development of education and cult of knowledge in the educational institutions and when the government clamours that it is out to grant that autonomy, the question arises why is then this spontaneous protest.

What does 'autonomy' entail?

The concept of autonomy of educational institutions is an inseparable part of the concept of democracy that evolved right at the time when democracy itself was being born in the human society. The academic autonomy is a renaissance concept. Before renaissance and industrial revolution during the period of feudalism and monarchy the universities were funded by monarchs and feudal lords. Course, curriculum, method of teaching, examination, evaluation, degree—all were controlled and decided mainly by religious establishments. So bestowing of secular and scientific education could not have been possible due to intervention of church. After industrial revolution and institution of parliamentary democracy, when funding of education was done by elected government there was a demand that education be made free from the tentacles of church and similar religious establishments and be governed by educationists and teachers. In India during the freedom movement the educationists, social reformers and other luminaries of the Indian renaissance, always upheld this concept. They made it clear that education is best imparted when it is left with academicians, teachers, professors and educationists to decide on its content, span, teaching-learning methods and all the rest. They held that education is imparted in its full flair only when it is funded by the government and

there is no interference from the government or any non-academic quarters. Government's financial responsibility towards providing education to its people can never be the plea to curb the academic freedom for educationists and educational institutions. In short, autonomy of education institutions means: in a system of education the decision of 'who will teach, what is to be taught and who will be taught' would be left fully, without any external interference, at the hands of academicians and teachers only. This is the concept of democracy in governance of education at any level—primary to tertiary. In the post-independence period the Indian ruling class was forced at the beginning to recognize at least apparently the need of autonomy of educational institutions. This is reflected in the report of the Kothari Commission (1964-66) instituted by the Union Government, which in unequivocal terms highlighted the need of autonomy of universities for the sake of unhindered scope of teaching, learning, research and inculcation of social accountability in pupils' mind. However, as the days passed on, the ruling class gradually deviated from its position and now they are out to impose their full control on education and education institutions. The present move of graded autonomy is an outcome of this devious design.

Graded autonomy—what it is

Following are some essential provisions that are incorporated in the MHRD-UGC document titled "University Grants Commission [Categorisation of Universities (only) for Grant of Graded Autonomy] Regulations, 2018":

- 1) The universities will be categorised into three types - Category I, Category II and Category III on the basis of NAAC score as described earlier [Art 3] and the first two Category institutions will be provided with a form additional autonomy [Art 4].
- 2) The document states: "A Category I institution may start a new course/programme/ Department /school/centre in disciplines that form a part of its existing academic framework without the approval of the UGC, provided no demand for fund is made from the government on

account of starting the new course/programme/department/school/centre." [Art 4.2]. If the government does not provide fund how these new courses will be opened? They would have no alternative to going for self-financing mode. So one point is thus clear about what the UGC does mean by their so called additional autonomy: extending freehand to go for minting money by self-financing the new courses.

- 3) The document goes on: "Universities may open constituent units/off-campus centres ... without the approval of the UGC, provided it is able to arrange both recurring and non-recurring revenue sources and does not need any assistance for the same from the UGC or the Government". [Art 4.3].
- 4) The UGC allows these Category I universities to go for further privatisation by opening "research parks, incubation centres, university society linkage centres, in self-financing mode, either on its own or in partnership with private partners, without approval of Commission." [Art 4.5].
- 5) The UGC document says: "a Category I institution may hire, without approval of the Commission, foreign faculty ..., up to 20% over and above of their total sanctioned faculty strength. Universities will have the freedom to hire foreign faculty on "tenure/contract" basis ..." [Art 4.6].
- 6) "Universities, while following the pay scales as laid down by the Commission, shall build in an incentive structure to attract talented faculty, with the condition that the incentive structure shall have to be paid from their own revenue sources and not from Commission or Government funds." [Art 4.8]. The question then naturally arises; if the Minister feels it necessary to attract talented faculties, why then the government would not bear the financial responsibility? Why this responsibility should be shouldered by the institutions themselves? How the institutions would acquire fund

for hiring those faculties? By this the UGC also seems to initiate for university faculties for the first time a scheme of differential salary structure, which is not just discriminatory, it is very distasteful.

- 7) The intention of allowing that category of universities to extract any amount of money is further apparent when the document says, "Universities shall be free to admit foreign students on merit, subject to a maximum of twenty per cent over and above of the strength of their approved domestic students. Universities would be free to fix and charge fees from foreign students without restriction". [Art 4.7].

The Category II universities will enjoy almost same dimension of "autonomy" with the exception of what the Category I universities do, being automatically deemed to be under section 12B of the UGC Act, 1956 without any inspection. [Art 4.1].

Graded Autonomy but of what Grade

If the Indian university system is subjected to the newly approved scheme of graded autonomy in what way the higher education would be benefitted in the country? From the provisions of the scheme it is very obvious that the intention of the UGC is to empower the Category I and II universities (i) to set up self-financing courses without any restriction, (ii) to establish research and similar other centres on self-financing basis in partnership with private partners, (iii) to hire foreign faculties on their own resources and (iv) to admit foreign students of number with no restriction charging them as much higher fees as they desire. Who would not admit that unrestricted self-financing in education amounts to privatisation without any bound? So the entire trend of the scheme is towards sanctioning power to the universities of this category to extort money from Indian and foreign students to whatever extent they like. It is not a matter of surmise in these days how overpriced may be the cost of a fully self-financing course! Who would then be benefitted from those courses? None other than those who can afford to pay the exorbitant fees. So the education would be

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Delhi Convention on Agrarian Crisis, peasants problems and movements

A National Convention and Photo Feature on Agrarian Crisis, Assault on Cattle Economy, Lynching of Dalits and Minorities was held by the Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan at Constitution Club of India, New Delhi on 21 March 2018. It was participated by Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, Member, Polit Bureau, SUCI (C), Comrade Sitaram Yechuri, General Secretary, CPI(M), Comrade Sudhakar Reddy, General Secretary, CPI, Comrade Atul Kumar Anjan, veteran leader CPI, Shri Sharad Yadav, MP, and other leaders and organizers of the peasants movements. The address made by Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya is summarized below.

Address of Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya

Dear Comrade Co-ordinator and all other friends present here,

First of all I extend my hearty greetings to you all, leaders and organizers of the Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan Committee for arranging such a very important conclave. The demands raised by the Bhumi Adhikar Andolan Committee are very well known. Almost all the burning problems being confronted by the peasantry have been raised by Bhumi Adhikar Andolan Committee. I need not deal with these pressing demands as all of you are quite aware of these. I would like to place before you our views about the course of movement to be developed for achieving some other urgent demands of the peasantry of the country. At the very outset, we would like to emphasize that under the given circumstances for carrying on democratic movement, struggles outside the Assembly and Parliament are of decisive importance and we are extremely happy to see that you are proceeding along this correct course. In a capitalist country like ours, people's movement is the last word. So peasantry's movement along this course is very crucial today. The peasantry constitutes the bulk of our population, near about 80% if not more. And it is also a stark reality that sharp polarization is taking place in villages. As days are passing by, rich peasants are becoming richer and poor peasants are becoming poorer, just as in the whole country where every day, every moment rich people are becoming richer and poor becoming poorer. I am sure you are quite aware that poor and marginal peasants are today turning into

paupers. They are fast losing their land. These landless peasants finding no other means of livelihood in villages are rushing towards cities and towns in hundreds and thousands in search of some kind of livelihood. But in most of the cases finding none, they are living a wretched life and in course of time finding no means to live upon, many of them are facing untimely death. To you all, leaders and organizers of peasant's movement, we fervently appeal to take up this burning issue with the aim of bringing about some tangible relief in their life. We strongly feel that lakhs and lakhs of poor peasants are being forced to surrender their land to rich peasants and the corporate houses.

I am sure all of you will agree that it cannot be given a simple pass. Governments must be forced to take some appropriate steps to thwart this burning problem, which is pushing poor peasants to complete ruination. I think you are also quite aware of the fact that whatever relief with respect to prices of fertilizers and other inputs and with respect to waiving of bank loan had been achieved earlier because of powerful united peasant movements, these are being usurped and cornered by the rich peasants in full connivance with the central and state governments. We firmly hold that to frustrate this machination, to defeat this betrayal and to defend the legitimate right of the poor and marginal peasants, development of powerful united peasants movement is an urgent necessity. In the face of this grave situation we therefore feel that united peasants movement should also take upon itself the task of foiling this heinous conspiracy against the poor and marginal peasants. I think you have observed further that even a large section of enlightened public are also expressing deep concern over this grave situation. So, it is to be guaranteed that, particularly with respect to minimum support price and with respect to waiving of loans, whatever the governments have been forced to accept, are not to be usurped and cornered by rich peasants. For that, we strongly feel

that not only powerful movements, rather to develop those, there should be people's committees formed at grass-root levels.

Neither we can forget that hundreds and thousands of poor completely shattered peasants finding no other way out for repaying their loans are openly embracing death by committing suicides. We feel, we should confront the situation and wage relentless powerful massive mass movement with courage and determination to force the Government to find out effective means towards bringing an end to this unbearable situation.

Speaking about the overall

of oppressed people and forging their broadest possible unity. For that appropriate political forum must be formed to carry forward this type of united legitimate democratic movements throughout the country. That is the need of the hour.

For your consideration we would like to stress that in spearheading these movements, although we shall have to fully utilize the parliamentary forum, it cannot be forgotten for a moment that extra parliamentary movements i.e. powerful democratic movements are prior and are of decisive importance. This is a historically established fact. We are of the strong opinion that in resisting and repulsing the RSS-BJP's worst communalism, worst type of divisiveness and their fascist activities, conduction of ceaseless democratic movements constitute the strongest bulwark and



Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya (fifth from left), member, Polit Bureau, SUCI (C) in the National Convention and Photo Feature on Agrarian Crisis, Assault on Cattle Economy, Lynching of Dalits and Minorities held by the Bhoomi Adhikar Andolan in New Delhi on 21 March 2018. Others on the dais include Comrade Sitaram Yechuri, General Secretary, CPI(M), Comrade Sudhakar Reddy, General Secretary, CPI, Comrade Atul Kumar Anjan, veteran leader CPI, Comrade Purushottam Sharma CPI(ML), Comrade G Devarajan Forward Bloc, Comrade D Raja, Shri Sharad Yadav, MP and others.

situation of country, I would like to place before you that not only peasantry, all other sections of the toiling people are also facing total ruination as an outcome of 70 years long ruthless exploitation of the capitalist class. We are seeing that all sections of the toiling people of the working class, the middle class, are finding it extremely difficult to eke out livelihood. The very existence of theirs is at stake. I don't want to elaborate how acute have become the problems of unemployment, price-rise, corruption and such other burning problems. I am sure all of you are quite aware about the oppressive situation which our countrymen are today confronted with. Working class are the worst sufferers, just like poor peasants. What I would like to stress is that we must develop powerful democratic movements one after another combining all these sections

that is the real antidote. It is therefore high time to take up the historic task of conducting uncompromising struggle both within the legislatures and outside them.

Lastly I extend my hearty congratulation to you all leaders and organizers engaged in building up powerful peasants movement throughout the whole country. As a matter of fact your initiative has enlivened the whole political atmosphere. Toiling people are very much enthused today. We extend our fullest support and cooperation to you towards carrying forward the legitimate cause of the exploited and oppressed peasantry. With this I conclude here.

Long live unity amongst all the fighting peasants organizations!

Long live Bhumi Adhikar Andolan!

AIUTUC on killing of 39 Indian workers in Mosul, Iraq

In a letter, dated 22 March 2018, to the Minister in Charge of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, the AIUTUC General Secretary, Comrade Sankar Saha wrote:

Madam,

The episode of Mosul tragedy, Iraq once again laid bare the efficacy of your External Affairs officials posted there. The sequence of events appearing in the national media also demonstrate their abject failure on the issue of abduction and killing of 39 Indian Construction workers. Unfortunately, this massacre was kept secret all through while the bodies had remained buried over a long time of about 4 years. Very recently, under pressure from various corners, you have come out with the confirmation of said killings. The primary and basic question arises why this Government preferred to keep such sensational issue out of the public domain over a prolonged time. May we not ask what was the reason behind?

You must be aware, in the month of July last year the national news media also reported news-item indicating kidnap and massive

murder of Indian construction workers at Mosul. After coming across said news our Organisation, All India United Trade Union Centre issued an open letter on July 25, 2017 addressed to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, seeking confirmation on veracity of the news. We have no words to express our unequivocal protest and condemnation against such ghastly killing of the brother workers of our country who under compelling circumstances migrated to Mosul, Iraq.

In the context of said happening, we can no way ignore the role of corporate sectors of our country involved in the re-construction process of Iraq being part and parcel of the current globalized economy. Obviously, in the particular case, it is expected that the Agency who dealt with the affairs of migration and employment of slain workers should keep track of their movement in foreign country and be liable for their safety and security as a licensee. In the given scenario of massive unemployment, migration of Indian unemployed youth, immensely multiplied despite reports of undue and inhuman harassment at the hands of foreign employers.

To ensure that our migrant

workers receive a humane treatment, provisions are there in the Inter-State Migration Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Condition of Service) Act, outlining obligation on the part of the Embassy / Consulate offices which otherwise imply that the government of India is lawfully bound to maintain authentic details of the individuals visiting the said country as migrant worker and treating them with utmost sympathy. It is however revealed that no effective step was initiated by the officials of External Affairs of Iraq in terms of the Act. It is therefore not disputed that with timely steps such horrific incident could be avoided. The concerned officials who virtually represent the government of India in Iraq thereby were squarely responsible for committing the grave offence and liable to be charged accordingly.

While urging your prompt attention to revamp the administrative functioning of respective foreign officials world over, we demand preference shall be given to safety, security, remuneration, etc., of the migrant workers without discrimination besides arranging for adequate compensation to the families of slain workmen who did migrate to Mosul, Iraq.

Massive protest against reforms in France

French workers shut down the country on 22 March. Around 200,000 teachers, train conductors, nurses, students, rail workers and air traffic controllers walked off the job and flooded the streets in more than 180 demonstrations nationwide. Police and protesters clashed in Paris when security forces fired tear gas and water cannons. Protesters managed to disrupt transportation and public services in a test of public anger towards President Emmanuel Macron's reforms that included plans to reform public services, slash jobs, lower wages and short term contracts and trim retirement benefits. Workers are planning to strike 2 days out of every 5 from April to June

Peoples' protest in Bhopal MP on burning problems of their life

On 12 March, a protest meeting was held at Iqbal maidan in Bhopal against ever-increasing unemployment, atrocities against women and children, drug-trafficking as well as commercialization of education and the decision to shut down government schools at the joint initiative of AIDS, AIDYO, and AIMSS. Students, youth and women participated in number in the meeting which was addressed by Comrade Pratap Samal, SUCI(C) Madhya Pradesh State Secretary, as the main speaker.

UGC opening up privatization

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dearer and dearer, which is opposed to the spirit of universal and inclusive education.

This is also to be noted that the trend of the governments, at the centre or in the states, irrespective of colour, is to slash their budgetary allocation for education. The government rather shows its preference to replacement of financial grants by loans through Higher Education Funding Agency (HEFA). The present rejuvenated thrust towards adopting self-financing mode or embracing the method of 'partnership-with-private-partners' would, therefore, be a further step to put public funded education system in jeopardy. The autonomy with the newly assigned attribute like "graded" has, therefore, nothing to do with the classical sense of autonomy that holds high the cause of secular and scientific education for all—irrespective of caste, creed, religion and more particularly of economic strata of learners. However, this brand of autonomy is out to curtail

the scope of education and restrict it to those who can afford to purchase it in lieu of high price.

Moreover, the UGC has fixed the duties and obligations of the university level statutory bodies like Senate / Syndicate / Executive Council / Academic Council / Finance Committee etc., while approving the provisions of the scheme. The UGC also seeks to intervene into the powers and functions of the statutory academic bodies like Academic Council or Faculty Council through the provision that they should start skill courses, consistent with the National Skills Qualification Framework." [Art 4.4]. Whether a university would teach their pupils skill development or not is absolutely the prerogative of its academic bodies and an external agency has no right to dictate. So this autonomy with the new tag stands contrary to the concept of autonomy that upholds 'governance of education with no interference from the government institutions or ruling powers.' So the UGC approved new brand of

autonomy is degraded—rather 'D-graded' and opposes outright the true concept and spirit of autonomy of education.

Conclusion

It may be recalled that the UGC was formed with a mission of "quality higher education for all"—the tag, which is still there in the Home Page of its website. Its main objective was to grant fund from public exchequer for central and state institutions of higher learning. While tracing out its origin, it is stated in the same website: "In 1952, the Union Government decided that all cases pertaining to the allocation of grants-in-aid from public funds to the Central Universities and other Universities and Institutions of higher learning might be referred to the University Grants Commission. Consequently, the University Grants Commission (UGC) was formally inaugurated ... on 28 December 1953". So the UGC has drifted far from its avowed mission of "quality higher education for all" to *education-for-those-*

who-can-pay. Its mentor and boss, the central government of all hues and shades, knows it well that if the universities are allowed to be governed by the principles of autonomy in its classical sense they cannot be made subservient to the rulers' design of stripping off the common millions right to get quality education. So is this not travesty of autonomy? The National Policy on Education 1986, the National Knowledge Commission, the Yashpal Commission, the Birla-Ambani Committee Report, etc.,—all these committees and commissions on education submitted reports ridiculing autonomy under various garbs. This has now been the order of the day at this juncture of society virtually in every country as true autonomy cannot serve the design of the ruling class in the field of education. The UGC's present scheme of Graded Autonomy should be judged and assessed on this anvil.

With brutality, criminality and killing reaching dangerous heights, human existence is put at stake

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this BJP rule against the minority community on charges of inter-religion marriages, or, allegations of conversion from Hinduism to Islam or Christianity, these have become added source of violent criminal assaults under the rule of the present BJP governments. The NCRB holds that 5 BJP ruled states have the highest crime rates against Dalits for 2014 to 2016, with conviction rates sharply plunging from 35% in 2010 to 28% in 2015 (Livemint 08-01-18).

Without adding much we may end with a particular incident of 'love jihad'. In Rajasthan, a Muslim migrant worker was brutally killed in open. The killer had his action videoed and boastfully claimed his righteousness against the victim's illicit relation with a Hindu girl. Widely propagated over the country, the incident created pressure on the Rajasthan government and its police had ultimately to crack the case to bring out that the killer himself had illicit relations with his 'Hindu sister' to protect whose honour he had said, he had killed the man. (Times of India 15 January 2018). This truth was however not propagated as vigorously as the previous criminal incident.

Human trafficking has turned into a flourishing business. It takes up many disguises and hence often go undetected. Two instances are mentioned only to provide clues. A young girl was auctioned for Rs 22000 at a village in a north Indian state. The man who had bought her married the girl. But two young brothers who had arranged the auction, raided the buyer's house for unpaid money and took away the girl. The man was found hanging from a nearby tree. The police stood beside the brothers.

Outside India

India cannot boast of being singular in presenting such a chequered canvas of horrible incidents. It has its partners. # Me Too movement has already been mentioned which implicates a long list of highest celebrities in USA or Europe. In USA along with a varied spectrum of crimes and brutal acts, shooting and killing are very common, as the gun is easily available and a powerful gun lobby stands as unshakable barrier to stringent gun law. There are repeated occurrences of single gunman spraying bullets upon innocent people, in many cases they

being school children and teachers within their campus or classroom. Most detestable is the fact, that the assailants do not feel any compunction nor repentance, rather more than often they seem to be rejoicing at their horrible misdeeds. After such a ghastly killing in recent times, people, particularly the young students and their family members seem to have reached a limit. There was a 17 minutes 'Walkout' in schools over the country. And succeeding it on 25 March last, there were massive rallies in almost all important cities of the USA and an estimated 800,000 strong rally in Washington DC. It was a people's movement termed the "March For Our Lives" which targeted the US Capitol, i.e., the government and the lawmakers. Participated largely by students, the rallies demanded stricter gun laws and prohibition of the sale of big-capacity magazines and universal check upon the background of the buyer. It was alleged by a 11-year old student speaker that any student even with the identity-card beyond its expiry date is entering a gun shop and is buying guns. She asked 'Where is the security?' 'Are we totally safe inside our schools? How do we get the security in the classrooms?' The 9-year old granddaughter of Martin Luther King, the civil rights icon, recalled the dream of her grandfather that his four little children will not be judged by the colour of their skin, but by the content of their character. She told a rapt crowd "I have a dream that enough is enough". A 2014 survey of "Violence Policy Centre" of America has brought out that black Americans are twice in number of the white counterparts as victims of gun assault. Black women are similarly assaulted twice that of white women. While the MFOL showed to what depth crime and remorseless killings have penetrated into the American society to give birth to such reactions, there was a different morbid picture too. Reportedly a father in the USA was arrested at Houston for uploading an advertisement for online sale of his daughter for a few thousand dollars; she was below 10 years. In France of Europe, IS attacks between 2015 and 2017 led to more than 250 deaths, latest being 3 people killed by a gunman on 23 March at a supermarket in a small town in western France, after his getting hold of a car killing a man also there.

Only a few of the more significant and important incidents are mentioned above to drive the point home. Besides, there are most heinous crimes like suicide bombing utilizing even innocent minor and female hostages, mass killing of innocent men- women- children even in prayer halls, kidnapping etc., perpetrated by terror-outfits like IS in Iraq-Syria or Boko Haram in Nigeria or their likes. For the sake of brevity, without details on these it only needs mention that all these terror outfits were created by the imperialists themselves, particularly the US imperialists. And the state terror and war crimes upon innocent people perpetrated by the US imperialists and their allies themselves in the name of fighting terror and terming it as collateral damage are no less dangerous elements in the string of crimes. All said and done, it remains a fact that crimes are spiralling worldwide in different forms, at different rates, but everywhere alarmingly.

Anybody with sanity worried, administration unperturbed

In India, the situation narrated above is really the tip of an iceberg. Anyone with a minimum sense of sanity and decency would tend to raise questions: Certainly this was not the state of affairs before independence when the entire nation was engaged in a do-or-die struggle against the British imperialists. During the medieval period under the feudal lords there were medieval barbarism, though in a sense those crimes were not so ferocious, dreadful and remorseless, nor rampant as crimes are getting as nowadays. Rather the rising nationalist surge helped put a break on those crimes. The country has made steps forward, earned independence, spent more than seven decades as a sovereign country aspiring to grow. Then what did happen to make the situation take such a vicious turn towards the worst? Where have all sense of values gone? Why are people becoming so reckless and daring to flout not just norms of humanity and civility, but also all red eyes and warnings of laws? Why is the rate of crimes increasing? Does it not speak of an abject failure on the part of the governments and their administrations? Or, is it that they are part of it? In fact, rampant corruption that prevails at all levels of administration and government clearly confirm that in most of the

cases criminals act in league with them. As mentioned above, there are arrests under POCSO. But do not more often than that the police and the administration refuse to accept the FIR if the victim is from a poor family and the assailant hails from a rich? Does not poor quality of police investigation – particularly guided by connivance with a moneyed aggressor, lead to consequent low rate of success in rape prosecution? Even, are not trials often compromised by an influential accused and a slothful public prosecutor? The questions no longer remain in the domain of academics. They corrode and erode minds of common people to add to their sense of bewilderment, insecurity and helplessness. They grope about for a way out. In most cases they face the cruel wall erected by money, social position and political considerations, be it in cities, town or villages. Out of disgust, people may tend to feel that the situation is never going to change, it can not be helped, there is no deterrent to this menacing rise of crime. It thus demands a few more words on the issue.

What brings the situation to this horrible shape

As data prove, crime is on the high, criminals too. It is no doubt vexing. But it should be remembered that nobody is born a criminal. It is his or her surroundings, the society including families, from which he or she learns; these are the powers that drag or push people to crime. The economic system of the country stands on the ever-widening chasm of discrimination, because it exploits the majority to feed and fatten a handful. Thus the said handful of people are floating on wealth to rise among the world's richest and a few enjoy privilege and favour from them. They wield the power as they possess the pelf. But in contrast to those miniscule of population, numberless children grow up in subhuman conditions of living. Right from the day one of their life they face poverty, a putrid shanty to live in, hardly any medical attention when needed, lack of proper education if not illiteracy, finally no job or no security in job. So they, more so young working girls or students, remain easy victims for both the criminals and the crime. Such victims suffer twice, once from the criminal and then from the

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Massive cultural movement involving people must protest-resist every instance of crime

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stonewall of the administration refusing to stand by her. It is the poorer who are the most susceptible. On the other hand, finding no decent means of livelihood and faced with the all powerful nexus of criminals-administration and money, they are compelled to compromise and finally get entangled in the cobweb of crime world itself.

Those who are a bit better-off are not spared either. Economy totters from acute market crisis, resulting stagnation of growth and industrialization, spiralling unemployment, and parallel fall in purchasing power. Total uncertainty and insecurity of life and livelihood plague people's life. Political scenes are dominated by opportunist career-seekers, even criminals. Corruption and craze for power and pelf have pervaded the entire political world, from top to bottom. The entire cultural-ethical ambience of the society is vitiated with acute degeneration. Values and ethics seem to have been wiped out from every walk of life. Added to these there is a deluge of sex and violence, unleashed through TVs and films, mobiles and smartphones. People, including youth are lured to varied means of mass communications, social media and the likes, which are already showing all signs of misuse-leakage of personal data etc. Even the so-called crime serials are introducing people, in the name of making them aware of crimes, to thousand and one ways of how crimes are carried on, keeping crime-cult alive silently and indirectly. All these aim at destroying the moral backbone of people, particularly the youth to prevent them from standing with head held high against injustice, to forestall any growth of revolutionary movement. But to everybody's dismay there is hardly anyone to instil in them higher and nobler culture, values ethics and morality. There are teachers and professors. But a large section of them are devoid of any values and many of them coming out to be perpetrators, getting involved in heinous crimes. In such a situation there is hardly any force to imbue students with any lofty purpose of life even. Won't these have any effect on common people? Would not they, more so their children, stand every chance of falling victim, without proper ideological-political-cultural

guidance, to the spate of sex-violence and crime going to the extent of rape and killing?

And about organized crimes. Once in yesteryears politicians used to take help from musclemen to combat the rivals; these days musclemen, even convicts come out boldly as elected political representatives of people. People, at large find the election ultimately lost in the labyrinth of money, muscle and media aided and abetted by administration. It boils down to results apparently pre-decided or manipulated to get some political force or party placed in power, which will act in its best possible way to keep the system running and the real rulers the ruling class served faithfully. People's representatives no longer represent people. Invariably, in the long or short run, the electoral pledges vanish as *chunawi jumla* or election slogans. As it is coming out nowadays, even social media platforms are using their data in favour of a candidate of the choice of the ruling class. And this is happening anywhere in the world, with Trump in the USA or BJP in India; it carries the omen that it may happen with anybody else or in any other country. Decades back, a high court judge in India uttered that 'Police is the most organized gang of criminals'; the situation has only worsened. A total anarchy, it may seem. Is not such an ambience congenial for the creeping worms, the criminals of any kind to eat through the social fabric or people's life and wealth to make fortune for themselves?

Capitalism, the root

And this is the system that capitalism has grown into all over the world. The system had started to grow few hundreds of years back. It was then fighting against the degenerated monarchy and feudalism. It called for freedom for all, in determining their life, livelihood, their government and their society. It was working for progress of society. But the capitalist system is based upon exploitation-oppression-discrimination. And the more exploitative, more consolidated and decadent it has become, it has given birth to all-out crisis, in all fields of socio-cultural-political activities, as stated above.

Way back in mid-nineteenth century when capitalism had not grown to this state, had not yet fully given up adherence to basic

humanist values and bourgeois democratic principles, the great leader of the proletariat and one of the greatest genius mankind has ever produced, Karl Marx, based upon his penetrative scientific analysis of development of human society including all its aspects, concluded that in capitalism money and self-satiation have become supreme, omnipotent. Everything in life and society including human relations even within families are subjugated to money, to satiation for self. How prophetic Marx's conclusions were is felt every moment today. Now with capitalism reaching its utterly decadent phase these characteristics have assumed still uglier form. The degenerated decadent system is turning man into beasts. Self-satiation at any cost by any means and grabbing money through any measure are driving people crazy to turn into dreaded criminals. Thus a rapist or a murderer does not feel any pang while committing crime. People around look helpless, speechless and action-less. Those in charge of governance and administration count how far and in which way, they can use the crime for their benefit. The gruesome events unfold one after another, now here, then there,

posing a ferocious challenge to humanity.

What is the way out

But standing helpless won't save people nor their family, neither their spouse, nor children. People will have to come out on to streets. Need of the hour is to give birth to a sustained cultural movement throughout the country incorporating the objective of forestalling the inhuman and barbarous acts of killing and other crimes ceaselessly going on. All right thinking and well meaning people must come out to join the movement with a view to strengthening this cultural movement. The movement must be organized well to the extent of reaching every town, every village and must take up every case of brutal acts going on in the vicissitudes. Its imperative task would be to develop strong public opinion against these brutal acts and crimes. If it can be built up on a wide and strong foundation, on one hand, it will exert tremendous pressure upon the government and other power centres, including the section of otherwise apathetic or lukewarm media and on the other hand, it will deter the perpetrators from committing brute criminal acts. This is the task ahead.

AIKKMS stage massive rally of farmers in Haryana

On 13 March at the call of All India Kisan Khetmajdoor Sangathan(AIKKMS), farmers in thousands from every corner of the state participated in a March to the Assembly at Chandigarh, Haryana. Comrade Satyawan All-India President of AIKKMS, Comrade Anup Singh Matanhel, President and Comrade Jaykiran Mandauti, Secretary, Haryana State AIKKMS, led the massive rally. A big police contingent stopped the rally near the Assembly but sensing the militant attitude of the demonstrators, the police had to allow the delegates to submit their memorandum to the Chief Minister. The leaders addressed the rally and pointed out that today farmers are subjected to severe distress under the oppression of corporate owners and the anti-farmer policies followed by the government. 80% of Haryana farmers are heavily debt-stricken who rightly demanded that their loans be waived. They do not get proper price of crops, though crops sell at high rate yet in retail market and shopping malls. The leaders raised the demands that the Government should buy crops directly from the farmers, fixing the supporting price of crops at a rate 50% higher than the production cost, as was the recommendation of the Swaminathan Committee in 2006 which the BJP had pledged to abide by in its 2014 Election Manifesto. Prices of manure-seeds-pesticide, expense for using tractors and irrigation-pumps dependent upon almost daily hike in diesel price, cost of electricity in most parts of the state, all these are showing day-to-day increase as the governments have left the businesses to the corporate and themselves are not doing anything effective to check the rise. Over and above these Haryana being a state ruled by the BJP, farmers have to bear the brunt of the RSS-BJP's policy of so-called 'cow protection'. The leaders, on behalf of the farmers, also demanded that the government should guarantee the agricultural workers a minimum annual pay of Rs.600 per day and that the aged farmers be given a minimum monthly pension of Rs.5000. They called upon all farmers to join their ranks against the exploitations.

MARCH FOR SCIENCE

On 22 April 2017 more than a million scientists, technologists, teachers, scientific workers, and supporters of scientific thought marched in more than 600 cities worldwide for the cause of science.

This year March for Science will be held worldwide on 14 April 2018. In India, the March will be on demands :

1. Allocate at least 3% of GDP to scientific and technological research and 10% towards education
2. Stop propagation of unscientific, obscurantist outdated ideas, and develop scientific temper, human values and spirit in conformance with Article 51A of the Constitution
3. Ensure that the education system does not impart ideas that contradict scientific evidence
4. Enact policies based on scientific evidence, etc.

87th Martyrdom Day of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Rajguru observed across the country and Pakistan

87th Martyrdom Day of the great Martyrs of freedom struggle of the country, Shaheed-e Azam Bhagat Singh and his comrades Sukhdev and Rajguru was observed across the country with great enthusiasm. The observances were marked by emotional and active participation of different sections of people, particularly the younger generation. It proved beyond doubt that despite the horrible cultural degeneration being fomented by the rulers to shatter the moral backbone of people, more so the youth and children, the humanity and craving for values and ethics still reigns in people, dormant but ready to rise up at a genuine call.

The Martyrdom Day fell on 23 March. On that date at Shadman Chowk (Martyrs' Crossing), in Lahore, Pakistan where the hanging of the martyrs was carried out, the Martyrdom Day was observed separately by two groups, the Bhagat Singh Memorial Foundation (BSMF) and the Bhagat Singh Foundation Pakistan (BSFP), both demanding declaring Bhagat Singh a 'national hero' of Pakistan. BSFP Founder President said: Bhagat Singh will be remembered as a great freedom fighter. (PTI report)

In India observances by AIDS, AIDYO, AIMSS, KOMSOMOL singly or jointly, were

held over an extended period before and after the date. Gujarat staged a mass scale observance for almost a week at Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Surat and other places, holding cultural programme including drama, paying floral tribute etc. In UP too, various programmes were held at Kanpur, Allahabad, Badlapur Jaunpur, Pahitiapur. Dhanora (by KKMS). At Patiala in Punjab, Comrade Aminder Pal Singh, Secretary SUCI(C), Punjab addressed the gathering. Different observance programmes were also held at different places, including schools and colleges in Jaipur, Patna, Muzaffarpur, Munghyr, Ranchi, Ghatshila, Coochbehar, Kolkata and other places.



SUCI (C) expresses deep concern about present move towards diluting the SC-ST law in the name of preventing its misuse

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, Socialist Unity Centre of India (Communist) has issued the following statement on 28 March 2018 :

Recent Supreme Court order holding it mandatory that there should be no automatic or immediate arrest of any public or non-public servant on any complaint filed under the stringent Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989, without a preliminary probe and approval of respective authorities, palpably undermines the intent and extent of the provision which was meant to protect one of the most marginalised section of population of the country. And this has come at an hour when that section of population, broadly the Dalits, have been made target of heinous attacks on this or that pretext under the present regime of the RSS-BJP combine. The situation arising boils down to the simple fact that even with the Act existing, seeking justice will depend primarily upon the bureaucracy and administration and its infamous delay from red-tapeism, if not worse. It will mean that the chances for justice for the Dalits will recede further.

As regards misuse of the SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, which has been used as the ground for making the move, can be prevented through legal measures as provided in other relevant laws.

We express our grave concern about this move and demand that it be reconsidered and rescinded, to help bring justice to the downtrodden oppressed section of the population that are presently being thrust under more vehement attacks.

Corrigendum

In the last 15 March issue, Proletarian Era,

On page 7: Photo with caption Chennai, would be THENI

On page 9: Photo of Stalin Day published is not of this year.

In the observance on 5 March this year, there was no central speaker.

Mistakes are deeply regretted

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