

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Attack on the Constitution of India	7
3. Takeover by the Sangh	12
4. Blow to Federal Structure	16
5. Pushing Kashmir To The Brink	19
6. Cozying up to the US	24

Please read other booklets of the series also.

Booklet 1 : Economy in Shambles

Booklet 3 : Promises Broken, People Betrayed

Booklet 4 : When Lives and Futures are Endangered

Introduction

This publication consisting of four interlinked booklets, marks the fourth year-on-year series on the policies of the Modi regime which started after its first year in office, in May 2015

A comprehensive look at the four years of Modi regime becomes all the more necessary given that these years have been marked by an unprecedented self-promotion drive by the Modi Government funded by public money. According to a recent RTI query, it is revealed that the Government has already spent a huge amount of Rs 4,343.26 crore rupees on advertisements through different media. Considering that the Government has refused to raise widow pensions by a single rupee in these last four years in the name of a resource crunch, such a huge expenditure on self-publicity seems obscene.

In its celebration of four years, undoubtedly dampened by its blunder in Karnataka, many claims are being made of the achievements of the regime with stress of it being pro- poor.

What is the reality?

The four booklets deal with different aspects. The first with an overview by General Secretary Sitaram Yechury is entitled Economy in Shambles and contains five fact filled articles on key issues such as the actual macro economic picture of the Indian economy, what happened to the promise of two crore jobs, on the issue of price rise, on flourishing corruption as opposed to the slogan of na khaonga na khane doonga and importantly the reality behind the hype on the flagship schemes of this Government.

In the BJP election manifesto and later, there were numerous promises made to different sections of the people, to the kisans, the workers, to

women and specifically to Dalits and adivasis. The manifesto had also promised health and education for all. These were promises to bring the acche din of BJP rule.

The third booklet titled Broken Promises, People Betrayed and the fourth, Endangered Lives and Futures deal with the reality of people's lives and the deep distress they face under the Modi regime.

This the second booklet in the series looks at a set of commitments made by the Modi sarkar which were not made public : those made to the RSS.

When Modi overcame divisions within his own party regarding his leadership before the last general elections, he was fully backed by the RSS. As is known India's Prime Minister spent the better part of his public life as an RSS pracharak. Long before he took an oath to protect the Constitution of India, he was bound by the oath he took, and the prayer he recited, when he joined the RSS. That oath and prayer are quoted in the second booklet which examines the overt and covert ways that the Modi Government has taken forward the RSS agenda towards a Hindu rashtra. This booklet looks at the assault on the secular character of the constitution, the attack on minorities, on democracy and autonomous institutions, on federalism, the basic pillars of the republic.

It is often not recognized that the present assault on the federal structure of the constitution and the consequent downgrading of the rights of the states is also part of the RSS agenda of a unitary India. The efforts to impose Hindi on all States met with strong opposition, but efforts continue. It is not as though earlier Governments at the Centre had not ridden roughshod over the rights of the States. But the Modi Government has broken all previous records. The terms of reference of the 15th Finance Commission are evidence enough. In this booklet we carry a short piece by the Finance Minister of Kerala, Thomas Isaac which explains some of the aspects.

This booklet also has a separate piece on the situation in Kashmir. It shows the utter failure of the Central Government's policies which have led to the alienation of the people of the valley. In fact Kashmir has been used cynically by the ruling regime to whip up false nationalism in other parts of the country.

The Government's claims to have made India a power globally "recognized and respected" is also scrutinized in a piece in this booklet on India's foreign policy. The personalization of foreign policy relations in the figure of Modi and the downgrading of experienced foreign policy professionals in the Ministry has led to swings in India's foreign policy which have dismayed India's longstanding friends and allies. Under Modi, the Government has aggressively taken forward the initial disastrous policies of the Congress led UPA Government to make India a junior partner of the U.S.

We would request our readers to read all four booklets to get a comprehensive picture of the disastrous consequences India is facing as a result of having such a Government in office.

We hope these booklets will strengthen the struggles being waged across India to free India of its toxic rule.

The publication of these four booklets has been made possible by the hard work and contribution of many comrades. We thank in particular Savera, Shyam, Pranjal, Sonali, Prabir Purkayasta, Prashant, Rajendra Sharma, Badal Saroj, Subhashini Ali, Vijoo Krishnan, Raghu, Venkatesh Athreya, Subin Dennis and Ajay Kumar.

We also thank the cartoonists whose work we have used in these booklets.

Brinda Karat

May, 2018

Attack on the Constitution of India

Despite its lip service to the Constitution of India, the BJP and its mentor the RSS have always derided it in reality starting with the RSS objection to the new Constitution back in 1950, and their demand that the Manu-Smriti be followed. After coming to power in 2014, the BJP-Sangh parivar has launched a many sided attack on the Constitution, the most incendiary of which is the abandoning of its secular features. Secularism for them is a dirty word , the object being to remove it from the constitution.

After packing the whole executive – from the PM downwards - with RSS people, committed to creation of the Hindu Rashtra, they have fostered and encouraged the spread of religious bigotry and Hindutva fanaticism through multiple fronts, corroding the Constitutional values. Safeguarding the rights of minorities, including policies of upliftment, is no longer a concern for the govt. Secularism, as conceived by the Constitution makers is being given a not so quiet burial by the Modi govt. and the Sangh parivar.

The result, is the increase in communal division, hate speech and minority baiting.

One of the key slogans of BJP and its prime minister Narendra Modi that has been repeated endlessly in every rally and meeting is “Sabka saath, sabka vikas”. It is explained by the BJP as – with support of all



communities, we will develop all communities.

But since coming to power four years ago, in 2014, BJP and its associates of the wider Sangh Parivar have unleashed a wave of violence against minority



communities fuelled by incendiary statements from leaders, shielding of criminals from legal action, and a poisonous campaign of lies and hatred carried out amongst the people. Hindu festivals have been turned into armed celebrations that viciously target minority communities. Hindu fanatic elements have used 'cow protection' as a pretext to attack Muslims and Dalits. All elections are vitiated by communal propaganda both overtly in public campaigning and covertly through hate-filled social media messaging. The BJP has not put up a single Muslim candidate in most of the 24 Assembly elections held since 2014, and neither did it have one for the 2014 Lok Sabha election.

In many cases local police was reported to be complicit in the violence. As a counterpoint, cases against Hindutva terrorists involved in Mecca Masjid, Malegaon and other bomb blasts, as also against some of the key instigators of the Gujarat anti-Muslim pogrom of 2002, have been let off by courts due to lack of diligent prosecution. This has sent a clear message to violent Hindutva extremists that the govt. is protecting them. The result of this barrage of Hindutva fanatic and supremacist propaganda and violence is that the country's social fabric and harmony is today under severe strain.

- **Communal Violence:** Incidents of communal violence have increased by 28% between 2014 and 2017 (for which official data is available). In these three years, there have been nearly 3000 communal incidents which have taken the toll of about 400 lives

and left nearly 9000 people injured.

- Officially registered cases of inciting communal violence have gone up by 41% in this period from 366 in 2014 to 475 in 2017.
- In the first four months of 2018, 13 districts of Bihar, 3 of Rajasthan and 3 of W.Bengal were rocked by communal violence directly instigated by armed processions organised and led by Sangh Parivar associates or BJP leaders on the occasion of Hindu festival of Ram Navami.
- **Cow Lynching:** Since the ascent of Modi, there have been 78 cases of mob attacks and lynchings in the name of cow protection, led mostly by Sangh Parivar associated persons. These horrific attacks caused deaths of 29 people and left 273 injured, including 148 seriously injured.
- Over two-thirds of the victims were Muslims and the remaining mostly Dalits. These incidents were sparked off by wild and manufactured rumours of beef eating, cow slaughter, etc. In some cases, like Junaid's lynching in Faridabad, a minor incident in a train turned into lynching by a hate filled mob. In most cases, the killers are either free or the trials are stuck in court.
- **Rape as Communal Weapon:** In a barbaric incident in January this year, an eight year old Bakarwal girl was abducted, kept in a place of worship and repeatedly raped before being murdered in Kathua, Jammu. The reasons motivating the criminals included their desire to get rid of the Bakarwal Muslims who had settled near their village. RSS-BJP and its associates openly sided with the accused. This incident was reminiscent of the rapes and molestations done by Hindutva fanatic mobs in Gujarat and elsewhere.
- **Attacks on Christians:** Another minority community in the country, the Christians, too are facing growing violence from the Sangh Parivar. An estimated 700 attacks have taken place on churches, clergy, carol singers, Christmas and Easter events and missionaries across the country in the past 4 years. Many such incidents are not reported to the police and go unrecorded because the victims are terrorised.
- **The killings of Kalburgi, Pansare, Dabholkar and Gauri Lankesh** by alleged Hindutva fanatics shows another facet of the Sangh

parivar's diabolic intentions of targeting voices of reason and progressive thought.

This growing communalisation of society has created mutual friction and tensions in most parts of the country, even in places where there was minimal history of such strife. In all these cases, the handiwork of RSS affiliated groups, that have mushroomed all over, can be seen. This dangerous strategy is also pushing sections of the minority communities into the arms of minority fundamentalists thus further alienating them.

Among the various "issues" that have been manufactured by the Sangh parivar to spread this poison against Muslims and Christians are "love jihad", forcible conversion, beef, population growth, allegiance to Pakistan or international jihadists, etc. Even the Rohingyas, who faced brutal ethnic cleansing in Myanmar and fled to India have been targeted, and held up as an example of Muslim infiltration in India.

The govt. on its part, has mostly kept silent on all of these issues and the violence that has been perpetrated, barring some hypocritical and anodyne statements. Behind the scenes, however, it is clear that

RSS Oath:

"Before the all-powerful God and my ancestors, I most solemnly take this oath, that I become a member of the RSS in order to achieve all round greatness of Bharatvarsha by fostering the growth of my sacred Hindu religion, Hindu society, and Hindu culture. I shall perform the work of the Sangh honestly, selflessly with my heart and soul, and I shall adhere to this goal all my life. Bharat Mata Ki Jai."

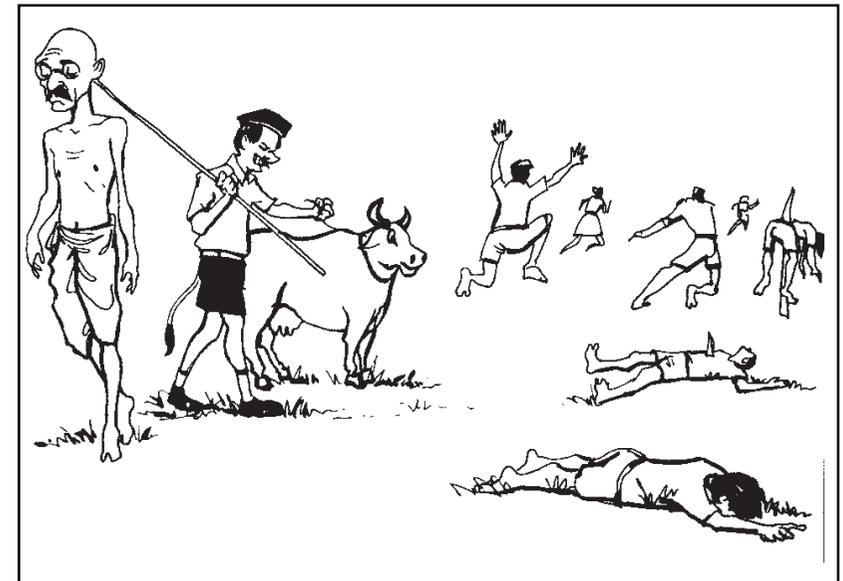
Prayer:

Affectionate Motherland, I eternally bow to you/O Land of Hindus, you have reared me in comfort/O Sacred Land, the Great Creator of Good, may this body of mine be dedicated to you/I again and again bow before You/O God almighty, we the integral part of the Hindu Rashtra salute you in reverence/For Your cause have we girded up our loins/Give us Your Blessings for its accomplishment..."

perpetrators of violence are shielded, while BJP leaders become hyper active in case a Muslim person is involved in a crime.

The discriminatory policy of the govt. is also visible in its Budget allocation for the Ministry of Minority Affairs which continues to be meagre, making up just 0.19% of the total expenditure budget for 2018-19. It has been kept at this low level throughout the Modi regime although minorities make up over 21% of India's population. Funds utilisation of the ministry has declined from about 97% in 2015-16 to 74% last year. Although public sector lending for minorities has increased to 16%, Muslims accounted for about 45% of this although they make up 72% of the minority population. Many of the Sachar Commission recommendations remain unimplemented or are being hollowed out.

Never before has India seen such openly partisan and communal governments as those run by the BJP at the Centre and in States. It exposes the slogan of *sabka sath sabka vikas* as a total lie, just like all the other lies this govt. and its leader Narendra Modi is fond of peddling.



Courtesy: Vaibhav Bose

Takeover by the Sangh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi never tires of saying “India First” that is, the country is above everything. In his 2014 election manifesto and campaign he repeatedly talked of good governance, transparency, accountability, upholding the Constitution and building a “vibrant and participatory democracy”. Yet, after coming to power the BJP govt. has revealed its true intentions of holding on to power even if it means destroying democratic institutions. It has shown complete disregard to the Constitution time and again, violating well established Parliamentary and governance related conventions. The judiciary, bureaucracy, armed forces, other constitutional institutions like the RBI, CVC, Election Commission and academic institutions– all have been made to bend their knees and function at Modi’s diktats.

An important feature of the Modi govt.’s policy has been to pack all institutions with hand-picked RSS members. Besides the govt., RSS cadres now sit in decision making bodies of practically all academic institutions and bodies. They control committees and boards of practically every kind. This is not just a matter of convenience and patronage. This is a long term strategic takeover of democratic institutions for spreading the RSS ideology far and wide, beyond the term of the present govt. The other side of the coin is that anybody who objects to either this takeover or to the policies coming out of RSS controlled bodies is branded as ‘anti-national’ and a witch-hunt ensues.

Downgrading Parliament

For the first time the Union Budget was bulldozed through without any debate in the Lok Sabha this year. The institution of Parliament was reduced to a joke when the representatives of the people were not allowed to discuss how peoples’ money will be spent. Not only this, a no

confidence motion was disallowed and the session was adjourned by the Speaker who belongs to the ruling party BJP. The motion to impeach the Chief Justice was unilaterally dismissed by Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, even though he had no powers to decide on the merits of the motion. On many occasions, the govt. adopted the ordinance route to bring in laws pertaining to various important issues. The ordinance on Land Acquisition was one such which had to be taken back after massive resistance from the Left and progressive sections of society. Ordinances on allotment of Rajya Sabha seats between Telengana and Andhra Pradesh, textiles, re-promulgation of coal mines ordinance and for appointment of Principal Secretary to the PM are other such examples where the institution of Parliament and its democratic functioning has suffered damage. The ordinance route proves arrogance of the ruling dispensation that they want to get things done without following due process and being held accountable.

State Governors

Not only at the Centre but in the states too, the BJP has adopted a similar policy of riding roughshod over democratic institutions and procedures. In states, it has been using governors as its tool to trample democracy. Remember that many of the governors now in position are affiliated to RSS (or sympathetic to it) and more than willing to act as tools of the Modi govt. The finest example of the same is the ongoing tussle between the Delhi government and the Centre. Successive Lieutenant-Governors of Delhi have been sending back proposals on various schemes. The elected chief minister has not been allowed to govern due to constant obstruction by the Modi govt. Goa, Manipur, Meghalaya and Karnataka are prime examples of how BJP has used Governors to capture the power. Acting in a partisan way, they have opened the path for BJP to form govts. through horse trading, making a mockery of their constitutional authority.

Judiciary

Even the judiciary has not been left out of this drive to co-opt various arms of the Indian state into the BJP’s influence. For the first time in history of free India, four senior most judges of the Supreme Court had

to organize a press conference appealing people to stand for independence of judiciary. Subsequently, one of these four wrote a letter to the Chief Justice of India requesting him to ensure independence of the institution. The Judge said that the very life and existence of the institution was under threat and a surgical intervention is required. The implication was that the Chief Justice was managing the roster (allocation of work) in a way that suited the BJP govt.

The govt. is also openly interfering in appointment of judges to the Supreme Court as shown in the recent case of Justice Joseph who was recommended by the collegium as per established practice but the govt. turned it down.

Government has formed a 14 member committee by the Ministry of Culture to write a "Hindu first" version of history as the Minister for Culture Mahesh Sharma put it in highly sectarian words. Given a huge budget the Chairman of the Committee K.N.Dixit said, "I have been asked to present a report that will help the government rewrite certain aspects of ancient history." The Minister on his part has declared that the study will prove that the Mahabharata and the Ramayana are real historical events. Thus the replacement of history by mythology, a pet project of the RSS, is being implemented by this Government.

Dissent is anathema to this Government. Any and every form of dissent is termed anti- national and put down. The selective use of the CBI, the Enforcement Directorate and the Income Tax department is the trimurti to threaten opposition leaders and others, who criticize the Government.

Shockingly, the Government has come up with a plan to monitor social media through a new mechanism which will act as the super spying tool of the Government under the I and B Ministry.

Additionally, in order to ensure a compliant bureaucracy the PMO has floated a proposal to change the present system of recruitment and deployment of officers in Central Government services and to the States which are now under the UPSC in a time tested transparent system. The PMO wants to intervene in this process.

Constitutional Bodies

The government has been continuously interfering with autonomy of institutions like RBI, Election Commission, Central Vigilance Commission, CAG, etc. For announcing the disastrous demonetization decision of November 2016, the RBI was given barely 24 hours to prepare for such a massive undertaking showing the high-handedness of Modi govt. The RBI has been facing reputational risk and its identity as an institution has been damaged with the government of the day treating it just like any other regulator while it has fundamentally different functions. The rules during the notebandi period were being changed continuously and even till today, RBI has not been able to give the exact figure for returned notes.

The Election Commission also appears to be compromised and kow-towing to govt. diktats. For instance, the Gujarat Assembly elections were delayed by over a fortnight, apparently to accommodate PM Modi's visits to the state for making various announcements which would have otherwise been prohibited under the code of conduct. Similar adjustments in schedules, dates and administration of elections by the EC have been alleged from time to time.

Academic Institutions

Practically every important University in the country, and diverse other academic institutions like the FTII, ICHR, ICSSR etc. have been handed over to be run by RSS supporters, many with no qualifications to run such bodies. These appointees in turn are destroying the internal democratic functioning of the bodies they run and imposing Sangh agenda in research or other academic pursuits. In the past four years, resistance to these moves has also intensified, especially in universities where the students and teachers have taken to the streets against interference and policy pushes. Such struggles have erupted in DU, JNU, HCU, Allahabad University, FTII and elsewhere.

Blow to Federal Structure

Allocation of financial resources is best undertaken by the tier of government which is nearest to the beneficiaries and mobilisation of resources is best undertaken by the tier of government that is farthest from the tax payers. It is for this reason that in all federations, taxation powers are generally concentrated at the Centre while the burden of expenditure is mostly on the States. To address this fiscal imbalance, there would have to be some constitutional mechanism to transfer resources from the Centre to the States. In India, the Union Finance Commissions appointed under Article 280 of the Constitution after every five years is the institution for recommending the vertical division of resources between the Centre and State as well as the horizontal distribution of the devolved resources between the States. In other words, sharing is not gratis from the Centre, but a constitutional right. However, the formation of the Finance Commissions (FCs) and deciding their terms of reference (TOR) has been the exclusive preserve of the Centre and this is against the grain of federalism.

Scuttling the fiscal space of the States

From the 1990s, the FCs have also become a vehicle for incentivising and coercing the States to implement fiscal reforms like deficit targeting. This is done citing the Constitutional provision enabling recommendations in the interest of sound finance, i.e. Article 280(2) (c). The FCs, since the 11th, have been consistently doing this by linking grant disbursement and debt relief packages to implementing Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Acts (FRBMA), adhering to zero Revenue Deficits (RD) and three percentage Fiscal Deficit-GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) ratio. A look at the TOR of 15th FC leaves no doubt in one's mind that this role is being carried further.

The FRBMA Review Committee, 2017, had recommended that instead of deficit targeting, Debt-GSDP ratio should be anchored to 60 per cent level (40 per cent for the Centre and 20 per cent for the States), and accordingly Fiscal Deficit-GSDP ratio should be glided down to 2.5 per cent for the Centre and 1.7 per cent for the States by 2022-23. This is a sharp reduction from the present three per cent level. Unless the revenue position of the Centre as well as the States improves markedly (which is unlikely at present), this would necessitate a substantial expenditure compression. The tenor of the TOR gives a feeling that the 15th FC may become an instrument to enforce curtailment of the fiscal space of the States.

In what could be debilitating for the States' finances, the TOR also suggests whether there should be Revenue Deficit grants at all. Till the 14th FC, post tax devolution Article 275 grants-in-aid were called Non-Plan Revenue Deficit (NPRD) grants, and were an important part of central devolution and a means of augmenting the Consolidated Fund of the State. The 14th FC awarded Revenue Deficit (RD) grants, taking a holistic view of plan and non-plan revenue expenditure. When the State finances are likely to be stressed in the immediate future due to a) Pay Commission Awards, b) problems in implementation of GST, c) need for spending in social and economic sectors, and d) interest liabilities on UDAY bonds, the TOR if implemented would severely strain the State finances.

TOR 7 (viii) is about "Control of lack of it on Populist measures". This is vague and open to wide interpretations. Through this, the FC would get authority to restrain democratically elected governments from implementing promises made to the people in the election manifestoes. Any measure from welfare pensions to food subsidy can be selected for attack. This strikes at the root of democratic polity.

Exacerbating the divide between the States

Another area of concern is doing away with the 1971 population as a criterion for tax devolution (TOR 8). States which have achieved demographic and health indicators and controlled the increase in population would substantially lose and their loss will be in proportion to the weight the 2011 population criterion gets in the Tax Devolution formula. A look at the comparative position of the States when the 1971

and 2011 population is used shows that all Southern States, Goa, Orissa, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and West Bengal would be losing when the criterion is the population in 2011.

For Karnataka, the share of population in the national total has gone down 0.25 per cent. It is pertinent to note that the losing States like Kerala have reached replacement rates of Population and are now not able to reap the demographic dividend of the new labour force. They have also incurred a huge cost to achieve this progress and now are bearing the burden of revenue deficits. Their loss needs to be considered in the tax devolution formula, lest the 15th FC award becomes a disincentive for achievements in human development, which has come through conscious public action.

Anti-federal tenor seen in TOR

The FCs becoming a monitoring agency is not befitting its Constitutional role. As the Finance Commission is not an ongoing body, any monitoring mechanism suggested by it would become a Central officials' supervision over the State governments.

The part of TOR 6 (iv) challenges the basic framework of federalism. It states: "The impact of the fiscal situation of the Union Government of substantially enhanced tax devolution to the States following recommendation of the 14th FC, coupled with the coming imperative of national development programme, including New India-2022". In a framework of Cooperative Federalism, there has to be a consensual approach and States and Local Self Governments, being closer tiers to the people benefiting from the programmes, should have the prime role. A substantially enhanced devolution would naturally ensure implementation of these programmes in a better way and there should not be any room for the apprehension expressed in the TOR 6 (iv). In fact, a larger untied allocation for measurable outcomes, should be better than the Centre spending from its own resources as tied grants.

All talk of Co-operative Federalism seems to have evaporated into thin air, as can be seen from the TOR. States will have to effectively take a position on these issues in their memorandums to the 15th Finance Commission, if they are to retain their rightful position in the federal polity.

(Syndicate: The Billion Press)

Pushing Kashmir To The Brink

The situation in Kashmir represents one of the biggest failures of Modi led BJP/RSS government. The critical issue is that the Modi Government has approached the issues of Kashmir from the single point of security instead of approaching it as a political issue which requires dialogue with all sections of the people. The use of the army and security forces as the single focus to "deal" with the Kashmir issue has led to a most disastrous situation. In fact, the four years of Modi Government's policies have helped Pakistan's designs in Kashmir to keep unrest and violence alive.

Firstly, contrary to the claims made by the Prime Minister himself, terrorist attacks and deaths of security personnel have not decreased but have increased hugely.

Deaths in J&K: UPA last 4 yrs compared to Modi 4 yrs

		Civilians	Security Force Personnel	Terrorist	Total
UPA	June 2010- May 2014	98	154	492	744
Modi Govt.	June 2014-May 2018	148	279	642	1069
% increase		51	81	30	44
Source: IICM					

Thus the Modi Government policy has failed to end terrorist attacks and in fact has led to an increase in the spiral of violence.

Second, the policy has led to a deep alienation of the people of Kashmir, more than ever before. Considering that the people of Jammu and Kashmir and particularly in the valley, had disregarded the boycott calls and threats of the extremists not to participate in elections, and had

voted both in the Lok Sabha and the State Assembly elections, the Modi Government had the opportunity to win their confidence through concrete measures. Instead it destroyed that opportunity.

In July 2016, after the killing of Burhan Wani, a Hizbul militant, by the security forces there was an upsurge of protests. This was brutally suppressed by the security forces under orders from Delhi implemented faithfully by the PDP led Government. 6000 protesters were injured in action by security forces, 500 suffered eye injuries leading to scores being blinded, by the use of pellet guns. Hundreds of young people were locked up for over two years branded as terrorists. It is only recently that those charged with “stone pelting” were released.

Third, the PDP-BJP Government in the State has only sharpened the communal divide between Jammu and Kashmir. The BJP has not given up its agenda of removal of Article 370 in the constitution which gives Kashmir a special status. RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat gave a public call for amending the constitution to ensure this. In 2017, the BJP encouraged a legal challenge to Article 35A of the constitution meant to protect the rights of permanent residents. Since Article 35A flows from the special status category granted by Article 370, the people of Kashmir, rightly saw this as another attempt to destroy the autonomy granted by the constitution. At the same time the constant attempts to communalise and divide the people of the two regions of Jammu and Kashmir by the Sangh parivar has also led to a big increase in the influence of Muslim fundamentalist forces in the valley.

This is damaging the very concept of Kashmiriyat. Such an environment has also adversely affected the required return of Kashmiri pandits who continue to suffer from their forced displacement from their homes in the valley.

The communalisation of politics by the Sangh parivar was vividly exposed in the horrific rape case of a minor in Kathua, Jammu. Here, according to the charge sheet, the child victim was selected by the rapist because of her being a Muslim and the rapists were defended by the top leaders of the State BJP because of their religious identity as Hindus. Nothing can be more hateful than the use of rape as an instrument for a communal agenda.

Fourth, the BJP-RSS have used the issue of Kashmir, branding all Kashmiris (Muslims) as terrorists to further their communal agenda in the rest of the country. As a corollary, anyone who opposes the Central and state Government’s use of repression in Kashmir are branded anti-national. Thus Kashmir becomes a tool to further a jingoistic fake nationalism which in fact neither serves India’s interests nor that of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. This is another reason why the Central Government has refused to open a dialogue with the representatives of all sections of the people.

This also goes against the assurance given by the Home Minister Rajnath Singh who led a parliamentary all party delegation to Kashmir. Two years after that the Centre has belatedly appointed a so-called Special Representative an ex-intelligence agency officer as an interlocutor. However without a specific mandate it has proved to be an ineffective measure.

It is primarily the working people who have once again borne the brunt of the impasse and are in the firing line. The daily workers, the small stall and shopkeepers, the autorickshaw drivers, casual workers feel the brunt of lost livelihood and extreme economic vulnerability threatening their basic survival. The continuing violence has badly hit the tourism industry hitting employment and incomes. The tourism destinations, 55, identified by government and some 10-12 so-called dream destinations do not show any progress as no public investment and required infrastructural development has taken place.

There are very few opportunities for employment leading to widespread frustration among the youth. The State is suffering from acute unemployment and chronic underemployment. According to the latest report of Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, unemployment has touched 38.8 percent (2016-17). 80 lakh educated youth are unemployed according to calculations from various education reports.

Social pensions are never given on time and even salaries are delayed. Teachers, Scheme workers, adhoc employees and contract workers are often on the streets demanding their pending salaries. Despite assurances given in the Assembly, daily wagers and casual workers are yet to be regularized and often their wages are not paid

regularly. The age old world famous handicraft industry is dwindling and the artisans are living a miserable life without any social security from the government.

Anganwadi workers are getting what is probably the lowest allowances in India with workers getting just Rs.3600 and helpers just Rs.1800 per month.

Even while Prime Minister talks of the pen replacing the gun in the hands of students, the reality is that the educational system has been badly affected with random closures of schools and colleges because of violence.

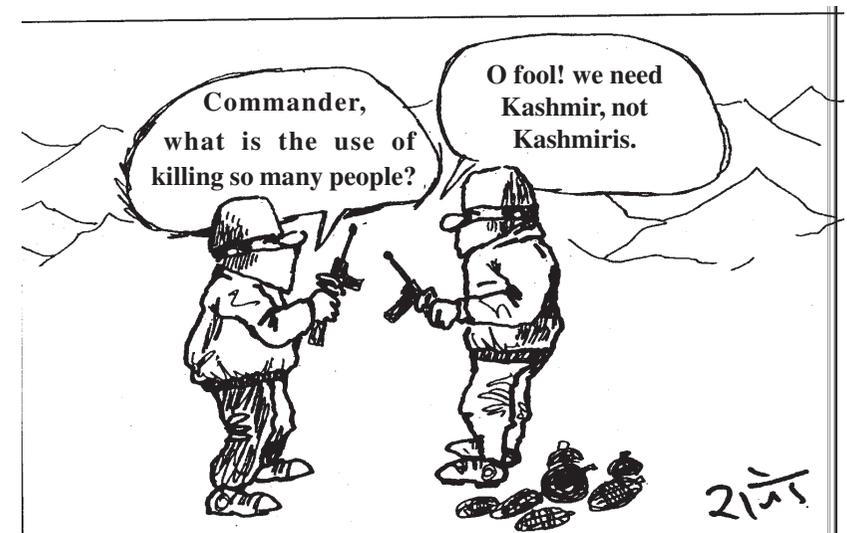
The agricultural sector, the mainstay of the people of J&K, is in deep crisis. Various agricultural schemes declared by the Government are not implemented. The infrastructure is extremely poor. There is no Government investment for post harvesting infrastructure or promotion of marketing facilities. Without a guaranteed support price farmers are in deep distress. Saffron cultivation which can be a big source of income has little support from the Government and prices are low. The horticulture sector is in bad shape. Growers are in deep debt with high prices of farm inputs and low prices for the product . There is no sign of any debt relief for the farmers of this State.

The Modi Government had promised development for the State with infrastructural investment. But just take one example of electricity availability. The power requirement of the J&K is 3000 MW against the availability of 2200 MW leaving a power deficit of 800 MW (i.e 26 %). The power deficit which is primarily because of system constraints at transmission & distribution levels is met by enforcing power cuts in both rural and urban areas. Frequent power cuts are normal. The Kishanganga HEP was inaugurated by the PM recently. But the state will not get the full benefit. It has a generation capacity of 300 MW but the State will get only 12% free power and additional 1% power will be used for development of the local area, though the demand is to increase the State share to 40 percent.

The C.Rangarajan Committee report had suggested return of two power projects, namely Salal and Uri HEP having a total capacity of around 900 MW to the State. But the government has refused to implement

this and the report continues to gather dust. On the other hand the resource starved State has had to spend as much as Rs.16,000 crores between 2014-2017 to purchase power for the State. Despite repeated assurances nothing has been done so far to meet these genuine demands of the state. This is rank discrimination against the state by the Central Government.

The CPI(M) which has consistently fought for the democratic rights of the people of Kashmir upholds the principle of Jammu and Kashmir as part of the Indian Union with a special status under the Constitution of India. There must be an end to repressive measures by the State. There has to be a political dialogue with all shades of the political spectrum. While strongly opposing all forms of cross border terrorism, this must be accompanied by talks with Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir issue. The original intended provisions of Article 370 must be restored and regional autonomy provided for the three regions, Jammu, the Kashmir valley and Ladakh. At the same time immediate measures must be taken to address the demands of peasants and workers and the common people.



Cozying up to the US

The Modi Government's foreign policy of the last four years has been one of aligning with the US, and increasingly becoming its subordinate ally. Near home, its relations with Pakistan continue to be at rock bottom. Relations with other neighbours too are strained.

The BJP government has been using bluff, bluster, Modi-centric events, and occasional empty gestures of goodwill, as a substitute for a well-thought policy and engagement with the world. The External Affairs Ministry and its diplomats have been largely kept out of foreign policy. Increasingly, India's foreign policy seems to be led by Ajit Doval, the National Security Advisor, and viewed through a security lens.

In recent years, India's independent foreign policy has taken two major hits. One is India aligning closely with the US through military agreements and exercises. The second is its clear signal that it now sees Israel as its ideological partner. India has weakened its historical ties with Russia, been silent on Trump's withdrawal from the nuclear deal with Iran.

Alignment with US

After signing the logistical service agreement LEMOA and the signal agreement CISMOA, two major defence agreements, the Modi government is now examining signing of two other defence agreements – Communications Compatibility and Security Arrangement (COMCASA), and the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-Spatial Cooperation (BECA).

As the CPI(M) had pointed out last year, LEMOA was just the renaming of Logistical Service Agreement that the US signs with its allies.

LEMOA allows the US to pre-designate Indian ports or airfields for the support of US Armed Forces, and even allows taking control of these facilities by the US. CISOMA allows India to use US signalling equipment, but conversely, also allows the US to track Indian military operations.

With COMCOSA, the US would in effect, not only be able to track, but also control all internal communications of the Indian armed forces. BECA envisages all targetting by India – missiles, artillery, bombings, etc. — be done using US geo-spatial satellite infrastructure, and therefore makes India dependent on the US. Ironically, in order to avoid becoming dependent on satellite signal from another country, India already has an expensive program of launching its own geo-spatial satellites, six of which are already operational. At this stage to go back to dependency on the US geo-spatial satellites makes no sense.

These two deals – COMCOSA and BECA – will hand over the control of India's hi-tech military infrastructure to the US. This is why the earlier UPA, and even the first NDA government, did not go through with these deals. As a number of Indian hardware comes from other sources such as Russia, such penetration of US signalling and targetting equipment also means the US gaining access to Russian equipment, something Russia would be very unhappy about. Consequently, this will become a long term threat to India's ability to diversify its military purchases. This will lock in all future defence procurement to take place from only NATO sources. This is the real intent behind the alphabet soup of US defence agreements, from LEMOA to BECA.

The set of military exercises – the annual Malabar exercises – carried out by the US, Japan and India in the Japan Sea near Okinawa and off the Philippines, is designed to draw India into the US policy of containment of China. It is here that the signalling and targetting pacts – COMCOSA and BECA – become important. It allows all the participating navies to operate as one, presumably under US command.

Already, India has bought more than \$15 billion of US arms in the last ten years. It has more than 50 working groups set up with the US that allows the US to penetrate deep into India's strategic, political, and social infrastructure. The US think tanks have a number of retired foreign

service and defence personnel, providing a backdoor, if not a revolving door into India's governing elite.

Israel

The Modi government's relations with Israel is growing stronger by the day. It is the biggest buyer of Israel's arms. Modi's last visit to Israel included an obeisance to Theodor Herzl, the founder of Zionism, who articulated as early as 1895, the need to ethnically cleanse Palestine of its Arab population. Clearly, Modi's love for Israel stems from the RSS and its Hindutva ideology being a close kin to Zionism and its vision of Israel as a nation of Jews. It is this vision that allows Israel to kill with sniper fire, more than a hundred unarmed Palestinians during their 6 weeks of protests in April-May this year.

The nearly 2 million Palestinians in Gaza are penned up in the biggest open air prison, residing across barbed wire fences from lands and houses that belonged to them only decades ago. India under Modi may try and de-link India's relationship with Israel and Palestine, but cannot hide the real history and geography of the land and its people. Israel has been built through ethnic cleansing, which it still continues, with expropriation of Jerusalem and occupation of the West Bank. It is this ideological affinity of Hindutva to Zionism that keeps the Modi government quiet on the Israel's barbaric killing of unarmed protesters at the Gaza border.

Neighbours

Under Modi, India's relationship with all our neighbourshad sunk to a new low. Modi and BJP's foreign policy of threats, economic blockade, surgical strikes, hot pursuit or brinkmanship have led to no results. Except negative ones.

The India Pakistan international border and Line of Control in Kashmir are seeing continuous tension. Cross border shelling and firings have gone up significantly, as have deaths of civilians and security personnel. Even the international border which earlier remained outside such shelling now routinely sees artillery and small arms fire, leading to civilian casualties and loss of property. The economic blockade of

Nepal supported by the Modi government hardened sentiments in Nepal against India and its attempts to browbeat Nepal. Countries, even small ones, are not easily cowed by either military or economic threats. Now, in the face of increasing alienation, the government is forced to rework its relations with our neighbours, as can be seen from Modi's recent visits to China and Nepal.

One consequence of NSA and the PMO bypassing the External Affairs Ministry has meant that there has been no preparation for any serious engagement. Hurried, ad-hoc meetings with foreign leaders and pseudo summits have been combined with grandstanding in the media. With the increasing need for Modi and BJP to play the Pakistan card in the domestic politics, India under Modi seems to be more interested in hyphenating itself with Pakistan, rather than play the larger international role it once did. In viewing its foreign policy through a security lens, India has lost its large geostrategic vision. Once a champion of Non-aligned Movement (NAM) and the interests of the developing countries, India has now lost that standing among the countries.

Four Years of Modi Govt Misrule

Why it has to end

Constitution : Denied, Diluted, Dismantled



Courtesy : The Times of India

A CPI (M) PUBLICATION



June, 2018

Price: Rs. 8/-

Published by Hari Singh Kang from AKG Bhawan, 27-29 Bhai Vir Singh Marg, New Delhi-110001 on behalf of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Printed at Progressive Printers, A-21, Jhilmil Industrial Area. G.T. Road Shahdara, Delhi-110095