

Deplore the Citizenship (Amendment) Act! Oppose Country-wide National Register of Citizenship!

The ongoing protest movement against the CAA and NRC show no sign of receding. It is unique in some respects:

1. Students, youth and girls play a pivotal role in the protest. They have become a clear and powerful voice of entire protesting people. Dynamism, militancy, genuineness and defiance- the natural qualities of youth are prominently displayed in the protest movement.

2. BJP and its regime at the Centre, perhaps, were under the illusion that the CAB which they could enact in parliament will not invite much opposition from the people and some protest, if at all erupts, can be handled easily. But the protest, which began as a small fire has, in no time, grown into a prierefire. It engulfed the entire country leaving no state from its influence. The protest was spontaneous and isolated at some places and organized and massive in many areas. Millions of people were drawn into it.

3. The Governments in BJP ruled states have let loose the police against the protesting people. At several places, the police have gone berserk, shown over enthusiasm and excessive brutality in their actions against the protesters. The BJP govt. in UP has turned the state into an experimental ground to commit worst type of crimes against the people. The way the police have raided the Campuses of Jamia Islamia Muslim University (JIMU) and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and acted against the students has become a model for police brutality. The police barged into the campus of JIMU, invaded the library, rained the lathis indiscriminately on the students - girls as well as boys - who were immersed peacefully in reading the books. They destroyed the books and damaged the furniture in the library. They did not spare even who were running for shelter. They paid deaf ear to the cries of student that they have nothing to do with the protest and pushed themselves even into the toilets in pursuance of students. Almost same was the story in AMU.

In UP alone, 18 have lost their lives in police firing. Cases were foisted against thousands of protesting people. In Kanpur city, the police registered cases against 21,500 people. In Aligarh, the police filed cases against the AMU students for committing the -crime- of taking out a peaceful candle light procession against the CAA and NRC. There are instance where the police were seen indulging in the destruction of students vehicles and other properties to throw the blame for the violence on the protesters.

4. The police have turned the North Eastern states like Assam, Manipur and Tripura into a war Zone. On one side, there stood the protesting people - with students, youth, girls marching in the fore front to oppose the CAA and NRC, and on the other side, lathi, tear gas and gun wielding police with all aggressiveness. The protests in Manglore and Banglore cities of Karnataka were massive and have encountered police attacks and firings. Kolkata, Patna, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Mumbai, Jaipur, Bhopal and many other cities have seen lakhs of people coming into the streets and demanding the withdrawal of CAA and NRC.

5. Unexpectedly for the BJP, the protest against the CAA and NRC has not only become massive, but also has gone against its wishes. The protest has united the people of all faiths instead of dividing them. We see all the people calling the CAA and NRC as the tools of dividing India and Indian people along communal lines and discriminating

against the Muslims. The students, youth, women, dalits, tribals, other toiling people; democratic and left forces are united in the protest movement to demand the withdrawal of CAA and NRC. The intellectuals, scientists and artistes came out in thousands expressing their support and solidarity to the protest movement. Here the BJP has suffered a serious blow to its sinister design to communally divide the Indian people and single out a section of Indian population - Muslims for attack.

6. Here two questions need answers. A) Why the BJP regime chose to bring the CAB and implement the NRC throughout India at this time? B) Why these moves have triggered off such a strong and wide spread opposition and protest in the Country?

As all the regimes of exploiting ruling classes, the BJP regime too is playing the game of diverting the people from the real issues. The country's economy is now plagued by a worst crisis. Though those in power were doing everything to deny or underplay it, the real effects of crisis are inescapable for the people. The people were getting restive and taking the road of struggle. The BJP regime was in dire need of diverting the people.

The judgment on the Babri Masjid - Ramjanmaboomi dispute roused the feelings of injustice among the Muslim community. But it did not lead to violent protest and communal clash as the general mass of Muslim people, acting with a sense of maturity, have refused to fall prey to the divide and rule game of the BJP. The BJP Govt. has brought the CAB to the fore when the people were moving into struggle on the problems of life.

The BJP Government's move to bring the CAA is a part of its communal agenda too. The CAA claims to neutralize on a fast track basis the citizenship of minorities, identified as Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Christians and Parsis who migrate to India because of persecution in Pakistan, Bangla Desh and Afghanistan. Clearly, the Muslims are excluded from the scope of migration and citizenship. BJP views India as a Hindu state and it opts to give shelter to Hindus in India. This thinking is totally opposed to the concept and spirit of India. The Indian constitution declares India as a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic country. It claims to accord equality and equal rights to all with no discrimination. But these principles are violated than practiced by all the sections of Indian ruling classes. BJP, now in power at the centre, is doing everything to stealthy smuggle its ideas of Hindu Rashtra into the laws and policies of Indian state. The CAA came only in this wake.

Through CAA, the BJP Govt. is attempting to lure Hindus from some chosen countries with the offer of Indian citizenship. This way of inviting a section of people from other countries in the name of religious persecution not only disturbs communal harmony in the concerned countries, but also creates needless controversies and tensions between India and the countries from where they are migrating to India. It also creates a category of people (Hindus) seeking migration and citizenship and such people getting discriminated from other Indian citizens. These migrated people are required to convince the Indian rulers that they were persecuted in their own country for the reason of their religious identity. Even after the grant of Indian citizenship, they have to live at the mercy of Indian rulers. They have to eke their lives in an unwelcome and even hostile atmosphere as their stay may impose more burdens on the limited resources and means of livelihood in India.

The North Eastern states like Assam, Manipur and Tripura are essentially tribal states. They have a big chunk of people migrated from the neighboring countries and other Indian states like West Bengal and Bihar. Wars (1972) or war-like situations also brought a big flow of migrants. There is a strong apprehension among the people of these states that their limited resources, lands and other means of livelihood are to be parted with the migrated people and the exodus of migrants may bring serious demographic changes leading to even a loss of national identities. We have seen massive protest movement of students and youth in Assam over the question of putting a check on the migrations and protecting their national resources as well as identities.

In addition, historically, the nationalities in this region are at different levels of evolution. The problems of population flows, demarcation of boundaries and other problems are yet

to be resolved among the states. In their eagerness to integrate North Eastern states and concerned about their own class interests, the Indian ruling classes have erected more problems than solving in the way of nationalities. The North Eastern states enjoy special rights under the Article 371 of Indian constitution. Some states have inner line limits. Some (Naga) are in dialogue for decades together with the Indian government on the question of their political integration in the Indian Union. The way BJP government has resorted to the act of revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019 had seriously shaken the trust and confidence of North Eastern people in the Indian rulers. The Indian government's move first to implement the NRC in Assam and the enactment of CAA came as a big blow for them. The people apprehend sinister designs in the moves of Indian rulers to polarize and divide the people along communal lines. They see the attempts to impose BJP brand of Hindutwa and seriously disturb the economic, social, cultural and political relations to suit the interests of Indian ruling classes.

The BJP has announced that it will implement the NRC all over India. Assam people had enough experience of it. Here, millions of adivasis and toiling poor who were sons of the soil or lived in Assam for generations had to beg for the citizenship. They had to run from pillar to post to gather proofs as required by the authorities to prove their eligibility for citizenship. At the end, 19 lakh people were earmarked as ineligible for citizenship. The entire exercise is unwarranted and unjustified. It was tortuous and humiliating for the people. Here, the government which is responsible to identify the foreigners and illegal migrants has shifted its responsibility on to the shoulders of Indian people. The people were asked to prove their own citizenship and be prepared to face the punishment for their failure. This experience is a pointer to the people in other parts of India what is in store for them if the NRC is implemented throughout India. The people have, therefore, justifiably rose against the government's move in protest and are rejecting the NRC in one voice.

Faced with massive protest movement, the PM Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah are indulging in a double talk to mislead the people. They are saying that no one needs to worry about the CAA because it is aimed at preventing the entry of illegal migrants throughout India. But they don't reply why the Muslims are discriminated and Hindu religion is adopted as the basis for allowing the migrants and according the Indian citizenship? They do not reply why a person can become eligible simply because he is a Hindu from Pakistan, Bangla Desh and Afghanistan, but a person born or living in India for generations is asked to go through a tortuous and humiliating process of proving his eligibility for Indian citizenship? Now Modi government is also talking about National Population Register with its own additions.

The Indian ruling classes are creating one issue or other to keep the people always diverted from the real issues. They are using these methods as a mask to push through their anti-people, anti-national and anti-democratic policies with no much opposition from the people. One of the welcome features of present protest movement is that the people are now showing more awareness about the diversionist and divisive policy of the ruling classes. The people are refusing to see the CAA and NRC as opposed to Muslims alone. They rejected the dangerous attempt of BJP government to communally polarize and divide India and the Indian people. The unity forged by the Indian people cutting across all faiths in the present protest movement is a fitting reply to those who are dead set to take India into a dirty drain of communalism. It is a welcome development for the future struggles of the Indian people. Let us support and extend all our solidarity to it. Let us demand immediate and total withdrawal of CAA and NRC.
