

Communalism:Heinous Attempt to Malign History

The Hindu communal fanatics are leaving no chance to rake up hatred against the Muslims. The sole aim of the communal forces spearheaded by RSS and its political wing BJP is to divide the people on communal lines to disrupt the unity among them in opposing the exploitative and oppressive policies being implemented by the successive governments that are in the service of safe guarding the interests of imperialism and Indian big bourgeois class.

Since the advent of the New Economic policies three decades back, the RSS and BJP are engaged in raking up communal hatreds and riots regardless of they held political power or not. The other section of ruling class representatives, the Congress, has been abetting these communal hatreds by using disguised methods.

Now any incident or tragedy is given a communal turn with ease by the communal forces as they have built up a massive formal and informal media network, and unashamedly using their positions in government. We saw this in case of Corona pandemic, when a section of media and many communal functionaries blamed Tablighi Jamaat for being Corona spreaders, for preparing Corona bomb and for undertaking Corona Jihad.

Back on the heels of this, another tragedy has been given a communal turn. A 15 year old pregnant elephant Soumya, died in tragic circumstances on 27th May 2020 in Palakkad, Kerala. She had accidentally eaten the fruit (Pine apple/Coconut?) filled with crackers. Her mouth burnt as crackers exploded, her lower jaw was damaged and she lost her life. Firstly the fruit was filled with crackers to scare off wild boars that damage the crops and farms. Elephant was the accidental victim.

BJP MP and former Minister of Environment and Forests, Maneka Gandhi attributed the event to have taken place in Malappuram, the Muslim majority district of Kerala and tweeted, "Malappuram is known for its intense criminal activity, specially with regard to animals. No action has ever been taken against single poacher or wildlife killer so they keep doing it." Backing up her tweet the Environment and Forest minister Javdekar added that, such incident, which has taken place in Malappuram are against Indian culture. The Minister with all information under his command did not even know that incident took place in Palakkad and not Malappuram. This is a naked attempt to give a communal turn to a tragic incident. Apart from creating ripples in the media, the people of Kerala have rejected it as they had rejected the Hindu communal forces' attempts to communalise the issue of women's entry into Sabarimala temple.

Recently the Hindu communal forces created an unwarranted controversy to rake up anti-Muslim hatreds that is Mapillah rebellion of 1921, also known as Moplah revolt or Malabar rebellion. While majority of people see it as anti-colonial revolt, the communal forces wants to portray it as anti-Hindu anarchy.

If we look into the history of colonial rule in Indian subcontinent, it would be clear that feudal lords became part and parcel of the British rule. Even during high tide of the national movement led by the Indian National Congress the feudal class served the British. There were many instances of anti-feudal struggle turning into anti-colonial struggle and the anti-colonial struggle into anti-feudal struggle. The colonial policy of installing a Hindu ruler over a Muslim majority population and a Muslim ruler on Hindu majority population was in operation. Hence, one cannot separate anti-feudal and anti-colonial struggles from one another. They are intricately intertwined at that time of history and even today as well.

One has to look at the Mapillah rebellion from this perspective. The INC launched the non-cooperation movement in 1920 while at the same time Khilafat agitation was gaining ground. The Muslim Mapillahs of South Malabar are victims of oppressive feudal agrarian relations that had the British protection. Before the colonial rule, the relations between landlords and tenants/peasants, though oppressive, had guaranteed certain rights to peasants. The British introduced new tenancy laws that were far more exploitative and deprived the tenants of any right to land and were more favourable to the feudal lords. This had thrown the Mapillah peasants into misery and poverty and fostered resentment among them against the British rule and feudal lords also.

Most of the landlords were Namboodiri Brahmins while most of the tenants were Mapillah Muslims. There were many outbreaks against feudal tyranny in the late 19th century and early 20th century. The Mapillah rebellion broke out in August 1921 and continued until the British troops

captured and executed its leader Variamkunnath Kunhamed Haji in January 1922. It largely took shape of guerrilla attacks on Janmis(landlords), police and troops. Mapillahs under the leadership of Haji attacked some individuals, including Muslims, who were loyal to the British. There were wild allegations in the past, which was revoked now by the RSS and its cohorts, that Haji resorted to forceful conversions. But recent research negated this allegation.

The factors that had given rise to Mapillah rebellion in 1921 were feudal oppression, economic distress and anger against British colonial rule as a result of new tenancy laws. Basically it was an agrarian revolt.

Malayalam film director Aashiq Abu, a known left supporter, announced a film project named "Variamkunnan", the main protagonist of Mapillah rebellion Haji, to commemorate its centenary. Soon three more film projects were announced on the same historical person. The Hindu communal forces took objection calling Haji as religious bigot and asked the actor Pridhviraj Sukumaran, who agreed to play lead role in Abu's film, not to accept the role. Thus a controversy has been instigated by the Hindu communal forces.

Veteran Malayalam film director who passed away recently, I.V.Sasi directed a film "1921" in 1988, based on Mapillah rebellion. It was received well by the audiences in Kerala as well as those of other states. It received rave reviews from film critics. It did not generate any controversy; leave alone the so-called communal angle. It is made into a controversy in today's Kerala solely because of attempts by the RSS and its cohorts to gain political power through spreading communal hatreds and polarizing the society on communal lines.

The revolutionary and democratic forces has ti firmly expose the machinations of the Hindu communal forces to divide the society and prepare the people for a prolonged struggle against communalism,and its props imperialism and big bourgeois class rule.

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