

# We can Rekindle the Vanishing Dreams

As we enter into 71<sup>st</sup> year of transfer of power, many questions stare at us demanding answers. Are we able, as a nation, to heal the wounds of communal partition of Indian subcontinent? Has the partition attenuated communal frictions as we were told? Are we able to shed the fetters of imperialism that kept our motherland enslaved for more than two centuries? When will we grow into a true democratic state that gives every one voice, for a society that discards communal, caste and religious prejudice and discrimination, for an economy that lifts our masses of people out of poverty and imbues them with scientific temper? Are we really free?

For our generation, which was born, grew and aged with “independence”, are being haunted by these questions: what we have supposed to achieve and what we have actually achieved.

We fought three wars with our brethren (Don't call them neighbours). The result: we, on both sides of the divide, became client states that are continuously buying armaments and squandering our precious resources. This is what precisely the imperialist powers wanted. That is why the partition defied the logic of geography, history and culture of the subcontinent.

The partition, instead of attenuating communal frictions, promoted communalism and religious fundamentalism further on both sides of the divide. While Pakistan declared itself as a Muslim state, India proclaimed itself as a secular state, but, in reality, acted as a Hindu state. This is what the ruling classes of both the countries wanted: to maintain status quo in the economic and political life of people and society by deflecting the growing anger of people against the ruthless colonial plunder and rule as reflected in the waves of mass militant strikes, anti-British mobilisations in the working class centres of Kolkata and Mumbai and the historic mutiny of Royal Indian Navy sailors.

The reactionary ruling classes of the sub-continent connived with the British Raj in its nefarious game of “divide and rule” and got ‘independence’ as a reward from their colonial masters. They have inherited and mastered the skill of using the same card against their people.

These are not the birth pangs for the emergence of a free nation. They are designed to stay to shape or deform the future of the subcontinent. The evidence is there for all to see.

The western media boasts of India's rise as the third largest economy for its capacity to provide cheap labour power for the world capitalism to exploit. It is so not only of the industrial labour, but also the intellectual labour as our professionals are made to provide services at the cheaper rates. This enriched a tiny stratum. India now has world's third largest number of billionaires, while three-quarters of its 1.3 billion people struggle to survive in abject poverty.

While Indian doctors are able to provide world class medical services to those who can afford its costs - euphemistically called as medical tourism – 321 new born infants are dying every year for want of medical attention even for easily preventable diseases. There are many Gorakhpurs dotting the landscape of this country.

There is a phenomenal growth of IITs, IIMs and centres of higher education, but the quality of education they impart is questionable in the sense of its suitability to the existing Indian conditions. Many of these graduates from these premier institutions are leaving India and are easily adjusting to entirely new conditions of work and life though they were uprooted from their social milieu.

Through the transfer of power, the British colonial power cleared the way for the imperialist financial capital to come into India and occupy commanding heights in all the sectors of the economy. The drain of our natural, financial and human resources reached to gigantic proportions. The country left with no other resources to build itself and serve the interests of people than roaming the capitals of international finance with begging bowl. Our ruling classes became so servile the Donald Trump could order them to spend their surplus in trade with US to meet the expenses of US imperialism's war of aggression on Afghanistan.

The unbroken chains of feudalism, the mainstay of economic, political and cultural backwardness of Indian society, are sprouting the seeds of casteism and communalism, which the ruling classes are using to divide and oppress the people. The feudal relations are sought to be changed by the extermination of peasant masses by taking away their land by forceful means and by economic levers. This is what we are witnessing today throughout the rural India – the mass suicides by peasants, large scale migrations, growing class tensions that are leading to physical attacks on dalits, uprooting of adivasis from their habitat and so on.

This has led to stagnation in all fronts. On the economic front unemployment and poverty are so rampant that the PM Modi shirked from the responsibility of providing jobs to the youth by calling them to become job givers rather than job seekers. On the political front the system failed to provide even a semblance of democracy and magical solutions are being show-cased for the problems faced by the people. On the cultural front, all the fetters that hinder the progress – obscurantism, fanaticism and godmen along with decadent capitalist culture based individual first – are being revived and promoted through the modern means of communication.

Our youth in the past used to take pride whenever they heard of leaders of the national movement over the radio. They now prefer to switch over TV channel to an idiotic reality show. The political leadership that boasts about the demographic dividend, meaning predominantly younger population, utterly fail to ignite imagination and initiative among the youth. Their rule over the country had vanished the dreams of the youth – those who took part in the national movement to the present day.

This is not a pessimist depiction. The light is shining at the end of tunnel. We can rekindle the vanishing dreams through the ongoing struggles of adivasis, dalits and peasantry for land, of the working class for improvement in their working and living conditions and of the youth and women for better future. It is the people of these toiling and oppressed classes that are going to change the destiny of this country through their struggles for building a new society that is free from exploitation and oppression.

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