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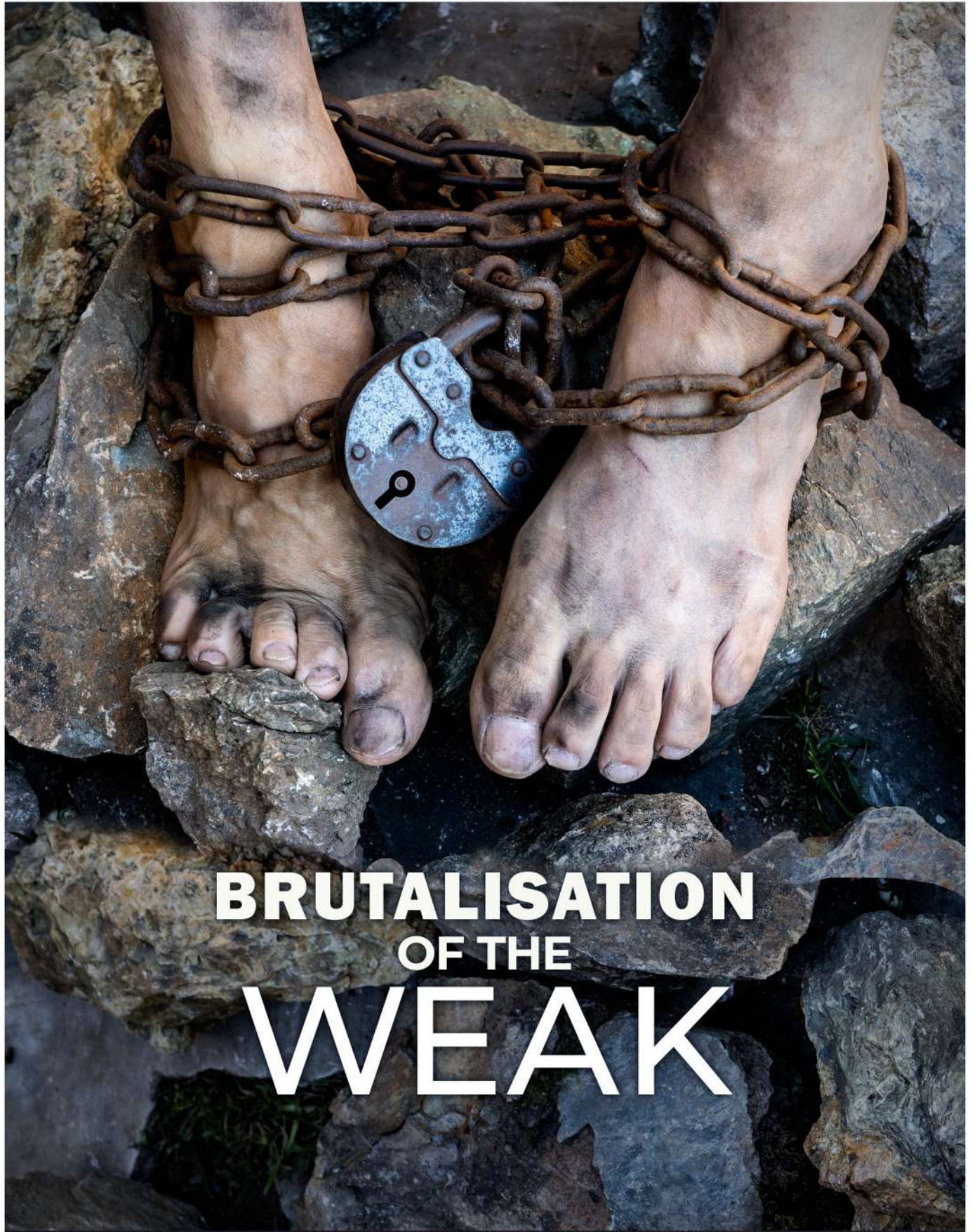
Bimonthly

# Pax Lumina



Vol. 04 | No. 05 | September 2023

A Quest for Peace and Reconciliation



**BRUTALISATION  
OF THE  
WEAK**



# Pax Lumina

A Quest for Peace and Reconciliation

**Those who make peaceful revolution impossible  
will make violent revolution inevitable.**

John F. Kennedy

Vol. 04 | No. 05 | September 2023

# Pax Lumina

A Quest for Peace and Reconciliation

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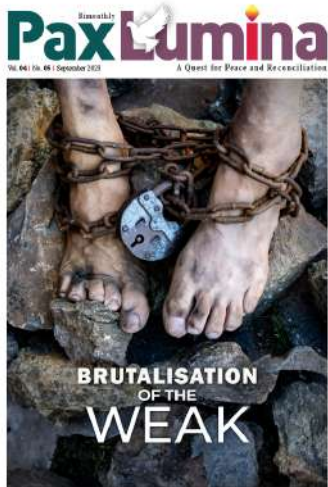
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**Pax Lumina**  
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## FEATURE









## Brutalisation of the Weak

### Editorial

**A**cross the world, it is seen that the weaker participants in almost all situations of life receive treatment that is unjust and exploitative. The term 'weak' is relative, but this tendency of the ruthlessness of the strong towards the weak seems to be universally prevalent among all living beings, except when emotions of love and empathy, or values of fair play and justice come into play.

*In this issue, we examine this pathological bent of mind of the human race, and probably of all living beings. First of all, let us ask the question: Who is the weak?*

*As already mentioned, the meaning of the word is relative to the measure of strength used as the frame of reference. It can be economic, social, psychological, political, historical, or any of the other categorical adjectives that human beings employ to describe themselves. But despite this element of complexity, we know that humans are living sub-human lives because of the complex, and often cruel, environment they are forced to live in, or designed by forces beyond their control.*

*As a first approximation, we can say they are people outside or on the margins of the mainstream of social life, like women and children, people belonging to indigenous tribes and minority groups, the immigrants, the physically (and mentally) weak and unprotected. In short, they are the unseen and the unfelt lives.*

*Pax Lumina has been trying over the past many issues to make the plight of these unseen visible to the rest of society. Change has to come from within. The kernel of goodness, which Pax Lumina believes exists in everyone, has to be moved to action. This is a difficult task. There are no shortcuts or violent quick fixes.*

*The tumour of exploitation, of which the brutalisation of the weak is the metastasized penultimate outcome, is spreading fast and wide. The structure of this malady is extremely complex. The categories of sufferers have multiplied exponentially. The structures relying on worn-out ideologies and beliefs have to be replaced by proactive, non-violent action in good faith.*

*We should have faith in the essential goodness of the human soul, though temporary, contemporary evidence appears contrary. Pax Lumina invites every reader and collaborator to join in this noble venture.*

*Palliative treatments of extreme violence, which result in the brutalisation of the unentitled and unseen through the law-and-order machinery, cannot bring sustainable and lasting peace. Confronting the reality of violence with a view to transforming values, attitudes, and beliefs through a process of empathetic acceptance of the other is what is needed.*

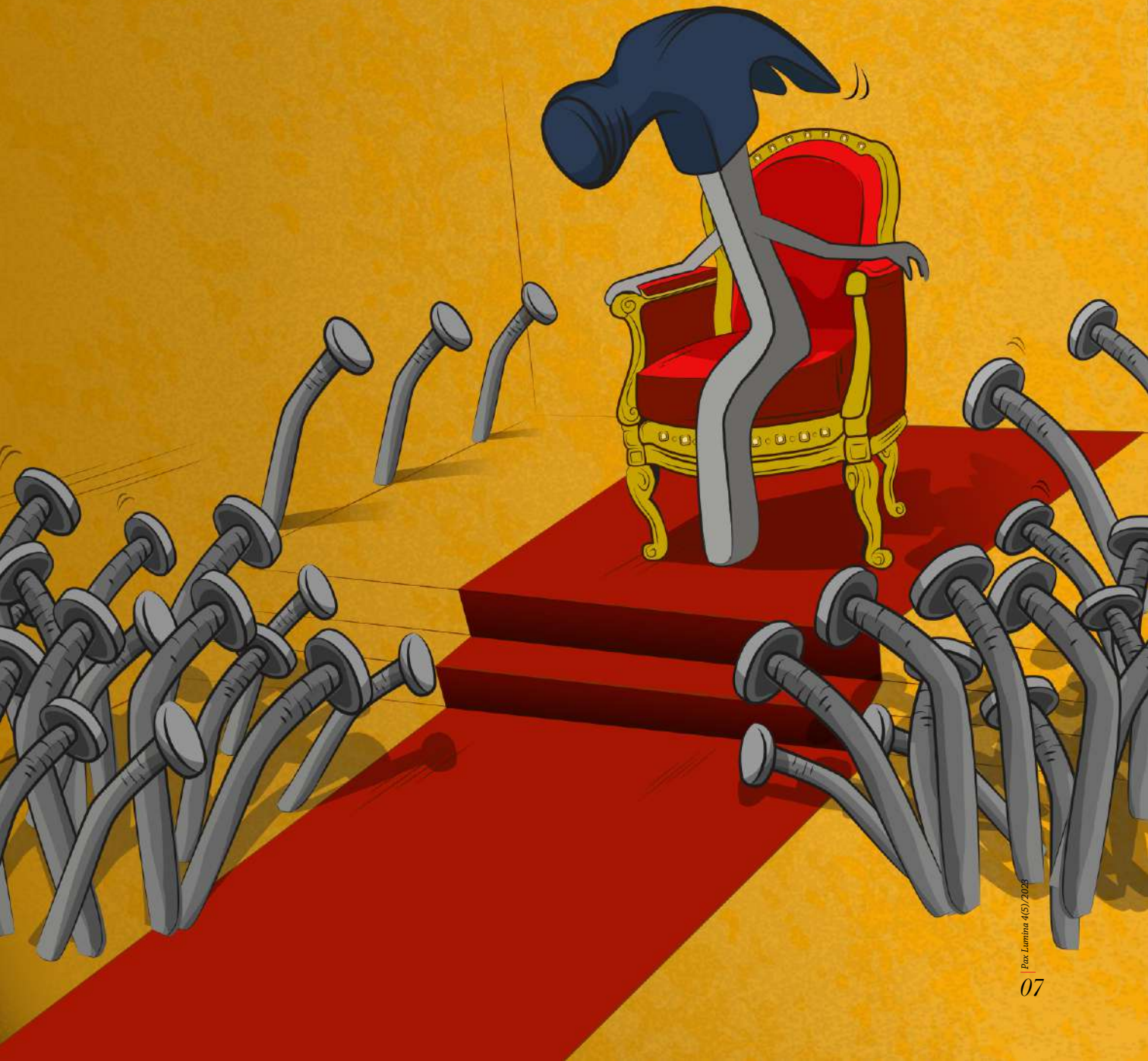
*Jacob Thomas*





**The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression  
and cruelty by the bad people  
but the silence over that by the good people.**

Martin Luther King, Jr.







**Harsh Mander**  
www.harshmander.in

# The **Karwan-e-Mohabbat** in **Two Frontiers** of **Wounded India**

# MANIPUR AND NUH

The Karwan-e-Mohabbat (Caravan of Love) is a people's campaign initiated in 2017 to fight against the rise in communal hatred with an abiding commitment to the values of the Constitution - of equality, freedom, justice and compassion.





**E**ntire villages of both warring communities have been razed to ashes. **Our foremost observation is that the State is led by a government that has done nothing to restore peace and ensure justice against people who kill, rape and destroy homes with unfettered impunity even three months later.**



**I**t was initially crafted as a journey of atonement, solidarity and conscience in response to rising hate crimes and lynching across India. In September 2017, a team of volunteers travelled to eight States, meeting families hit by hate violence, particularly of victims of lynching.

The purpose of this journey in these tumultuous times across different parts of India most severely ravaged by mob lynching was twofold: (a) to respond with solidarity to the everyday fear that has settled in the hearts of Muslims, Dalits and Christians, and (b) to challenge and break the worrying silence of the majority with a call to conscientious action for promoting fraternity and solidarity with the survivors.

\*\*\*

From July 25-28, 2023, the Karwan e Mohabbat undertook a journey to Manipur to attempt to understand the nature and scale of the conflict and to offer support and solidarity to victims of hate violence and to assess relief efforts by the State and the Central Government.

Numerous lives had been lost, villages and homes razed, sexual violence unleashed, livelihoods uprooted and thousands displaced in this humanitarian crisis which has continued for nearly three months up to the time of our visit.

Our travels within Manipur, our visits to the relief camps and our meetings with a wide range of political leaders were made possible because of the generous support of two finest community leaders, human rights defender Babloo Loitongbam and pastor Reverend Jangkhoham Haokip.

On this journey, we travelled in parts of Imphal and Churachandpur (Lamka), on both sides of the virtual border that tears apart Manipur in this frenzy of State-enabled violence. We met affected people in relief camps, and community leaders, women and youth activists.

Entire villages of both warring communities have been razed to ashes. Our foremost observation is that the State is led by a Government that has done nothing to restore peace and ensure justice against people who kill, rape and destroy homes with unfettered impunity even three months later.

The State is absent in its foremost constitutional duty to protect civilians; it is absent from relief camps. Instead, the State Government is often perceived to be taking sides in what is quickly escalating into a full-blown civil war.

The grief, the rage, and above all, the hate on both sides are boundless. The grief in both the Meitei and Kuki camps almost mirrored each other. Where Kukis were in minority settlements in the Imphal valley, they were surrounded by crowds with torches that set their homes on fire.

The same happened to the Meitei people who had lived for generations in the hill villages of the Kuki tribal people. The unbearable grief and rage of both were those neighbours of the 'other' community, with whom they had lived for generations with peace and goodwill, turned overnight into murderous and pitiless enemies.

They each recalled their fearful escapes, often trudging kilometres with children, sick and old people on their backs in the cover of the night. They spoke of pregnant women who gave birth as they escaped, of hungry, frightened babies whose cries they had to stifle. They spoke of people killed, of people who could not survive the arduous journeys. They mourned for daughters abducted and sexually assaulted, and sons who never returned.

But it was their narratives of fury, of concealed and settled hate on both sides that worried us the most. We were struck first by how as people grieve inconsolably about the loss of their homes and loved ones, they completely erased from their memories the acknowledgement that

people of what was now the 'other' community had often suffered almost identical tragedies, even though the magnitude of loss and suffering endured by the Kuki-Zo people was greater.

On both sides, people had been felled by the violence, and at the same time, they had also perpetrated these same atrocities. They refused to carry not just the burdens of grief for what was done to them but also of culpability and guilt for what they had done to one another.

\*\*\*

Another important set of initiatives of the Karwan in recent months was to Nuh, badly hit with its first major communal clash in three decades. We found this homeland of the proud Meo people reduced to a wasteland.

What we encountered as we made our way through this wounded terrain was not just skeletons of burnt vehicles and kilometres of ruins of shanties, street vending kiosks, medical stores, and tall buildings, all felled as though by a fearsome tempest. We found – even more tragically – the wreckage of the spirit of the residents, of their trust in their government, of hope and faith that a better future could ever now be built.





**A**lmost all dairy farmers have today abandoned their principal livelihood of generations, even centuries, of rearing cows. **The cow in just five years has almost completely disappeared from the villages of Nuh. There is no more dramatic example of the power of hate lynching in fostering a community's dread of calamitous proportions.**



Nuh, with 79 percent Muslim residents, borders the glittering corporate, financial, and information technology hub of Gurugram, where half of the Fortune 500 companies in the country are located. Formerly known as Mewat, Nuh was identified by Niti Aayog in 2017 to be the district with the lowest development indices in the entire country. Gurugram, in dramatic contrast, that same year was rated by UNDP to have a very high Human Development Index of .889. The average per capita income of Gurugram residents is the third highest in India.

The Meo Muslims of Nuh have conserved tight bonds of goodwill and shared economic, social and cultural life with their Hindu neighbours for centuries. What began to tear apart these close bonds was the series of lynching and hate killings since 2017.

The first of these lynchings was in 2017, of Meo dairy farmer Pehlu Khan. He was assaulted and killed by a mob that falsely claimed that the cows that he was transporting were intended for butchery. The investigation into the lynching was slipshod, and the prosecution in the courts was lackadaisical. It was no surprise that the



men accused of his killing were acquitted. My colleagues were in court the day this judgement was announced and reported that the accused men triumphantly raised slogans of Jai Shri Ram within the court premises itself as they celebrated their acquittal.

A series of gruesome lynchings of Meo residents of Nuh followed, all on the pretext of cows being transported for slaughter. Dairy farmers and truck drivers were murdered by mobs on the pretext that they were transporting cows for slaughter. This string of lynchings, the increased stringency of cow protection laws, and the close and undisguised partnership of the Haryana police with cow vigilantes incubated intense fear in the Meo community.

Almost all dairy farmers have today abandoned their principal livelihood for generations, even centuries, of rearing cows. The cow in just five years has almost completely disappeared from the villages of Nuh. There is no more dramatic example of the power of hate lynching in fostering a community's dread of calamitous proportions.

What was it that raised temperatures to near boiling point resulting in the communal fires of July 31 and the days that followed?

The fires were ignited first by the killing by brutal pounding of a young man, Waris Khan, and the burning alive in a car of two others, Nasir and Junaid earlier in 2023. The killings of all three were explained by vigilantes as punishment for allegedly transporting cows.

**W**e plan on immediate habeas corpus petitions for the release of children and are trying to bring together some local lawyers to work collectively for bail and legal defence of those incarcerated. **We are also seeking action against public officials for unlawfully targeted demolitions.**



The three killings were by organised vigilantes who carried modern automatic rifles and worked closely with the local police. They would shoot at trucks and thrash their occupants. Their Facebook pages were full of these videos, often streamed live.

The evidence, including videos initially posted by the attackers themselves, pointed unambiguously to Mohit Yadav, popularly known as Monu Manesar, as a primary suspect in the murders.

Despite this, Manesar was not arrested and remains free. The Rajasthan police, which lists him as a prime accused in its chargesheet, had to return empty-handed after they went to Haryana in search of him. The Haryana police say he is absconding. But he continues to surface regularly on social media and has given several interviews to media channels.

As a BBC report observes, it remains a mystery why when the media can locate him effortlessly and he continues to post videos on social media, he cannot be found by the police. Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar claimed in the defence of his administration that there are no criminal charges against Manesar.

Manesar is a law unto himself. Photos showed him in the company of influential political leaders, including the Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Images with police officials show him strolling casually with police officers beside a river, barefoot and with trousers rolled up.

Most Nuh residents we spoke to blamed Manesar for lighting the recent communal conflagration by announcing on social media that he would come to Nuh as part of a religious procession.

Manesar was threatening to come for the Brij Mandal Jalabhishek Yatra, a recently instituted religious journey to the Shiva temple in Nuh with almost exclusive participation by radicalised young men from organisations like the Bajrang Dal.

Each year, they carry weapons including daggers and assault rifles, and shout hate slogans to insult and instigate Muslims. In an earlier year, they had even destroyed a 'mazaar' in Nuh.

Many witnesses confirm that the men crossed the borders of Nuh on July 31, displaying deadly weapons, shouting incendiary hate slogans, and making lewd gestures to passing women.

Most people who we spoke to in Nuh agreed that whatever might have been the provocations, the violent retaliation by a gathering of young men, many of them in their teens, was entirely reprehensible. They flung stones at the participants of the Yatra at Khedla Mod, a few kilometres from the Shiva temple where the participants were to assemble for rituals.

In the firing that followed, four lives were lost, including two home guards. (Many aver that these constables died in an accident during the melee, but this is unconfirmed). Many of the yatra members took refuge in the temple and were escorted to safety hours later by a large police contingent that rushed in for their rescue.

There was then a spate of retaliatory violence which split into neighbouring districts in Haryana. Later, on the same night, Hafiz Saad, a young naib-imam was stabbed to death in a mosque in Gurugram. Many mosques were vandalised, and Muslim shops and homes were set on fire in that district. The flames spread quickly to neighbouring Sohna and Palwal, where mobs attacked several mosques, and stalls run by



Muslims. Calls were made for the boycott and expulsion of Muslim workers. Some village panchayats even called for the expulsion of all Muslim residents. Terrified migrant Muslims began to flee Gurugram.

\*\*\*

The Nuh administration responded in two ways. The first was a massive punitive rounding up of hundreds of Muslim youths. Entire villages around Nuh were emptied of young men, who fled to the hills or out of the State in hiding. Few, if any, members of the Bajrang Dal were arrested.

The second was to unleash a calamitous retaliatory assault on the properties of homes and commercial properties of Muslim residents of Nuh. The targets of the Government bulldozers covered the entire class spectrum: from the small hutments of plastic and cardboard of those who lived by rag-picking or street vending, to the large concrete structures of those who had made it good in life. A total of more than 750 structures were razed. These included 'at least' 50 shops, medical labs and restaurants.

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At the time of writing, we are back again from a journey into Nuh. Entire villages are emptied of young men, who are hiding in the surrounding hills, because the police continue to round up hundreds, including children. The anguish of local people is compounded because the police refuse to investigate and arrest hate mongers like Monu Manesar.

We plan for filing immediate habeas corpus petitions for the release of children and are trying to bring together some local lawyers to work collectively for bail and legal defence of those incarcerated. We are also seeking action against public officials for unlawfully targeted demolitions.

But there are rays of hope. The majority of Hindu residents of Nuh stand firmly with their Meo Muslim neighbours, affirming that they will not allow centuries of close bonds between the two communities to be torn apart. And everyone drew strength from the resolutions passed in numerous widely-attended farmers' panchayats, affirming brotherhood with Muslim residents, and opposing stoutly the hate politics of the Bajrang Dal.



Sadly, there is no similar optimism in Manipur. The humanitarian crisis deteriorated even further and demands urgent and extensive interventions. We prepared a detailed report on this, with extensive recommendations. Here is the link <https://karwanemohabbat.substack.com/p/the-humanitarian-crisis-in-manipur>.

I was speaking to a respected Kuki pastor, who said to me with much sadness that he searches very hard for reasons to be able to hope, and he finds nothing. The killings continue, and the State Government has so completely abandoned the Kuki people that even food and medicines for patients in the Government hospital are being organised by public donations.

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*Harsh Mander is an Indian author, columnist, researcher, teacher, and social activist who initiated the Karwan-e-Mohabbat campaign in solidarity with the victims of communal or religiously motivated violence. He is the Director of the Centre for Equity Studies, a research organisation based in New Delhi.*



Syeda Hameed | Roshmi Goswami  
Jarjum G Ete | Angela Rangad

*Pax Lumina 4(5) / 2023 / 14-19*

# WHO GAINS? WHO LOSES?

INTERIM REFLECTIONS  
BASED ON A RECENT VISIT TO THE  
CONFLICT ZONES IN MANIPUR



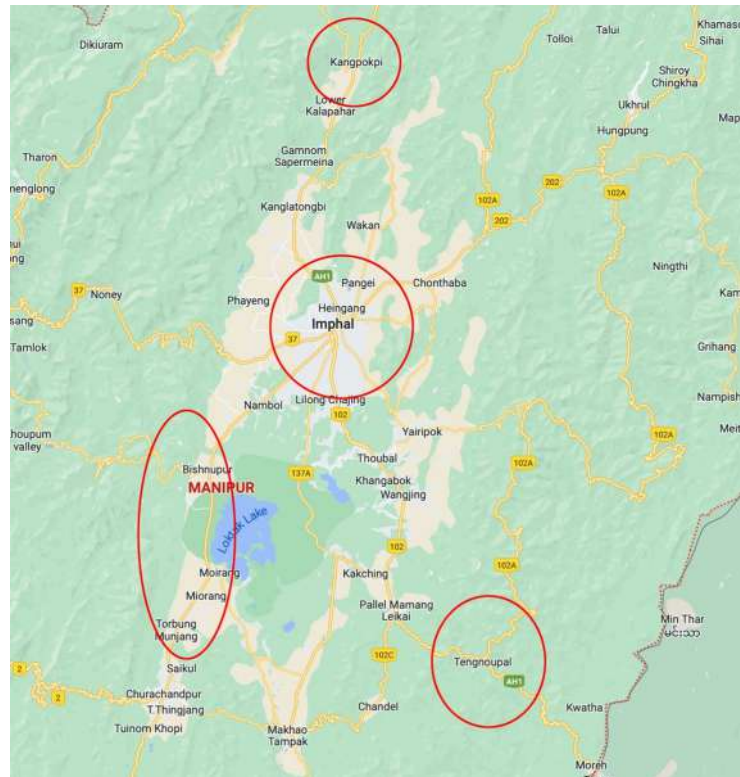
**A**s we travelled through battle-ravaged Manipur the objective of our visit kept evolving, incorporating new perspectives and taking different directions. Eventually, it was a ‘mission of listening’. It was also the first in a series of proposed visits that we are committed to undertake.



**W**e were a team of four women. Three of us are from the North East and one is from Delhi. We have different ethnicities and four different religions - Christian, Hindu, Muslim and the Indigenous tribal faith.

For one of us, the process of connecting with Manipur during this moment of unprecedented crisis had already begun by way of a three-day closed-door meeting in a private enabling feminist space where women from five different communities of Manipur were able to come together to talk.

This visit came about from that closed-door meeting. It was initially planned as a goodwill visit. But as we travelled through battle-ravaged Manipur the objective of our visit kept evolving, incorporating new perspectives and taking different directions. Eventually, it was a ‘mission of listening’. It was also the first in a series of proposed visits that we are committed to undertake.



We landed in Imphal on August 3, 2023. A most contentious day to arrive as it marked three months since the fateful day of May 3. The Kuki community had proposed to hold a mass burial programme for their dead on that day. The proposal was to bury 35 dead including three women lying in the Churachandpur district hospital morgue at S. Boljang village.

The proposed burial was turning out to be a hugely controversial and charged event as the burial grounds were being claimed by both sides – for the Kukis primarily led by the Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum and by the Coordination Committee For Manipur Integrity for the Meiteis.

Mass condolence ceremonies paying tribute to the deceased were conducted at the peace ground at Turbong and in other Kuki areas and were already over by the time we reached our destination.

The burial was, however, deferred for another week by the Manipur High Court, which asked both the Kuki and Meitei communities to maintain the status quo and to arrive at an amicable settlement during the period.

Starting with this flashpoint, the period of our visit was indeed a 'flare up' period which was highly charged, each day bringing heightened aggressive and combat posturing by all actors -- Kuki and Meitei groups, Meira Paibis, Armed volunteers, State and Central security forces and the military.

During our short visit, we interacted and had wide-ranging discussions with a cross-section of people (Meitei, Kuki Zo as well as Naga). We met organisations, women and student leaders, concerned individuals, experts from human rights and environmental movements, peace activists and negotiators, journalists, researchers, filmmakers, writers, theatre personalities, students, relief providers, church workers and others.

We also met survivors of sexual violence, assault and killings, families of disappeared peoples, displaced people and individual voices against the drug cartel. There were several narratives – some more dominant than others and also constantly changing as the situation on the ground changed.

**A**s one person pointed out, the State has been strategically absent. This strategic absence seems to have become the DNA of the ruling regime when they are unable or unwilling to take action either because of incapability or calculations around some electoral gains or losses.

## Anguished Narratives

The most striking expression cutting across both the Kukis and Meitei people we interacted with, regardless of their situation, was their unequivocal assertion that the present regime at the Centre and in the State is clearly and solely responsible for the continued violence and complete anarchy.

People were unanimous in saying that if the violence was controlled and reined in during the first few days of its outburst in May, it would not have accelerated the way it did and they would not be in the present State that they are in.

They also pointed out that many of the sexual violations and killings that happened after May 3-4 could, perhaps, have been avoided. The issue of command responsibility and state accountability rang loud and clear from every quarter and category of people.

Concerns were also raised about undertrials in the jails in Imphal and other Meitei-dominated districts, with Kukis having no access to their loved ones and not even knowing if they are still alive. As one person pointed out, the State has been strategically absent.







This strategic absence seems to have become the DNA of the ruling regime when they are unable or unwilling to take action either because of incapability or calculations around some electoral gains or losses. People simply do not seem to matter.

Another narrative is that the core issue is not even the formation of a separate Kuki administration or clash with militants in different locations, but that it is essentially a geo-political conflict driven by people with a deep-rooted political agenda.

The strategic absence and silence of the Centre seems to lend credibility to this narrative. Along the same narrative, a question that was raised by several people including those who have been directly affected is who gains from allowing this impasse to continue and for the violence to fester.

Is this lingering conflict a cover-up or a diversion from other things that are going on?

Linkages to poppy cultivation, the drug cartel and drug money being used for electioneering were made by several people. People spoke to us at length on the various aspects and operational strategies of the drug mafia and the inextricable nexus with the seat of power and the involvement of the higher-ups of all the communities.

There is immense sadness, grief and regret for the loss of lives and the incidents of barbaric violence. There is also huge rage and anger. It is very early yet and too fraught to talk about peace. For now, the need is to focus on the practical requirements that have arisen and to find ways to build trust through a sense of urgent concerns common to both sides. But most importantly, it is for a cessation of violence and hostilities.

Our visit to the relief camps and our conversations with family members and women support groups of the disappeared and a survivor of sexual violence has provided practical and some telling gendered insights.

We saw the sensitivity and gentleness of a group of young women who have encircled a young survivor of sexual violence and her family moving them out from a public relief camp and helping to set up a home in a beautiful and secure homestead enabling healing and freeing them from constant media and public focus and supporting the family daily.

### **What Should We Be Thinking About?**

Manipur has witnessed several episodes of violent conflicts over the years. But this time, civilisational control and norms seem to have been lost, and lines of control crossed like never before.

**I**n the relief camps, apart from the conditions of the relief camps themselves and the horror that drove people to these camps, the looming question on everyone's face was about their uncertain future and status.



Killings and death are inevitable in a 'war' or the process of 'defence' but what is not acceptable and was strongly condemned across sections were the levels of barbarity. We were able to initiate some conversations on this with the Meiteis but it was only with the more progressive people. More in-depth engagement is required with a wider cross-section of people from both communities including the Meira Paibis.

The systematic clampdown on civil society organisations and dissenting local voices by the BJP government, and the promotion and

patronisation of vigilante groups that toe the political line have obliterated or systematically suppressed an important section of credible voices that could help to maintain a level of checks and balances that keeps together the social fabric of communities.

There is a huge proliferation of arms and ammunition, ranging from light machine and combat guns to mortars and rocket launchers. We were told that the arms were both looted or handed over upon production of 'Aadhar cards' from the police stations and depots!

The issue of illegal migration of people from across the 1700 km long border with Myanmar was repeatedly mentioned as a key trigger of the present conflict by the Meiteis. There were allegations by both sides that border management which lies with the Centre is pathetically run or deliberately mismanaged.

The immediate as well as long-term fallout is the issue of internally displaced people, which needs urgent attention. In the relief camps, apart from the conditions of the relief camps themselves and the horror that drove people to these camps, the looming question on everyone's face was about their uncertain future and status.

There is, undoubtedly, an angle of dwindling land resources and increased population making claims on the limited land and the tension around this.







Roshmi Goswami, Angela Rangad, Syeda Hameed, Jarjum G Ete

The clear-cut agenda of bringing about a communal divide along religious lines by the right-wing Hindutva forces was strongly pointed out by the Kukis with documented evidence. On the Meitei side, opinions are divided on the actual control and power of the communal forces over the Meitei ethos.

Narco Terrorism is a phrase that was bandied around by all and sundry but it is also an issue of great concern. That there is a nexus between the politically powerful, the corporate world, elections and drug cartels is obvious enough but it is an extremely murky and violent world and beyond the reach of common analysis.

Given the observations and information gathered after interactions with those in the camps and the volunteers and community groups, a few suggestions were made which included safety and security audits of the relief camps, adequate food, health and sanitation, educational and psychological support to children in camps, Internet access, legal support, grievance-redressal mechanisms, dignified burial for family members, and counselling and protection to survivors of sexual violence.

## Final Thoughts

People go back from the Manipur battleground with a high level of despondency. Our team experienced the same sadness, depression and sense of futility. We could see the fatigue on the faces of the women on both sides who were out protesting or grappling with emerging

crises daily. The class and economic dimensions of people suffering, and how they will rebuild their lives are also quite apparent.

Without a doubt, it is the poor, primarily the rural poor, who will face the greatest challenge in rebuilding their lives for a long time to come. Yet, at the end of the day, we could not but be affected by the spirit of the people and the continued resistance against all odds.

We heard numerous accounts of people cutting across communities helping one another during the height of the violence. These voices have mostly been drowned in the overwhelming narrative of violence, but need to be picked up and heard. We parted in the hope that we would find more such voices in the period ahead and that we may join hands towards healing and rebuilding.

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*Dr. Syeda Hameed: Mentor - Bharat Jodo Abhiyan, Founder Member, South Asians For Human Rights. Dr. Roshmi Goswami – National Council Member, Bharat Jodo Abhiyan, Co-Chair, South Asians For Human Rights, Co-founder, North East Network. Jarjum G Ete – All India Union of Forest Working Group. Angela Rangad – TUR - Thma U Rangli Juki, KAM Meghalaya.*



■ **INTERVIEW**

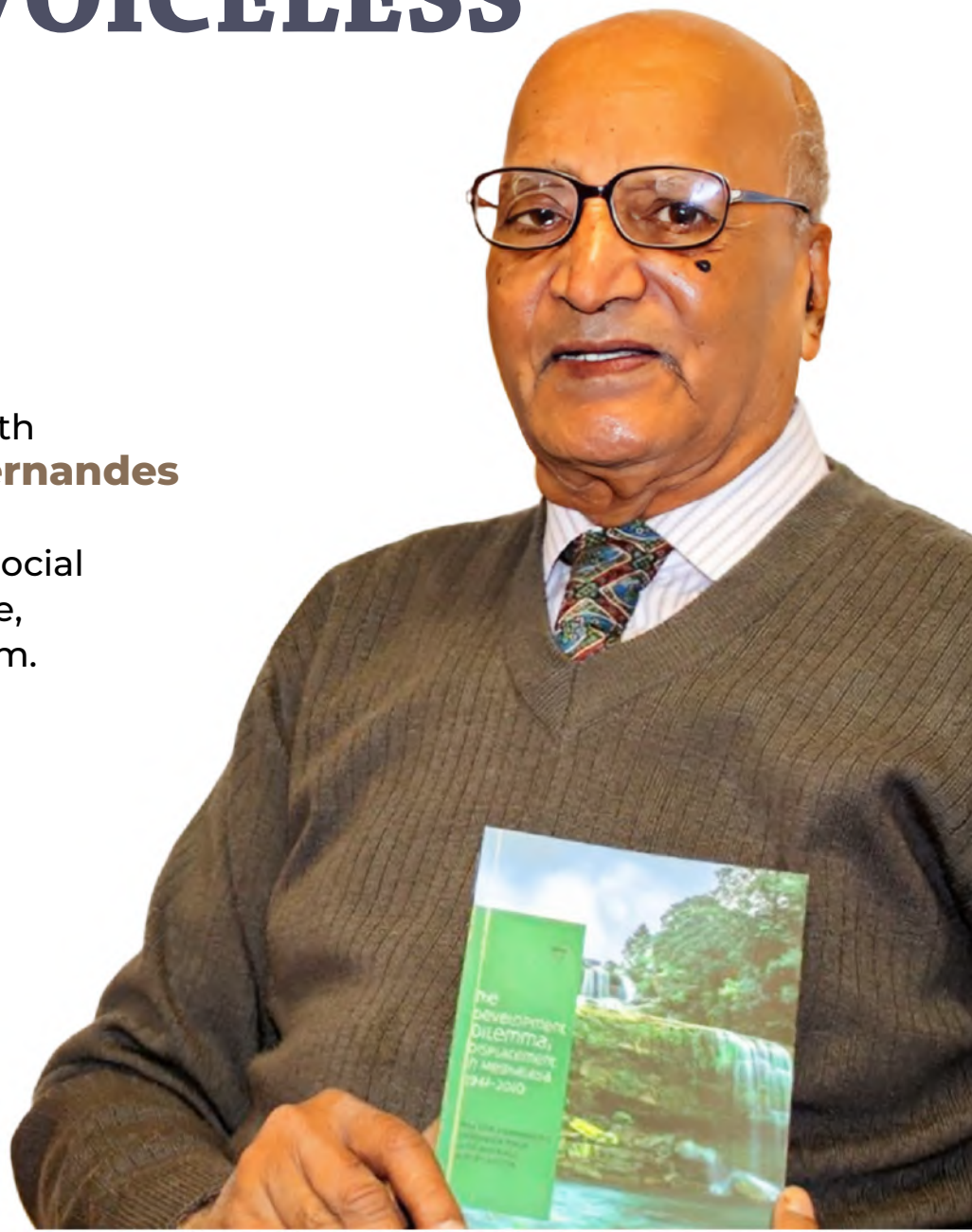
**Dr. Walter Fernandes** / Pax Lumina

*Pax Lumina 4(5) / 2023 / 20-23*

# CIVIL SOCIETY MUST SUPPORT THE VOICELESS



An interview with  
**Dr. Walter Fernandes**  
Director,  
North Eastern Social  
Research Centre,  
Guwahati, Assam.







**C**ivil society groups can play a role. They can facilitate the organisation of the weak not as political party action but as something resulting from awareness-building about their right to a life with dignity.

**?** *In a democratic country like India, how can our Governments (Central, State, and Local) be made effectively accountable to the concerns and demands of the weak, the voiceless, and the suffering?*

Governments understand only political pressure. The weak have to organise themselves for non-violent political action, use of the media and legal action to assert their human, economic and organisational rights whenever possible. Power has to be acquired. It is not granted.

**?** *How can non-governmental civil society groups play an effective role in making our democratic system more effective, especially concerning the weak?*

Civil society groups can play a role. They can facilitate the organisation of the weak not as political party action but as something resulting from an awareness-building about their right to a life with dignity. This was how the apex court defined Article 21 of the Constitution on the right to life.

They can help by making workers aware of their legal rights, of their right to dissent, to a just wage and of their right to a life with dignity. There are civil society persons with skills to write or intervene in the media. They can use these skills to support the voiceless. They can take up legal initiatives, based on the Bhagwati judgement of September 18, 1982, on public interest litigation. This states that people with a voice have a right and a duty to advocate on behalf of the voiceless. Through their actions, civil society groups can build good leadership among the weak and the voiceless.





**R**epression is growing. National security and patriotism are used as fronts for repressing

**the weak.** This situation cannot be changed through violence. Violence is unethical.

**?** *Dissent and protest with respect to the genuine suffering of marginal groups rarely catch media and public attention. Moreover, the state always views these as subversive actions and resorts to extreme repressive measures against the victims and those who support them. How can this situation be changed in a peaceful and non-violent manner?*

There is no easy answer. Repression is growing. National security and patriotism are used as fronts for repressing the weak. This situation cannot be changed through violence. Violence is unethical. People with power have much greater means to suppress the weak. Though difficult and slow, the reaction of the weak has to be based on Mahatma Gandhi's teaching of non-violence. That is, use psychological violence against a physically violent foe.

**?** *The objective of political parties is the attainment of power and winning elections. In such a situation, the marginal and the weak get bypassed. How can this be rectified?*

We cannot run away from the reality that the objective of political parties is to attain power. Pressure has to be built precisely on that political process through the actions mentioned above. One can even join them at times but with the risk of being co-opted.

**?** *There is another source of direct assault on the weak. This comes from powerful corporate interests. In many instances, the state, both at the central and local levels actively supports them. Often this results in the annihilation of the weak and their environment. What are the nonviolent ways of preventing this?*

The State, more often than not, is guided by the corporate sector in the name of development. You cannot wish the state away but can only control the power of the corporate sector over the State through political action.



**?** *How can the media be made more effective in the functioning of our democracy?*

This, despite the constraints of censorship by powerful economic interests, is often antithetical to those of the marginal and the weak as well as the survival needs in a competitive environment.

You have a few media outlets that are more or less friendly towards and exceptionally supportive of the weak. One needs to keep intervening in those outlets that are friendly towards the weak – a few newspapers, and some TV slots. But the focus has to be on social media.

**?** *How can social media be made more responsive? What about the attempts of the governments to regulate the media?*

There are more possibilities in social media than in the official media outlets. There are bound to be attempts by the State to regulate them but one has to find openings within those constraints. There are many such openings.



**It is difficult to speak of the judiciary as one block. They are not a homogeneous group. There are relatively few judges sympathetic to the powerless in the lower judiciary.** Their number increases as one goes up the ladder. But not all judges are sympathetic.

**?** *Is the judiciary in India sufficiently responsive to the needs of the marginalised and the weak?*

There is an opinion that the problems of Manipur started with a judicial intervention.

It is difficult to speak of the judiciary as one block. They are not a homogeneous group. There are relatively few judges sympathetic to the powerless in the lower judiciary. Their number increases as one goes up the ladder. But not all judges are sympathetic. However, one cannot give up on this front. One cannot depend on a single means like organising people. One has to combine awareness-building and people's organisation with supporting them through the media and recourse to the judiciary whenever required.





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# CRISIS IN UKRAINE





**U**kkraine is the centre of the resistance. But it is also at the epicentre of a global battle, a purposeful ‘life and death’ battle. **For freedom. For human dignity. For peace. For Just Peace.**



**T**here are two things we in Ukraine are preoccupied with the most these days: a victory in the war and future reconstruction and transformation of the country.

Let me share with you a few reflections which are shaped by these two major concerns which define our present-day thinking, decision-making, communications, fighting, and prayer.

Ukraine is the centre of the resistance. But it is also at the epicentre of a global battle, a purposeful ‘life and death’ battle. For freedom. For human dignity. For peace. For Just Peace.

I never counted how many of my relatives, friends, colleagues, alumni and people I know – instead of running companies, writing IT code, teaching, developing communities through civil society projects and creating value for others – hold weapons in their hands, and fight.

It is a scary calculation to do, as all those people are under constant attack. With some of them, I am in touch. But the way it happens now – I check when was the last time they have been online. I never call them. I can write them a

message without expecting an answer, but usually, I check their presence online. If they disappear for days, I start to worry.

We Ukrainians knew from the 2014 annexation of Crimea and the invasion of Donbas that democracy is fragile. If you believe in it, you have to be ready to stand up for it, including being ready to give up your life. These are things which are often taken for granted in many countries.

A year and a half into Russia’s invasion, the education system and the university campuses continue to remain under the threat of deadly missile attacks and bombardments by Russian forces. If you go to the website <https://saveschools.in.ua> you can see that 3395 education institutions have suffered bombing and shelling, and 363 have been destroyed completely. About 1,271 objects of cultural infrastructure suffered damage, not including sites of cultural heritage. Almost a third of them (473 objects) are destroyed.

Dozens of missiles (\$3 million for each) hit schools and universities in the South, East, and North. On October 10, last year, during a six-hour air raid, several missiles hit Kyiv National University and the Ministry of Education. Indeed, one graduate who works actively with the digitalisation of the Ukrainian school system and works in the Ministry of Education was luckily not in the office when it was destroyed.

**We in the universities are in a 'generational business'. That means we create the most lasting and cross-generational impact. Perhaps, we create the most important and transformative impact when it comes to human personalities, lives, social and community lives.**



At the beginning of July, a missile hit a residential building in Lviv, around 200 feet from our university. Some windows and doors in the university were damaged. Ten people, who were members of the parish at our campus, died.

These are examples of a terrifying series of strikes aimed at universities since the February 24 invasion. The message conveyed by these strikes is clear. If the universities are frontiers facing the future, there should be no future for Ukraine.

Russia has unsurpassable challenges in confronting its future by constantly readjusting and remodelling its past while being demonstrably frightened and incapable of opening itself up to the future.

Sadly, Russian forces have become a source of deadly destruction and genocidal practices on a massive scale.

Institutionally speaking, the world hears no words of condemnation on the part of Russian universities for the war crimes committed by the military and its political leadership. On the contrary, the Rector's Union has backed the leadership in its decision to invade Ukraine.

So what can we do?

Humanity can stop this if only we all were able to act as humans, as Olleksandra Matviichuk urged recently in her Nobel Prize for Peace. She is the first Ukrainian to receive the Nobel Prize.

We in the universities are in a 'generational business'. That means we create the most lasting and cross-generational impact. Perhaps, we create the most important and transformative impact when it comes to human personalities, lives, social and community lives.

One thing which we can't allow ourselves to fail at is communicating and educating is this:

A free society is a moral achievement. A moral achievement which cannot be achieved once and for all and forever.

It requires everyone's effort and commitment. It's a kind of moral victory which is expected of everyone and all of us at all times.

In essence, this is what is unfolding in Ukraine now.

It's a moral and spiritual combat for freedom and dignity. And this is why our moral victory is of such importance for Ukraine and the world.





**This academic year is crucial for us. We need to survive and help to save our country. Sometimes our students have to go to the shelter three times per day, but they keep working on their growth and development. Together using Service Learning pedagogy we do various educational and social activities to help ourselves to survive.**



We in the university community are in this combat. This is the right time for us to be authentically what we are and who we are in standing for what is true, good and holy. This is the source of our resilience and the hope for the future.

In this time of crisis, we are blessed by the solidarity of many people, institutions, foundations, and associations.

We are more than grateful for this support

The workload of people in our university has tripled.

1. Employ all our faculties and all our people to make certain that world-class education continues 100 percent, despite the brutal, horrid realities of the war. Our students are on campus right now and we do our best to allow them to learn.
2. To provide massive humanitarian aid to tens of thousands of people. Over the first year of the war, the Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU) collected \$6.5 million for humanitarian aid. Most of the funds were spent on medical supplies for hospitals and people in the

combat zone. Approximately 11 percent of the collected money was spent to support internally displaced people, eight percent on protective and safety equipment for our soldiers, and seven percent on emergency food aid.

3. The UCU is already working on future recovery plans of Ukraine into a modern state with human beings in the centre. We want to build Ukraine back better. That's our plan.

Russian terrorism will not stop us.

This academic year is crucial for us. We need to survive and help to save our country. Sometimes our students have to go to the shelter three times per day, but they keep working on their growth and development. Together using Service Learning pedagogy we do various educational and social activities to help ourselves to survive.

The end of war for us will be a happy end that will come with lots of hard work.

There are many concerns. What if, as the situation engages more countries, we give more military weapons to Ukraine, what if. There are many more what-ifs? But I would like you to ask yourself.

What if Ukraine loses?

Everybody in the free world will lose.

If Ukraine loses Russians will do the same as they did in Bucha, Irpin, and Borodyanka, small towns near Kyiv – killing, raping, or stealing. Or in Mariupol – a city about the size of my city Lviv – which was completely blocked and destroyed to show how powerful evil is.

But silence can also be evil.

So we ask you not to be silent.

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# **SOCIETAL MALIGNANCIES CAN BECOME INTRACTABLE PROBLEMS**





**T**he years I volunteered in returnee townships and camps for internally displaced people with a faith-based organisation in Afghanistan have opened my eyes regarding the decomposing impact malignant contexts can have on vulnerable individuals and communities.



**T**hroughout the world, the brutalisation of conflicts between different nation-states, political parties, ethnic and religious communities and between individuals can well be compared to a non-system specific 'deep cancerous corrosion eating into the human psyche', as hinted at in the introduction to this issue of PAX LUMINA. It seems to affect the psyche of those committing atrocities against the vulnerable and the witnesses withholding help or appropriating such incidents for personal purposes, as do some media.

This metaphor applies for various reasons: A malignant tumour starts unnoticed in a weak cell and feeds itself at the expense of its host. If not stopped, it grows unrelentingly to assume dimensions beyond effective therapeutic intervention. Regardless of its invasiveness, any malignant growth will most likely eventually destroy its host either by infiltrating or crushing its neighbouring organs or by creating offshoots.

The medical sciences have come a long way in the fight against cancer. They teach us that by adhering to lifestyles coherent with and conducive to human nature some types of malignancies can largely be avoided. Regular checks and early detection can prevent random tumours from insidiously reaching stages beyond treatment. Depending on the type and stage of a tumour it can be healed or at least be controlled, so as for patients to be able to enjoy an acceptable quality of life. We know that appropriate psycho-social and spiritual support enhances the impact of medical interventions.



Can this metaphor help us identify causes of and approaches to remedy the ever-growing number and extent of violent incidents we observe in certain societies around the world? I think it can. The years I volunteered in returnee townships and camps for internally displaced people with a faith-based organisation in Afghanistan have opened my eyes regarding the decomposing impact malignant contexts can have on vulnerable individuals and communities.

Similarly, my ongoing online-accompaniment of female Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Supervisors (MHPSS), who are supporting boys and girls enrolled in clubs that organise

structured activities, continues to provide enlightening insights into breeding grounds for ruthless anti-social behaviour.

The many therapeutic reports these MHPSS Counsellors submit to me for supervision every week do not contain crimes that make it to the front page of print media and the headlines of electronic news. The events described in them do not stir up outrage among readers because of their absurdity. But they illustrate what may be gentle beginnings of such incidents and have the potential to appear there sooner or later, if unattended to.

The counsellors narrate horrifying nightmares of young children, who witnessed their father commit atrocities against their mother in his rage and despair about not being able to provide for his family. Other children do not dare to go to sleep for fear their depressed mother might end her life if they do not watch her.

During the day, these children are absorbed by worries and incapable of learning. Many show symptoms of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHS). Addicted fathers send their boys and girls out into the streets to find drugs for them in the middle of the night. Children living in such households not only suffer from passive smoking but even more from drug-induced quarrels between their parents, and they feel responsible for mitigating it.

In group activities, students freeze, if called by the leader as previous experience tells them that

they will be humiliated. Unsettling scenes of children aggressively harassing, blackmailing and otherwise victimising and abusing companions to get rid of their frustration, are no exception.

Most of these boys and girls are forced to labour in the pollution of the city traffic, the stinking ditches along the streets or on the smeary grounds of fruit and vegetable markets, where they quickly learn the law of the survival of the fittest.

Young children are encouraged and trained by older boys to steal and compete with each other in terms of their prey. The counselling sessions indicate that verbal abuse, physical injury and psychological suffering are inflicted on a great number of street children and youth. As a consequence, without understanding the ongoing dynamics in detail, some of them feel resigned, others develop deep hatred against the unjust adult world and wonder, how to defend themselves, and how to escape or fight it.

One way of doing this is the formation of gangs to take revenge indiscriminately on those parts of their society they hold accountable for their misery.

Regular checks, prevention and treatment are key strategies in the pursuit of cancer control. The social sciences have identified the formative potential of traumatic experiences. They are known to be able to be reactivated and lead to destructive behaviour in contexts resembling the situation the victims originally faced.





**W**hile civil society groups fight for social justice, schools, faith-based, political and other institutions like the Scouts can support overburdened families by gathering their deprived children in culturally relevant groups, where they experience love, friendship and **solidarity, where they can learn that purposeful living is possible for all regardless of their socio-economic situation and where they can be prevented from getting trapped in vicious circles hostile to a life worth living.**



However, there is also evidence that strategies analogous to those used by medicine can be effective in the prevention of societal malignancies and their exacerbation.

Parents, educators, social workers, health workers, pastoral caregivers must assume their duty of care as we witness how woes undermine the faith, trust and hope of vulnerable children for a better future.

As many societies no longer seem willing or able to protect their weakest members, smaller size communities need to nurture their healthy development, not by offering fast food that fills their stomachs and leaves them hungry, but by substantial and meaningful provisions.

The social sciences have much to offer regarding approaches to strengthening healthy child development and healing psychosocial pathologies in individuals and groups. While civil society groups fight for social justice, schools, faith-based, political and other institutions like the Scouts can support overburdened families by gathering their deprived children in culturally relevant groups, where they experience love, friendship and solidarity, where they can learn that purposeful living is possible for all regardless of their socio-economic situation and where they can be prevented from getting trapped in vicious circles hostile to a life worth living.



Such organisations can not only guide children and youth to become responsible and responsive adults but also educate them to be leaders with high psycho-social integrity and the courage to stand up against wrongdoings themselves. Any approach to the prevention of brutalisation of conflicts should remember that no one chooses to suffer from cancer.

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# INVISIBLE WOUNDS

**THE TRAGIC TALE  
OF INDIA'S NUCLEAR  
RADIATION VICTIMS**





**M**any villagers began to report discomfort including skin irritation and a persistent burning sensation in their eyes and noses. **However, the situation escalated further, with reports of cancer, genetic disorders, and skin diseases afflicting both the human residents and their livestock appearing all over the area. Birth defects soon became surprisingly prevalent in the villages.**



**I**n the quiet corners of India, far from the bustling cityscapes and vibrant bazaars, lies a haunting reality that has long been ignored – the plight of victims of nuclear radiation. From the pernicious consequences of India's nuclear tests to the plight of those working in radioactive material industries and residing in contaminated regions, their stories paint a grim picture of suffering, negligence, and administrative insouciance.

### **The Invisible Fallout: A Legacy of Nuclear Tests**

India's pursuit of nuclear prowess has left an indelible mark on the lives of countless individuals. While nuclear tests have showcased technological prowess, their aftermath has been largely brushed under the rug. The Pokhran-I and Pokhran-II nuclear tests brought international attention to India's nuclear ambitions, but the human cost remains a lesser-known tale.

In the village of Loharki, Rajasthan lies an unsettling example of this legacy. The residents, living in the shadow of the nuclear test site, experienced a sudden surge in cancer cases and birth defects. Local physicians attribute these health issues to the radioactive fallout from the tests. The villagers are nearly unanimous in claiming the sudden jump in cancer incidences and physiological abnormalities from barely any before the test to frequent occurrences in the years following it.

Gulab Singh Rawlot, an erstwhile community leader in Pokhran in Rajasthan, narrates his experience of India's first nuclear test, Operation Smiling Buddha. In the late hours of May 17, 1974, an army battalion informed the village's 2,000 residents that 'air-firing' would take place the following day, potentially causing minor irritations to the eyes and nose. Assurances were given that these effects would subside soon.

As dawn broke, India conducted its inaugural nuclear test, detonating an eight-kiloton thermonuclear device at the Pokhran firing range within the Jaisalmer desert, a mere five kilometres away from Loharki village. Uncertainty loomed in the air, as no one could predict the success of the explosion or whether potentially harmful radiation might be carried by the wind to affect the surrounding areas.

Rawlot recalled that the villages around the test site were viewed as martyrs – any possibility of detriment to their health was treated as mere collateral damage instead of the much greater good.

Not long after the detonation, the crops in Loharki and Khetolai, the two villages nearest to the explosion site, took on an unusual white hue. Within six months, a troubling pattern emerged. Many villagers began to report discomfort including skin irritation and a



persistent burning sensation in their eyes and noses. However, the situation escalated further, with reports of cancer, genetic disorders, and skin diseases afflicting both the human residents and their livestock appearing all over the area. Birth defects soon became surprisingly prevalent in the villages.

### **Scorched Earth: No Salve for the Unhealed**

The prevailing lack of government acknowledgement and medical support has only deepened their anguish. The government has ignored the repeated flagging of issues, presentation of alarming evidence, and pleas to probe into possible long-term health implications raised by physicians and physicists alike.

Although the Department of Atomic Energy conducts periodic checks of background radiation levels in the region, it has abstained from scrutinising radiological pathways such as water, vegetation, and livestock.

In the absence of any epidemiological studies, claims of abnormally high incidence rates of cancer and genetic disorders have been shot down by authorities. The neglect of the victims is undeniably tinted with power dynamics and inequality of justice – the residents of the areas around the nuclear site are poor and illiterate with little to no access to civic amenities.

The villages are small and scattered, deterring the sharing of information and unification for a cause. Many blame symptoms of radiation

poisoning on evil spirits or other superstitions and seek the counsel of witch doctors and quacks.

### **A Critical Chain: Mining and Transport Workers on the Edge**

While nuclear tests capture headlines, the workers involved in the mining and transport of radioactive materials remain hidden figures, toiling away for the nation's nuclear ambitions.

The Jaduguda Uranium Mine in Jharkhand is a stark illustration of this dark side. Workers in the mine, often labouring in hazardous conditions, are exposed to high levels of radiation. Cases of cancers, skeletal deformities, and other health issues are alarmingly common among these workers. Workers often work on very low pay without being provided with any protective gear. Many handle radioactive material with their bare hands. Trucks and dumpers often carry ore and wastes uncovered, exposed to the elements, contaminating the areas that they pass through.

In 2019, the plight of these workers came to the forefront when a study revealed that they were exposed to radiation levels far beyond permissible limits. Despite this damning evidence, administrative negligence continues to expose workers to unnecessary risks. The disregard for their safety reflects a larger pattern of indifference toward those who fuel the nuclear industry.



In the remote villages near uranium mining sites, inhabitants unknowingly live amid radioactive contamination. Residents suffer from ailments that can be traced back to radiation exposure, yet their cries for help often go unanswered. **Administrative authorities have been slow to address the issue, demonstrating an alarming disregard for the well-being of these communities.**

### **Unseen Perils: Residing in Radioactive Mineral Mining Areas**

In the remote villages near uranium mining sites, inhabitants unknowingly live amid radioactive contamination. The case of Jaduguda is once again illustrative. Residents suffer from ailments that can be traced back to radiation exposure, yet their cries for help often go unanswered. Administrative authorities have been slow to address the issue, demonstrating an alarming disregard for the well-being of these communities.

In 2008, the Jharkhandi Organisation Against Radiation conducted an assessment of water samples taken from various locations around Jaduguda. The results were alarming, as they revealed that a staggering 70 percent of the samples contained elevated levels of heavy metals such as lead and mercury.

Over the decades, the remote, hilly, thickly forested region of Jaduguda has emerged as the epicentre of India's uranium mining sector, supplying a significant portion of the uranium required for both the nation's nuclear weapons program and its nuclear power industry. However, the insidious consequences of this industry's operations are far-reaching.

The water contained within the tailing ponds not only seeps into the surrounding soil, leading to groundwater contamination, but also converges with the Gara River, a crucial tributary of the Subarnarekha River. The water

from these sources is a vital resource for both human and animal populations in the region. Unfortunately, these waters also harbour radon gas, which, when inhaled, poses a grave threat to health.

Four abandoned tailing ponds – water bodies dug up to hold waste slurry (having trace of radioactivity) from the mines – lie dangerously close to the villages. These sites have remained unmanned for a significant duration.

It is only in recent times that a signboard, erected by the Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL), the government enterprise running the mine, has emerged near these ponds, cautioning people, many of whom are illiterate, to keep a distance from the premises. This belated effort to warn the public underscores administrative neglect and apathy.

The foundation of the initial tailings pond is in a fragile state, and despite years having passed, efforts to increase its height and stability have stagnated. This persistent lack of progress highlights the vulnerability of the infrastructure in place and the pressing need for comprehensive and urgent action.

### **A Failed Reaction: A Systemic Crisis of Denial, Negligence, and Apathy**

The stories of nuclear radiation victims in India underscore a systemic crisis marked by ignorance and indifference. Administrative authorities often downplay the risks associated with radiation exposure, perpetuating a culture of misinformation.

The lack of proper healthcare facilities and support for affected individuals further exacerbates their suffering, hindering both faithfully-precise diagnosis and targeted cure, compounding the problem several fold.

Many cancer victims are misdiagnosed unless they are taken away to major hospitals for testing, which is quite rare. Local administrative officers feel little incentive, obligation, or compulsion to undertake any systematic inquiry into the issue given its rarity and lack of precedent for redressal.

Instances of whistleblowers attempting to shed light on these issues have been met with harassment and silencing. In 2010, Dr. Surendra Gadekar, an anti-nuclear activist, faced threats and intimidation for voicing concerns about radiation hazards in Jaduguda. His experience highlights the lengths to which authorities could go to suppress dissenting voices.

Local and State authorities have consistently responded with denial to inquiries, petitions, litigations, and appeals by activists and the media. This is despite the abnormally high and sustained prevalence of birth defects and deformities in the population and the persistence of 'mysterious medical conditions' in areas surrounding the mines, and goes contrary to consistent observations by residents, NGOs, individual activists, and experts including locally employed and visiting doctors and scientists.

Studies that demonstrate a fairly consistent increase in incidences of mystery ailments and congenital conditions along increasing proximity to mining sites and transport routes would lend legitimacy to the attribution.

Despite UCIL's dereliction, one of the biggest worries for locals is its anticipated departure from Jaduguda following the closure of the mine shortly, given that the known uranium reserves of the mine are almost depleted. This will jeopardise the continuation of even the existing rudimentary safeguard measures that are in place to prevent the accumulated radioactive wastes from affecting them.

Even with their steadfast denial, the State and Central Government authorities must conduct investigations to look into the problem at the very least to allay the pervasive fears of locals and put such widespread suspicions to rest.

### **Criticality Containment: The Urgent Need for Change**

Addressing the plight of nuclear radiation victims requires a multifaceted approach. First, acknowledging the magnitude of the problem is crucial. The government must take responsibility for the consequences of nuclear tests, provide medical assistance to the affected individuals, and ensure that workers in the nuclear sector are protected from unnecessary radiation exposure.





**A**ddressing the plight of nuclear radiation victims requires a multifaceted approach. First, acknowledging the magnitude of the problem is crucial. **The government must take responsibility for the consequences of nuclear tests, provide medical assistance to affected individuals, and ensure that workers in the nuclear sector are protected from unnecessary radiation exposure.**



Transparent and independent assessments of radiation levels in various biotic and abiotic elements of affected areas are necessary to ascertain the extent of contamination and its health impacts. Additionally, stringent regulations must be implemented to ensure the safety of workers and residents in radioactive mineral mining regions.

### **Unravelling the Unseen through the Unheard**

The tales of victims affected by nuclear radiation reveal a dark underbelly of the nation's pursuit of nuclear power and weaponry. From the residents living in the shadows of test sites to the workers toiling in hazardous conditions, the human cost cannot be ignored any longer.

Given that most residents in the mine's vicinity belong to indigenous communities, the issue reeks of discrimination and marginalisation, part of a broader pattern of apathy, exploitation, economic externalisation, and collateral damage which is typical of most large industrial facilities in India, and particularly pronounced in tribal areas.

A historic lack of socioeconomic privileges and a history of repeated displacement, exploitation, and oppression exacerbate their predicament. Lack of educational and healthcare amenities creates a vicious cycle that renders them unable to sense, understand, recuperate from, and raise their voice against their debilitation.

It is high time for the Central, State, and Local Governments to take cognisance of the crisis and take concrete and expedited steps to upgrade and equip local hospitals with general and specialist infrastructure and facilities.

Timely and accurate diagnosis and targeted treatment for individuals as well as sincere, unbiased, long-term public health studies are the need of the hour. Administrative authorities at all levels need to exercise their conscience, diligence, and discretion to tackle the crisis, beginning with acknowledging it.

It is high time that India acknowledged the suffering of these accidental martyrs, provided them with necessary medical and psychological support, and took decisive steps to prevent further harm. Only through a comprehensive approach, marked by accountability, empathy, and reform, can the nation hope to undo the damage caused by years of administrative negligence, apathy, and denial.

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# **SOCIO-LEGAL ANALYSIS OF WITCHCRAFT ACCUSATIONS**

## **Vulnerability and Injustice Towards Elderly Women in Malawi**





**The inquiry into the existence of witchcraft, while not within the scope of this article, underscored its enduring presence as a belief system within diverse global cultures, with adherents spanning a broad spectrum of societal backgrounds.**



**I**n a world scarred by the horrors of war crimes and various acts of violence that resulted in numerous crimes against humanity, our collective attention often gravitated towards the most glaring atrocities. However, it was equally important to shine a light on the less conspicuous but no more distressing instances, such as the mistreatment of vulnerable individuals like the elderly in our societies.

In early 2023, a distressing incident in northern Malawi gained the attention on social media. A shocking video depicted 77-year-old Christina Mphande and her sister digging a grave while a restless crowd surrounded them. Tragically, someone from the crowd callously kicked Christina, causing her to fall into the grave they were digging. This heart-wrenching event stemmed from the untimely death of a young woman, a relative of the elderly sisters.

In their close-knit village, suspicion and paranoia grew, leading to accusations of witchcraft against Christina and her sister, who were blamed for the death of the young woman. As an act of vengeance, the enraged villagers forced the sisters to bury the deceased, a task they were ill-prepared for. This punishment included physical assaults, confiscation of their belongings, including livestock, and their ruthless banishment from the community. <sup>[i]</sup>

This case study is a stark and unsettling reflection of the plight faced by older individuals in Malawi. It was, unfortunately, not an isolated

occurrence. In the past two years, 28 elderly women lost their lives, while an additional 146 were subjected to harassment, all due to a variety of reasons, but predominantly on accusations of witchcraft.

These incidents have plagued not only the African countries but even beyond. According to the Help Age International survey that was conducted in African countries, South Africa, Kenya, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, India, Tanzania, Senegal and Malawi, men, women and children were accused of witchcraft but it was usually the most vulnerable elderly women, autistic children, albinos and the mentally ill who were targeted. <sup>[ii]</sup>

Witchcraft accusations bring forth a complex web of human rights violations with profound consequences for the victims involved. From a human rights standpoint, these accusations infringed upon a spectrum of fundamental rights, including the right to life, liberty, and security, the right to property, and, in certain instances, the prohibition against torture.

The ramifications of these accusations extend beyond the physical realm, encompassing social and economic marginalisation, which were also violations of human rights. Just like Christina, who miraculously survived her ordeal, her life has been forever altered. She now resides far from her ancestral home but within the same district, carrying both mental and physical scars as indelible reminders of the traumatic experience. Notably, a visible gap in her gums served as a constant testament to the brutality she endured.



The inquiry into the existence of witchcraft, while not within the scope of this article, underscored its enduring presence as a belief system within diverse global cultures, with adherents spanning a broad spectrum of societal backgrounds.

In the Malawian context, the concept of witchcraft manifested with dual connotations, characterised by practices perceived as benevolent or malevolent. Within the realm of benevolent witchcraft, individuals such as traditional healers, fortune tellers, and those who protect the health of others and properties, played pivotal roles. They were held in high esteem within their communities, garnering respect and honour for their positive contributions to society.

In stark contrast, malevolent witchcraft practitioners evoked widespread disdain and apprehension due to their purported involvement in nefarious activities motivated by jealousy and various other factors.

These malevolent witches were believed to inflict misfortune, illness, and even death upon their victims. Consequently, the allegations of witchcraft in Malawi were predominantly directed at those perceived as malevolent practitioners, as their actions were deemed inhumane, infringing upon the basic human rights of others. Accusers lived in constant fear of potential violations of their rights by these malevolent witches.

Nevertheless, the practice of witchcraft was regulated by legal provisions in many African countries. In Malawi, these regulations were

manifested through a legal framework referred to as the Witchcraft Act.

Enshrined within the Malawi Constitution, the Act explicitly prohibited the accusation of individuals as witches or the practice of witchcraft. Notably, its scope was extended beyond the mere criminalisation of practising witchcraft; it also deemed it unlawful to accuse someone of witchcraft or to identify oneself as a witch.

While this Act did not expressly classify witchcraft itself as a criminal offence, it effectively rendered the practice illegal. A parallel legal approach could be observed in several other countries, including Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

However, contrary to this Constitutional Act, the Customary law in Malawi had long recognised the presence of witchcraft, acknowledging its benevolent and malevolent aspects. Malawians were acutely aware of the existence of witchcraft practices, spanning a spectrum from beneficial to harmful.

In many instances, local chiefs and religious leaders had assumed significant roles in mediating disputes related to witchcraft, often helping those accused of engaging in such practices.<sup>[iii]</sup> Consequently, Malawi grapples with a complex issue, characterised by a dichotomy between belief in witchcraft and the scarcity of legal evidence, leading to an imbalance between the constitutional and customary legal frameworks.

This sluggish pace of justice served as an advantage to the perpetrators, as the prosecution required support from a constitutional framework that,



**T**o effectively combat this victimisation, there was a need to embark on a journey of awareness, comprehensive education, and passionate advocacy.

**It was important to emphasise that the concern was not centred on the belief in witchcraft, but rather on the devastating repercussions it inflicted upon the victims. This was a reminder of our collective failure to shield this vulnerable demographic.**



within the Malawian context, did not explicitly acknowledge the existence of witchcraft.

To effectively combat this victimisation, there was a need to embark on a journey of awareness, comprehensive education, and passionate advocacy. It was important to emphasise that the concern was not centred on the belief in witchcraft, but rather on the devastating repercussions it inflicted upon the victims. This was a reminder of our collective failure to shield this vulnerable demographic. It called for us to acknowledge our shared responsibility and express profound regret for the unjustifiable anger and cruelty they endure.

In addressing these challenges head-on, there was an opportunity not only to rectify historical injustices but also to shape a more inclusive, compassionate, and equitable future for all.

Since victimisation of the elderly women was also linked to their vulnerability due to physical, economic and societal status, it was essential to work in collaboration with traditional and religious institutions to reinterpret beliefs that contributed to witchcraft accusations, dispelled myths and promoted a deeper understanding of the rights and dignity of elderly women.

Community engagement was vital for addressing the underlying fears and suspicions driving these accusations, fostering open dialogue, and prioritising reconciliation over violence.

Additionally, it was paramount that we bolstered anti-witchcraft laws to enforce stricter penalties for baseless accusations.

Therefore, unless we embrace these multifaceted approaches, then only can we embark on a collective journey towards a more just and compassionate society, one that safeguards the well-being and dignity of elderly women while dispelling harmful beliefs and fostering unity within our communities.

[i] Charles Mpaka, Belief in Witchcraft Costing Lives of Elderly Women in Malawi. Inter Press Service: March 17 2023. Available at [https://www.globalissues.org/news/2023/03/17/33340#:~:text=BLANTYRE%2C%20Mar%2017%20\(IPS\),Mzimba%20district%20in%20northern%20Malawi](https://www.globalissues.org/news/2023/03/17/33340#:~:text=BLANTYRE%2C%20Mar%2017%20(IPS),Mzimba%20district%20in%20northern%20Malawi).

[ii] Introduction – purpose of study (helpage.org)

[iii] Edwin Nyirongo. When Elderly People Die on Witchcraft Accusation. The Nation Newspaper. March 16, 2023. Available at <https://mwnation.com/when-elderly-people-die-on-witchcraft-accusation/>

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# The Exploitation of Victims in Conflicts

**The Unmasking of the Horrors  
of Conflict from a Psychological  
and Philosophical Perspective**





**T**he sexual, physical and emotional exploitation of victims also raises questions about collective responsibility and complicity. **Silence and inaction by those in positions of authority reflect upon and implicate society when victims grapple with basic questions about the nature of humanity within it.**



**“**Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect”

– author Mark Twain

A recent policy statement from the United Nations states: ‘Exploitation thrives in the shadows of power, preying on the vulnerabilities of the victims who deserve not only our empathy but also our unwavering commitment to justice.’

In the history of the tangled web of human conflict, one of the most distressing facets is exploiting victims as instruments of manipulation and control. This sinister tactic extends beyond physical brutality as it sheds light on the darkest aspects of human behaviour.

This issue reveals the extent to which power dynamics, ethical considerations and the human psyche can intersect in profoundly disturbing ways. The current goings-on in the Indian State of Manipur is a poignant template, exemplifying the horrors inflicted when victims are coerced into roles that amplify the tumult of conflict.

In all intra-societal conflict situations, power dynamics plays a central role. Those in positions of power exploit vulnerable individuals and groups, perpetuating the cycles of victimisation.

The long-standing conflicts deteriorate a society to such an extent that individuals and groups become dehumanised, and the ‘othering’ of those unlike themselves allows imaginary permission to perpetrators to justify their actions. Victims are stripped of their humanity, making it easier for perpetrators to exploit them. The inexcusable exploitation of victims as instruments in conflicts happens primarily at a psychological level when there is a breakdown of the essence of compassion.

Victims are subjected to manipulation, coercion, and forced allegiances, leading to a psychological concept called ‘learned helplessness.’ The famed psychologist Philip Zimbardo aptly describes it as ‘the kind of suffering that leads to disorientation, depersonalisation and dehumanisation’, which, at the same time, allows sections of the wider society to turn a blind eye to the inhuman sufferings even as the horror show of moral disintegration and its rationalisation continue.

Far too often, conflict-related exploitation involves the erosion of moral boundaries. This moral disintegration reveals the unsettling truth that people can justify heinous acts when placed in extreme circumstances. The resulting psychological trauma can have long-standing effects, shaping the victims’ identities and worldviews.

Endurance of such suffering presents a challenge to the rebuilding of shattered lives. At the same time, it desensitises the perpetrators, thus allowing them to repeat and perpetuate the horrors without guilt.

The sexual, physical and emotional exploitation of victims also raises questions about collective responsibility and complicity. Silence and inaction by those in positions of authority reflect upon and implicate society when victims grapple with basic questions about the nature of humanity within it.

The value of life itself and the meaning of suffering also become important topics to ponder. This leads to severe communal existential angst and moral ambiguity, from which emerges a slow realisation that these questions may never have easy answers.

Perverse as it may sound, there are often those who have something to gain from the mayhem. Such gains are achieved through control of public perception through manipulating the media. The reality of exploitation of the victims can become distorted and hidden from the public eye. Such manipulations result in the unsettling possibility that what we perceive as truth might be carefully curated falsehoods.

With the erosion of moral boundaries, perpetrators begin to cloak their actions through philosophical justifications and twisted notions that blur the

**T**he neurobiology of cruelty sheds light on the neural mechanisms that drive exploitation.

Studies indicate that under certain conditions, **the brain's reward system can be activated by inflicting pain on others, releasing the neurotransmitter dopamine that reinforces aggressive behaviour.**

boundaries between right and wrong. When the rationalisation of 'the end justifies the means' rears its head, the pursuit of a perceived greater good becomes an alibi for the atrocities.

Philosopher Hannah Arendt's concept of the 'banality of evil' highlights how ordinary people can be swayed by ideology to commit heinous acts that erode moral boundaries. Manipur is a





chilling illustration, as philosophical justifications like nationalism or political ideals legitimise the exploitation of victims, rendering a grim portrait of societal moral degradation.

Social conflicts often heighten the psychology of hatred, raising the spectre of the 'other', where the 'other' is demonised. This phenomenon is exacerbated by the dynamics of group identity, as emphasised by psychologist Henri Tajfel's social identity theory.

Ethnic divisions and historical grievances foster deep-seated animosity when the 'other' becomes a receptacle for collective anger, enabling the perpetration of atrocities under the guise of ideological righteousness. Behind the scenes, conflicts are often orchestrated by individuals with ulterior motives – political gain, economic interests or power consolidation. The strategic engineering of conflict benefits those who exploit victims as pawns, further deepening the cycle of violence and conflicts are often sustained through denial.

The neurobiology of cruelty sheds light on the neural mechanisms that drive exploitation. Studies indicate that under certain conditions, the brain's reward system can be activated by inflicting pain on others, releasing the neurotransmitter dopamine that reinforces aggressive behaviour.

**The lessons for humanity come through unmasking the psychological and philosophical horrors of victim exploitation, which should serve as a stark reminder of the potential for a dark, ugly underbelly and darkness within humanity.**



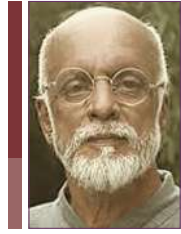
In conflict situations, perpetrators of violence and exploitation might derive pleasure from victimising others, feeding into a vicious cycle of cruelty fuelled by biochemical responses. Neuroscientist Jean Decety said, "Empathy for social exclusion is linked to the brain's pain matrix."

The lessons for humanity come through unmasking the psychological and philosophical horrors of victim exploitation, which should serve as a stark reminder of the potential for a dark, ugly underbelly and darkness within humanity. It also underscores the need for continued vigilance and the importance of fostering empathy, understanding and ethical considerations in all aspects of society.

It also requires acknowledging the complexities of human behaviour by promoting accountability and striving for a world in which exploitation and victimisation are vehemently rejected. As philosopher Edmund Burke cautioned, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing".

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# **HINDUTVA'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE ABUSE AND HUMILIATION OF KUKI WOMEN IN MANIPUR**





**T**he commodification of the female body has become a thriving industry. Even under ordinary circumstances, it is a challenge for women to move about without enduring the constant male gaze. **Navigating womanhood in a male-dominated world necessitates exceptional skills to get past the vulgarity of male behaviour.**



**W**e all inhabit, from a global perspective, patriarchal societies. The value systems are skewed in favour of male members. In India, women are often perceived either as mothers or deities; if not, they are invariably objectified for male sexual gratification.

The commodification of the female body has become a thriving industry. Even under ordinary circumstances, it is a challenge for women to move about without enduring the constant male gaze. Navigating womanhood in a male-dominated world necessitates exceptional skills to get past the vulgarity of male behaviour.

Considering these circumstances, one can only fathom the dire situation women face when law and order collapse entirely. There is no need to seek evidence of the unspeakable brutality women frequently undergo.

I will concentrate on a recent incident that transpired a few months ago in Manipur. It's crucial to acknowledge that I am not disregarding the historical occurrences of violence against

women on a global scale, be it during colonial times or the agony endured by African slaves in America. There are innumerable instances that we can highlight if we delve into the topic — consider events like the aftermath of Indira Gandhi's assassination in 1984 or the 2002 Gujarat pogrom.

Nevertheless, the incidents that unfolded in Manipur represent a new chapter in the annals of the torture and degradation of women. In Europe, for centuries, devout believers resorted to burning women alive at the stake, driven by superstitious notions of exorcising imagined Satanic influences.

Contrastingly, in Manipur, women were subjected to rape and the harrowing act of being paraded naked. What distinguishes this ordeal is that more than a hundred people bore witness, not out of superstitious beliefs but with prurient curiosity. No one stood appalled or made crosses or appealed to God for help.

Instead, they laughed and even participated by groping the bodies of the distraught, anguished women. Onlookers not only endorsed those who were committing such heinous acts but also actively encouraged the perpetrators while they inflicted multiple acts of rape.

What actions were taken by the Government of Manipur and the police in response?



**T**his deliberate silence on the part of the government is likely because the victims of this utterly disgraceful and inhuman act were non-Hindus. **The government identifies itself as a proponent of Hindutva ideology. According to this ideology upheld by the present Narendra Modi government, Christians in India, like Muslims, are expected to be treated differently from those who view India as their sacred land.**



At least until news of this horrifying crime gained widespread attention, both the government and the police failed to take any action. Surprisingly, the Government of India and its Prime Minister remained silent as well.

This deliberate silence on the part of the government is likely because the victims of this utterly disgraceful and inhuman act were non-Hindus. The government identifies itself as a proponent of Hindutva ideology. According to this ideology upheld by the present Narendra Modi government, Christians in India, like Muslims, are expected to be treated differently from those who view India as their sacred land.

As India is not considered the holy land of the Christian minority in Manipur, the suffering and humiliation of the victims in this appalling incident are perceived to hold a distinct nature.

Under the leadership of the Narendra Modi Government, India has become an unsafe place for its Abrahamic minorities. Driven by



the ideology of Hindutva, this government has established an environment where these minorities cannot anticipate equal political standing with those who view India as their sacred land — despite the constitutional assurance of equal rights for all citizens.

My assertion is that, as long as the Hindutva ideology persists as the driving force behind the government's actions, minority groups of Abrahamic origin will continue to face marginalisation and unethical treatment, akin to the distressing treatment endured by the three women in the Manipur incident.

What options are available to a marginalised minority within the framework of India's Government guided by the Hindutva ideology?

Their recourse lies in cultivating both optimism and strategic action to challenge their predicament, primarily through the electoral process. However, this path is arduous due to the government's skilled utilisation of tactics such as deceit and violence.

Consequently, the Abrahamic minority must adeptly devise methods, aligning with Gandhian principles of Satya (truth) and Ahimsa (non-violence), to effectively counter these forces. The practice of Satya and Ahimsa not only nurtures inner strength but also empowers individuals to confront a governing body inclined towards brutality.



**N**otably, Veer Savarkar, the author of Hindutva, vigorously advocated for a subcontinental history grounded in Puranic narratives. **This particular historical perspective is the one that the Modi government endeavours to propagate through educational institutions, aiming to replace the existing history built upon archaeological, epigraphical, and archival sources.**



It is imperative to remember that a mere 37.7 percent of the population aligns with the Hindutva ideology, leaving room for the larger fraction of India's populace to potentially rally against it. Thus, the time has come to engender a Satyagraha movement, compelling the ruling party and its affiliates to relinquish their predilection for deceit and violence. In essence, these groups must be coerced, peacefully, into relinquishing their foundational ideology of Hindutva.



The Muslim minority in India, in particular, should aspire to cultivate patience and wholeheartedly embrace non-violence. Reflecting on global instances such as the United States' inability to subdue Vietnam and Russia's failure to suppress Ukraine, this underscores the efficacy of non-violence as a strategic approach. Utilising non-violence as a primary strategy holds the potential to draw international censure toward Hindutva, thereby exposing its proponents as bullies on a global stage.

The Hindutva ideology emerged from a fusion of anger and self-pity. Gandhi's manifesto, 'Hind Swaraj', can indeed be seen, at least partially, as a counter-response to this very sentiment. Entities such as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha, deeply affected by this sense of self-pity, made multiple attempts to reconstruct the history of the Indian subcontinent by drawing upon the Puranas as historical sources.

Notably, Savarkar, the author of Hindutva, vigorously advocated for a subcontinental history grounded in Puranic narratives. This particular historical perspective is the one that the Modi government endeavours to propagate through educational institutions, aiming to replace the existing history built upon archaeological, epigraphical, and archival sources.

This revised historical narrative portrays Muslims and Christians as adversaries to the 'illustrious' Hindu civilisation. The far-reaching ramifications of embracing such a distorted historical account are evident — the distortion contributed to the portrayal of Gandhi as an enemy of Hindus, culminating tragically in his assassination.

Tragically, this same distorted history was manipulated to incite the Hindu population of Manipur to commit acts of rape, and parade naked Christian Kuki women through the streets. This grim incident serves as a stark illustration of the pernicious influence of such a skewed perspective.

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# THE GOVERNMENT HAS FAILED TO PREVENT VIOLENCE





**W**hen interests clash, we as 'homo sapiens,' as we have chosen to call ourselves, endowed with free will should be able to find a way to resolve, **or rather dissolve the clash through dialogue either between the two parties directly or under the auspices of a government or an NGO.**



**I**t is painfully clear that the incidence of violence among human beings has rapidly increased in India and across the world, whether it is the deplorable and unstoppable gun violence in the United States, about which the oldest democracy is unable or unwilling to act, or the atrocities in Manipur, that the largest democracy has till now failed to address.

Let us confine our thoughts to India.

As we contemplate the proliferating violence in India the questions uppermost in our minds are:

- 1) Why is there so much violence?
- 2) Who is responsible for these acts of violence?
- 3) Who is responsible for preventing the occurrence of violence, and if the violence breaks out, for bringing an early end to it?

- 4) What can we, as citizens of a democratic polity, do?

Coming to the first question, the standard answer, by and large, that is accepted, is that violence occurs because of a clash of interests. Take the horrendous case of Manipur. The Kuki and the Meitei tribes have fought in the past as their interests clashed. Ergo, we should not be surprised if another round of killings, rapes, and destruction of property is going on.

The argument does not hold water. If we accept the proposition that clashing interests invariably cause violent confrontation, it follows that India and Pakistan are destined to have hostile relations forever, with war breaking out from time to time, on account of Kashmir. Similarly, it follows that as the interests of the Pandits in Kashmir and that of the majority community clash, there cannot be peace and tranquillity.

**The same approach of deliberately disregarding the Constitution can be seen in the case of Manipur. On May 3, 2023, ethnic violence broke out. Till now, neither the government in Manipur nor the Union government in Delhi has acted responsibly.**



In short, when interests clash, we as 'homo sapiens', as we have chosen to call ourselves, endowed with free will should be able to find a way to resolve, or rather dissolve the clash through dialogue either between the two parties directly or under the auspices of a government or an NGO. The Good Friday Agreement (1998) in Northern Ireland is an example. The free will given by God should be used for the common good and not for common ruin.

Coming to the second question, it is indubitable that in India the government has contributed in a big way to violence by failing to prevent it or by failing to take prompt measures to put down the fire of violence as the fire brigade does when a house is on fire.

The 2002 pogrom in Gujarat remains unaddressed by the State and society in Gujarat and the rest of India. I was in Delhi then. The Parliament was in session. I remember writing an article proposing that the Parliament session should be suspended; members of Parliament from Gujarat and elsewhere should go to that State urgently; and the civil aviation ministry should make available flights free of cost and without prior reservation for members of Parliament and the media to rush to Gujarat.

My idea was that if the MPs urged the crowd to stop violence, and if the media could capture and broadcast it, there was a good chance that the crowd might stop its murderous dance and, more importantly, the State Government might be shamed into acting responsibly. I had suggested that the Leader of the Opposition

should move a resolution for suspending the session. What was the point of Parliament's meeting in the capital when the fire was raging in 'Gujarat'?

Alas! a prominent newspaper which swears by 'courage' refused to carry my article. The Parliament chose to turn a blind eye to the atrocities being committed with impunity in the State that gave birth to Mahatma Gandhi. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee did seriously consider dismissing the State Government. Alas, partisan considerations and ignoble calculations came in the way of taking the right action required under the Constitution.

The same approach of deliberately disregarding the Constitution can be seen in the case of Manipur. On May 3, 2023, ethnic violence broke out. Till now, neither the Government in Manipur nor the Union Government in Delhi has acted responsibly.

*Archbishop Peter Machado*





**A**part from the government, it might be possible for NGOs to bring the clashing parties to the table. **It is a matter of regret that no non-state body in India has so far taken serious action. Where are the religious leaders? Why are they silent spectators?**



Over 180 human beings have been killed by their fellow human beings; over 300 have been injured; 400 churches and 17 temples have been vandalised. The statistics are not up to date. They relate to July 29.

We need not go into the reasons for the culpable apathy of the two governments. Whatever be their motivations, the fact remains that they have not acted responsibly, and have demonstrated moral bankruptcy.

In this context, we need to remind ourselves that a government can resort to violence in many ways. Violence is to be seen holistically. For example, when the Central Bureau of Investigations, and the Enforcement Directorate are used, or rather abused, to threaten or punish political rivals without due justification, that is a form of violence. Take the case of Fr. Stan Swamy, over 80, kept in prison, without charges, and denied medical attention he urgently needed. Wasn't that violence of the worst kind?

Coming to the third question, since the State or rather the government has the legal monopoly to resort to violence, it follows that it has the responsibility to act promptly when the fire of violence erupts. The government should act with the alacrity of the fire brigade.

Apart from the government, it might be possible for NGOs to bring the clashing parties to the table. It is a matter of regret that no non-state body in India has so far taken serious action. Where are the religious leaders? Why are they silent spectators? In this context, I was comforted to read the forthright statement from Archbishop Peter Machado of Bangalore.



We note with distress that moral bankruptcy can be contagious, and that it is proliferating in India.

What can the voter do as the nation faces this crisis? Conferences and demonstrations might help to a limited extent. There is something else that can be done. Let us tell our Member of Parliament that it was a shame that the Parliament did not properly address the crisis. Ask him or her why it was so. What did he/she do in this case? Do make it clear that those who demonstrated moral bankruptcy will not get re-elected in the forthcoming election.

There is widespread confusion about the general election. We as voters elect our MP and not our PM and the MPs elect the PM. Our vote is for the MP and not for any PM. In tune with the officially declared Amritkaal, let us elect morally upright MPs without bothering about parties.

Let us make the largest democracy regain its moral mission!

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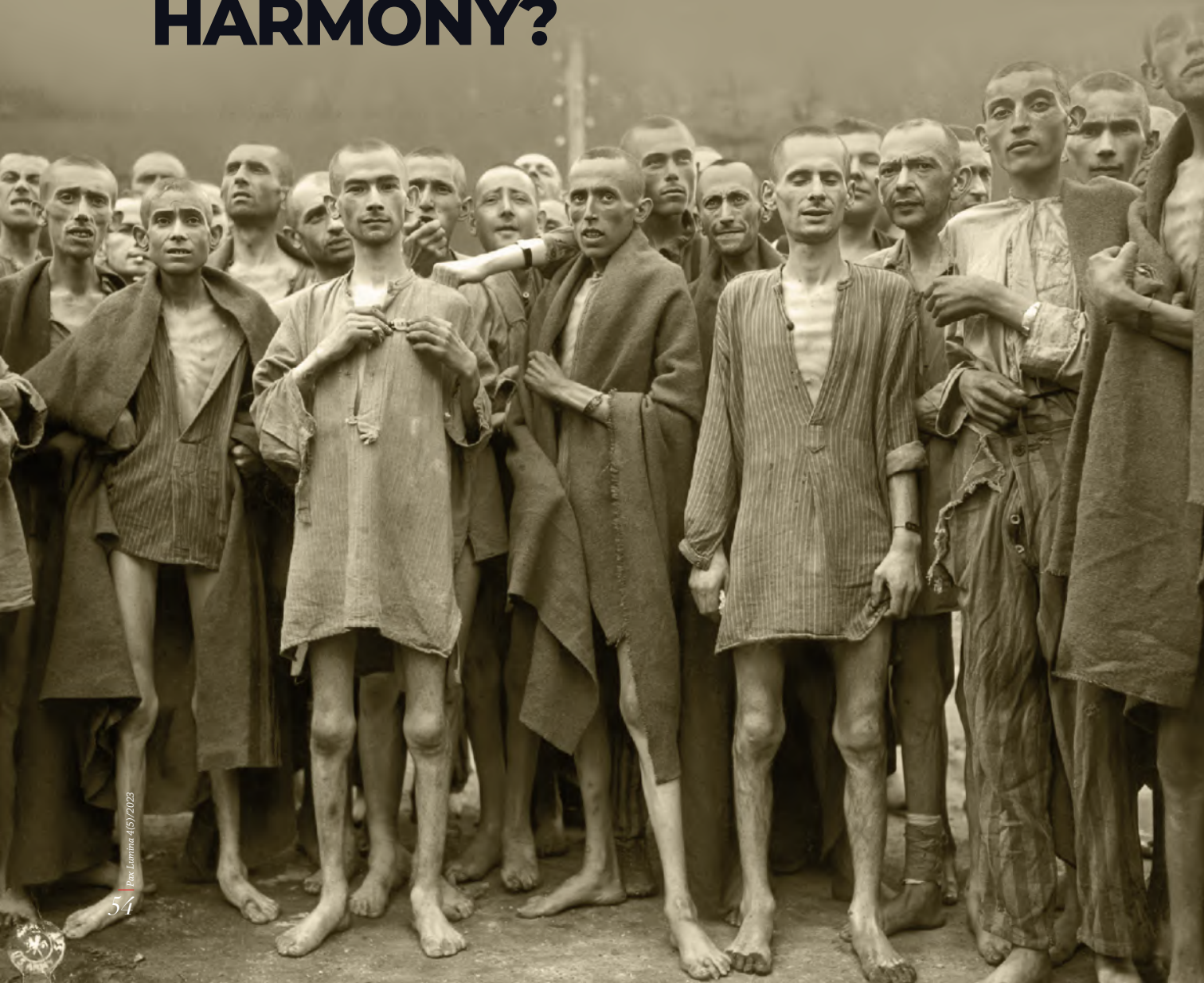


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# GENOCIDE

## CAN IT EVER HAPPEN IN KERALA OR ANY OTHER PLACE OF INTER-RELIGIOUS HARMONY?







It could reasonably be surmised that slavery, as practised through the caste system in Kerala, indicated the genocidal violence unleashed on those who were engaged in agriculture to dispossess them of their fertile lands, their culture, memories of their violent history of subjugation and even their earlier identity as a dignified community.

Social scientist Rajan Gurukkal's recent article, 'The Caste and Slavery Brought About by Sword' in the Mathrubhumi Weekly points to this violent past (Gurukkal, 2023). Suffice it to say that we are still suffering from the aftermath of many pogroms or genocides in Kerala which were never historically documented.

If it happened in Kerala without leaving any vestige of its occurrence, and if it has been happening unabated in Manipur before our eyes for more than three months until now, despite all the communication facilities and the democratic national and international systems in place, we had better be prepared for the worst.

Australian historian Ben Kiernan, General Editor to the Series, 'Genocide: Its Causes, Components, Connections and Continuing Challenges' shared the following in his introduction quoting one of the first noncommunist journalists who visited the Cambodian capital:

"Phnom Penh... is in the image of the rest of the country. There is no drinking water, no telephone, no mail service, no transport, no registry office, no money, no markets, hardly any electricity, hardly any schools, hardly any

# 1 Introduction

Such a question does not seem to be plausible to many of us who have an innate sense of justice, abhorrence of collective violence, and an incorrigible optimism about social harmony in Kerala despite the recent instigation of violence from many fundamentalist and fascist forces as shown during the the Sabarimala issue in 2018 and the Vizhinjam struggle in 2022.

If it happened in Kerala without leaving any vestige of its occurrence, and if it has been happening unabated in Manipur before our eyes for more than three months until now, **despite all the communication facilities and the democratic national and international systems in place, we had better be prepared for the worst.**



medical dispensaries. The city is so quiet that bird-song has a sinister ring to it" (Kiernan et al., 2023. p1).

As I read this account I was reminded of 'the eerie silence' and pitch darkness that I witnessed during the Kandhamal violence when I stayed in Ghumusar Udayagiri in Kandhamal district in September 2008. Even 10 years after the genocidal violence, when a journalist revisited the Kandhamal district, victims had neither got justice nor were their wounds healed (Ramani, 2018).

## 2. What is it?

It is in this context that we need to explore how and why genocide happens and gets planned, but before such an exploration, it is worth understanding what it is.

Genocide is defined as 'the deliberate and systematic destruction of a group of people because of their ethnicity, nationality, religion, or race' (Andreopoulos, 2023. para1). The term was created by combining the Greek word 'genos' meaning 'race,' 'tribe,' or 'nation' and the Latin word 'cide' meaning 'killing' by Raphael Lemkin, a Polish jurist during World War II (Andreopoulos, 2023).

Article 2 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines genocide as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such:

(a) Killing members of the group.

- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group.
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group.
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group (UN.ORG N.d. para1).

## 3. How does it originate? Can you identify some basic steps?

How genocides originate and happen could be understood using the academic tool generated by Gregory Stanton, the founding president of Genocide Watch, namely 'The Ten Stages of Genocide'.

The progression or sequence of the stages need not be linear and step-by-step but at times compounded or in an unordered order. However, this conceptual framework can help us analyse genocidal events and even warn and prevent such occurrences (Stanton, 2023).

The processual model starts with:

- (1) Classification when the perpetrators identify and classify their opponents in terms of 'us' and 'they'.
- (2) The symbolisation of giving names to others as it happened throughout the genocidal history like Jews and Aryans during Nazism and Tutsi and Hutu in the Rwandan genocide.

**P**owerful people who rule the world have been planning and executing genocide as a political act of expediency **to eliminate those who are depicted as 'enemies' of the State or terrorists or unwanted people who could be 'disposed of'.**







- (3) Discrimination, the next step of dispossessing the alienated group of their citizenship rights which leads to barbaric laws and customs.
- (4) Dehumanisation when the targeted victims are compared with some animals and called brutalising names to justify ‘cleansing’ the society or ‘eliminating’ unwanted elements rather than murdering them (Stanton, 2023).

These first four processes contribute to what Professor James Waller calls ‘Othering’ in the context of genocide (Waller, 2007). Powerful people who rule the world have been planning and executing genocide as a political act of expediency to eliminate those who are depicted as ‘enemies’ of the State or terrorists or unwanted people who could be ‘disposed of’.

When many actors stand by and condone the acts of violence, the victims are further victimised. Though there can be multiple reasons for the genesis of genocides, they often start with dehumanising the targeted victims through the process of false propaganda. This ‘othering’ and depicting the other as the ‘enemy’ legitimises mass killings using the state machinery or with its connivance (Maritiz, 2012).

In the light of his study of the Armenian genocide, Waller explained how anyone can gradually be influenced to participate in horrendous genocidal violence. The gradual process is such that those who engage in such violent acts seem morally blameless because of the kind of brainwashing that takes place justifying the denigration and demonization of the other (Waller, 2007).

When the othering process is complete, the natural stages of the process happen more or less in the following sequence:

- (5) Organisation of various violent actors takes place.
- (6) Polarisation is achieved even by targeting the moderate voices among the perpetrators who resist the dehumanisation of their brothers and sisters.
- (7) Preparation, detailed planning is done for mass killings and displacement of people by training the perpetrators.
- (8) Persecution is set where mass killings are organised systematically.
- (9) Extermination is ensured through the intentional destruction of an identity-based group in whole or in part.
- (10) Denial. Through denial, the perpetrators ensure the erasure of memories and block any possibility of holding anyone responsible for the genocidal violence through various narratives that depict the victims as villains (Stanton, 2023).

#### **4. Who Was Responsible for Planning a Genocide?**

The master planners behind the mass murder of some groups never do it directly, but they have their pawns in the grassroots who execute their orders. In the opinion of Dr Waller, as it was evident in the case of the killings of the Armenians, such crude ways of murdering, required deep-seated negative motivation to eliminate them.

Based on his research on the Armenian genocide, Dr. Waller premised that every human being can commit murder and most people can commit mass murder given conducive circumstances.

Such evil deeds are instigated through the propagation of deep-seated ideologies, the immunity provided by partisan statesmen, and the anonymity of being in a mob that may be condoned for their crimes (Tataryan, 2023).

Persons in authority and power are often found to be responsible for planning genocides. In history, several genocides have been attributed to specific individuals or organisations.

For example, the holocaust during World War II was planned and executed by the Nazi regime led by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party where approximately six million Jews were exterminated (Anonymous N.d.).



The Rwandan genocide in 1994 was organised and carried out by the Hutu extremist government and military officials, who vilified and dehumanised the Tutsi ethnic group, leading to the deaths of approximately eight lakh people (History.com Editors, 2009).

During the Bosnian War in the early 1990s, Serbian forces, under the leadership of Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić, masterminded the mass killings of Bosniak Muslims in Srebrenica (Wallenfeldt, 2023).

The Ottoman government, led by the Young Turks, was behind the planning of the genocide of the Armenian population during World War I (Suny, 2023).

Thus, though it is difficult to assign the responsibility for mass killings, it can be seen that they are often either organised by state structures or directed by government leaders and political elites sometimes in a surreptitious way and sometimes in a brazenly open way by manipulating the common people through ideology-based propaganda (Brivati, 2008).

## 5. Underlying causes of genocides

When we search for the causes of genocides, we can identify some long-term and immediate causes. Many of the events and processes related to various socio-cultural, political, and economic issues or factors that undermine the stability of some established communities could be seen as the long-term causes of genocides.

Long-term causes stem from socio-political unrest related to wars, and vulnerability induced by poverty, economic depression, dislocation, cultural divisions, social crisis, political instability, mass migration, and drastic climatic change (Kiernan, et al., 2023).

**P**ersons in authority and power are often found to be responsible for planning genocides. **In history, several genocides have been attributed to specific individuals or organisations.**







Analysing historical cases of genocide can provide insights into how and why genocide happens. Understanding why people treat others in such brutal ways during genocide requires an examination of various factors:

#### **a) Ideological and Political Factors**

The people on the receiving end have no say in the matter of self-defence. There is a lack of political will to stop mass killings. Identity-based politics is part of the problem when a group of people are considered enemies by a dominant group and are denied their original identity, their right to self-determination and private property, and their very right to life.

The extermination of a group of people is normalised through the weaponisation of hunger. International governments have put their geo-political and national interest above the agenda of protecting the human rights of innocent people elsewhere (Gebremedhin, 2023).

In the opinion of human rights defender Meaza Gebremedhin who participated in an online discussion on genocide, genocidal regimes such as Ethiopia, China, and Burma have blood on their hands. They have been suppressing the 'self-determination of minorities'. State-sponsored genocide has been happening in these countries (Gebremedhin, 2023).

#### **b) Propaganda and Hate Speech**

Making a villain out of the other population will make the majority of the people who belong

to the group of perpetrators mere bystanders. Genocide perpetrators, especially perpetrator states provide immunity to the murderers. From the perspective of Alex Galitsky, Programme Director of the Armenian National Committee of America, genocide is politicised in the name of national security using morally neutral terms such as 'sanitizing' and 'cleansing'. Human rights have become a kind of commodity in the world market where it is used to negotiate trade relations (Galitsky, 2023).

#### **c) Social and Historical Tensions**

Long-standing identity-based issues are raked up by perpetrators during periods of intense socio-political, cultural, and economic conflicts that destabilise society. For example, the Armenian Genocide was the systematic destruction of the Armenian people and their identity in the Ottoman Empire during World War I (Suny, 2023).

It was spearheaded by the ruling Committee of Union and Progress and implemented primarily through the mass murder of around one million Armenians during death marches to the Syrian Desert and the forced Islamisation of others, primarily women and children (Suny, 2023).

#### **d) Group Dynamics**

In situations of conflict, individuals may identify themselves as part of a group with a diffusion of individual responsibility and a sense of impunity and justification for committing atrocities.

In conclusion, genocide is a horrific crime.

It results from complex dynamics of social, political, psychological, and historical factors.

**Individuals and collectives who wield power and authority are often responsible for organising and executing such acts.**

All genocides have some common characteristics. In activist Saifullah Muhammad's view, conflicts are manufactured through the process of vilification of the victims as a group by dehumanising them (Muhammad, 2023).

#### e) Economic and Resource Conflicts

The scarcity of resources in terms of land and jobs causes different groups to fight among themselves (Gebremedhin, 2023). What is happening in Manipur, India, which seems to be some kind of ethnic cleansing or mass killing of Kuki Christians by Meiteis, the majority of whom belong to the Hindu religion seems to be genocidal where the latter due to scarce landed property and rising unemployment want to have land rights over the tribal lands and a share in the reservation of jobs allowed only for the former given their tribal status as per the Indian Constitution (Donthi, 2023).

#### f) State-Sponsored Violence

The violence that broke out in Churachandpur, a town in the state capital Imphal, on May 3, as part of protest marches by Kuki-led tribal solidarity and the counter-protests by the Meitei was not contained either by the State government or the central government. Even after about two months the mass killings and rapes continued unabated. Out of the 72 victims, 60 of them were Kukis, and that allegedly smacks of State support (Donthi, 2023).

#### g) Psychological Factors

There are social-psychological factors of identity-based collective self-esteem and collective aggression that play a role in enabling individuals to commit acts of genocide. In stressful situations,



obedience to authority and conformity to group norms can cause depersonalisation and extreme forms of violence. So also, gender as well as race also shaped patterns of genocidal violence (Kiernan, et al. 2023).

## 6. Conclusion

In conclusion, genocide is a horrific crime. It results from complex dynamics of social, political, psychological, and historical factors. Individuals and collectives who wield power and authority are often responsible for organising and executing such acts. We see a similar pattern of generating hatred, spreading propaganda, finding scapegoats through group dynamics, and ideological warfare culminating in the dehumanisation and demonisation of fellow human beings during genocidal events.

Understanding these underlying factors is crucial for preventing such atrocities in the future and promoting peace and solidarity among different groups of people. The recent incidents of demonising Muslims and all those who question the eminent domain of the State and its policy of privatising the common property



resources in the name of development such as in the case of Vizhinjam Mother Port, could be seen as a step towards legitimising the violence suffered by some specific marginalised coastal communities in Kerala and the utter lack of respect towards their self-determination.

The withdrawal of the protest against Vizhinjam Mother Port was widely depicted as a sagacious step by the Latin Archdiocese of Thiruvananthapuram lest there would be bloodshed among the vulnerable, minority community represented by the Archdiocese.

Thus, the next step to a pogrom or a genocidal violent event could be in the offing if the protest potential of the people is actualised conclusively to challenge and change the unjust social order perpetrated through the connivance of the fascist and crony capitalist forces that go unchallenged today.

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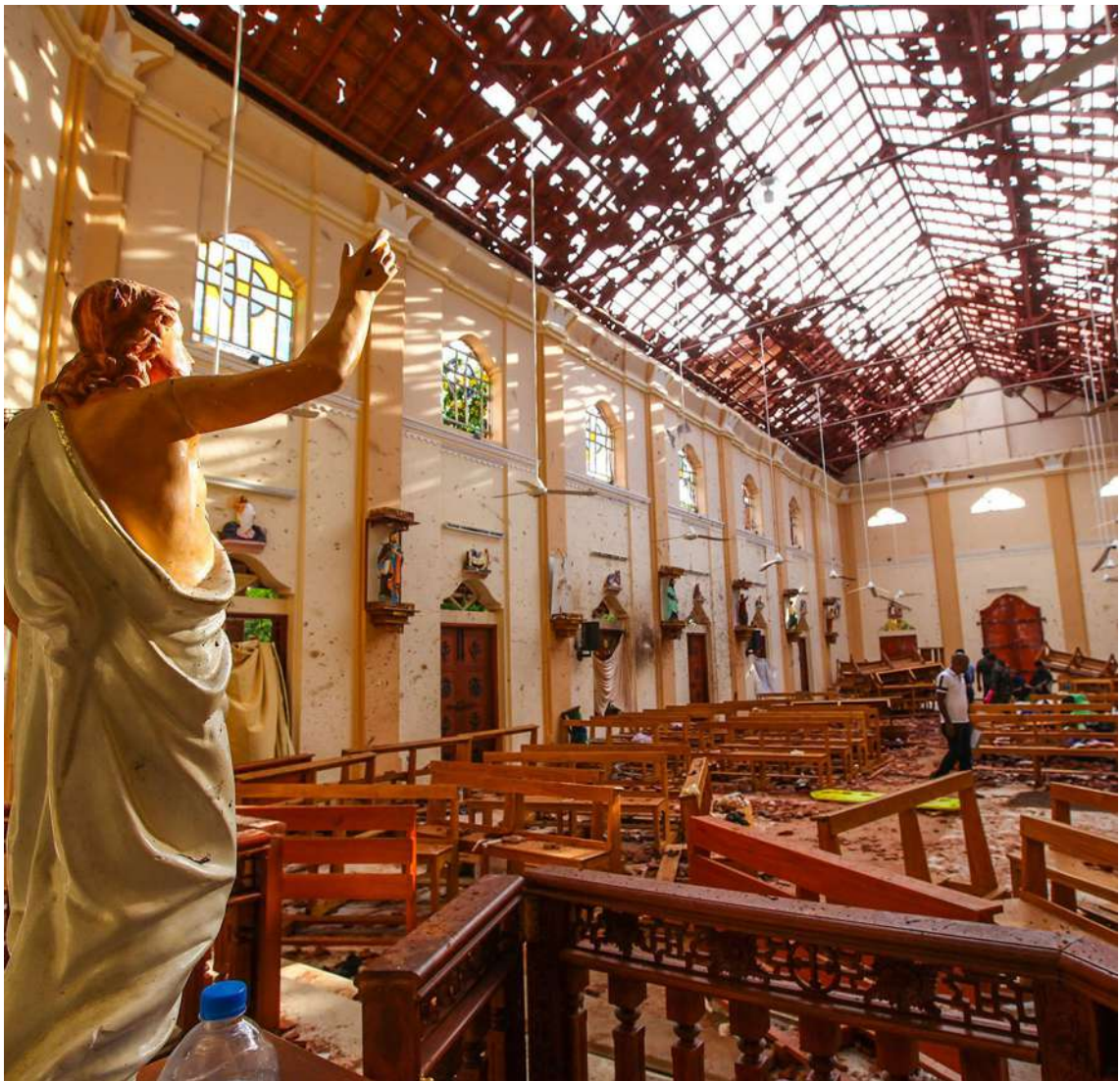
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# **BRUTALISATION OF THE WEAK IN SRI LANKA**





**S**lave trade between Africa and America, was the unmitigated brutalisation of weak people by so-called Christian nations. **But even the modern world is sullied by this. The Nazis and others of their same ilk have inflicted extreme brutalisation on minorities and innocents.**



**I**n the past when we were living in tribal formations, the biggest tribe dominated. Those days there were no such things as dignity of the human person. The weak were exploited, brutalised and killed with impunity. It was even considered valiant and good. Anybody from the dominant tribe who sympathised with the weak was considered a weakling and a betrayer.

From tribal formations, we come to kings and feudal systems. Now, instead of tribes, we have slaves, castes, peasants and serfs. There were outcastes or people outside the caste system who were non-human non-persons. For example, Saliya, the son of King Dutugemunu (BC 161-137), instead of raping Asokamala, a Chandala girl, which is the normal and even approved behaviour of princes, fell in love, and married her. He abandoned the throne and joined her in the lowest social rung.

Naturally, Saliya was considered a weakling and a betrayer by his contemporaries. Today, he is the hero of all lovers. The weak and the minorities were the natural prey of the strong and the majority. Any crime could be committed against them: rape, burning and killing.

Today, we have democratic social organisations and nations after going through the birthing pains of industrialisation and Communist-forced communes with no freedom. The brutalisation of the workers in the West (16 hours of work in most unhealthy environments, even for children) and the peasants of Russia and China (slaves underfed and exploited to the point of death) need no explanation as it is our recent history.

Colonisation was based on the brutalisation of the local populace. 'Francisco Pizarro gained Peru from the Incas by massacring five thousand Indians in cold blood. Vasco Da Gama in Calicut ordered his men to parade the Indian prisoners, then to hack off their hands, ears and noses.' The historian Gaspar Correa describes it thus.

'When all the Indians had been thus executed (sic) he ordered their feet to be tied together, as they had no hands to untie them: and so that they should not untie them with their teeth, he ordered them to strike upon their teeth with staves, and they knocked them down their throats.'

That was the age of imperialism. Slave trade between Africa and America, was the unmitigated brutalisation of weak people by so-called Christian nations. But even the modern world is sullied by this. The Nazis and others of their same ilk have inflicted extreme brutalisation on minorities and innocents. Advanced modern culture, fine arts and educational brilliance were no match to this animal-like degenerate inhuman brutalising.

**The history of our country is idiotic. Instead of developing the country, the politicians made us fight one another. The two insurrections of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna and the 30-year civil war between the Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam made terrorism and brutalisation normal.**



That sort of ugly, shameful situation still exists in India towards the Dalit and the tribal populations. Those who show solidarity with such victims are also targeted and victimised. That is the politics of the Bharatiya Janata Party of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Both Buddhism and Christianity advocated the egalitarian dignity of every individual. But they have not succeeded. It is incredible how strong the gut-level, almost instinctive, degenerate thrill people get in brutalising the innocent and the weak. Do they realise afterwards how low their animal-like behaviour was and feel any shame? Psycho-sociologists need to work on that.

### **Sri Lanka**

There were corporal punishments, similar to the Roman crucifixion, during the reign of Kandyan kings. The brutal execution of the family of the courtier Ehelepola Nilame (1173-1829) was notorious. The suppression of the Wellassa rebellion (1817-1818) by the English is another hideous story, similar to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in India in 1919. There was even verbal brutalisation. The plantation workers in the tea and rubber estates were very rudely addressed by the white Periyadorai and Sinnadorei. There was a booklet of Tamil vocabulary with the

harshest and most humiliating four-letter words in the Tamil language which they studied and liberally used.

In Sri Lanka post-independence, we had the Black July of 1983. The photos of arson, humiliation, brutalising and killing of poor innocent Tamil labourers in Colombo have gone viral and they speak better than any words. It is the most shameful chapter in our post-independence country. There had been the extremely indecent and brutal treatment of women: the undressing, parading and killing of the Kataragama beauty queen and the Kurunegala incident though it did not end in murder.

The history of our country is idiotic. Instead of developing the country, the politicians made us fight one another. The two insurrections of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna and the 30-year civil war between the Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam made terrorism and brutalisation normal.

The ogre behind all this brutalisation is gained through racism and communalism, the last refuge of the scoundrel. Our parliament consists mostly of scoundrels. The goal of bombing churches on Easter Sunday in 2019 which killed 273 and maimed over 500 was clear. A regime change, and bringing to power another Rajapakse. Can a human being make such murderous plans? What kind of human being can plan such unspeakable tragedies? Just to gain political power?

Only Satan incarnate can do it!

Our country must do a self-examination, repent and choose the correct path to prosperity and freedom from fear and brutalisation. What happened last year at the famous 'Aragalaya' or the protest in the Galle Face Green at Colombo was a beacon of hope. The young generation saw the truth and had the guts to do something about it. Almost the whole country has woken up.

Change is imminent.

We shall overcome...

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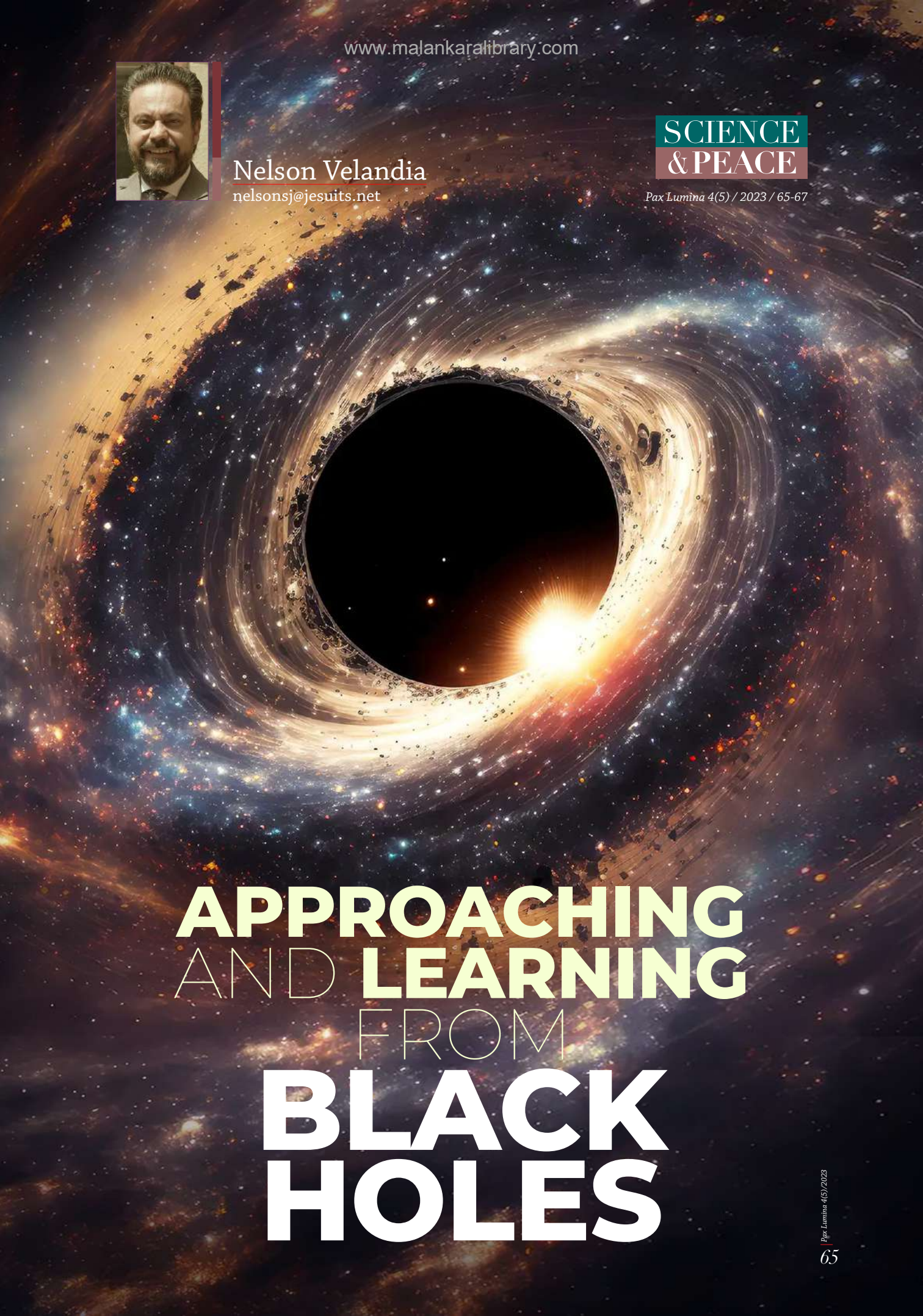




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**SCIENCE  
& PEACE**

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A large, detailed visualization of a black hole, showing the event horizon and the accretion disk. The center is a dark, circular void, surrounded by a bright, glowing ring of light. The surrounding space is filled with stars and galaxies, creating a sense of depth and scale.

**APPROACHING  
AND LEARNING  
FROM  
BLACK  
HOLES**

The gravitational field of the black hole is so great that the light stream from this flashlight cannot get out and immediately returns to the centre of the hole. In physics and mathematics, this point is called a singularity. **Here the laws of physics are not specified and, so a lot of research and mathematical calculations are done to trace their laws.**



Looking up at the skies is a wonderful experience if we are willing to let ourselves be surprised by what nature offers us every day. In the skies, we find many celestial objects, helping us trace the history of our universe was! They also teach us the emergence of our solar system and how it will evolve in future.

Based on the knowledge of the evolution of our universe, our solar system began five billion years ago. The Earth was born about 4,500 million years ago. This solar process helps us learn a lot about other solar systems and galaxies. For instance, we have discovered that there are systems that have millions of solar masses. Their origin and development are a little different from what we have experienced in our solar system.

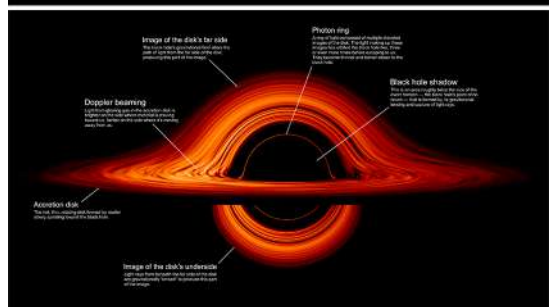
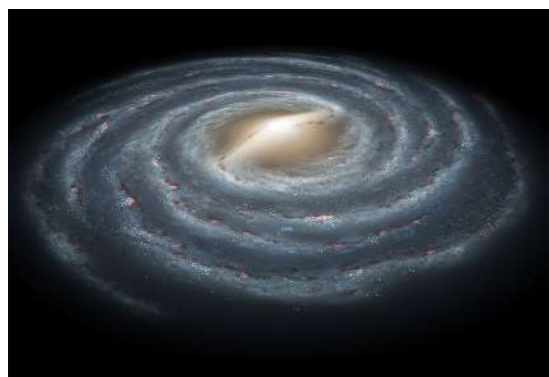
In the solar system, there is a basic structure through which every star must pass. This evolution will depend on how much mass the star has and the tension between the hydrogen and helium atoms and the combustion dynamics within the star.

The basic stars have a mass of three to five solar masses and their lifetime will be between 80 and 370 million years. Stars that have 1.5 solar masses may last about three billion years. Stars like our sun live about 10 billion years.

In general, stars live in a main sequence in which they have a stable state of nuclear fusion, transform hydrogen into helium and radiate X-rays. All this process take place at high energy and high temperatures so that the stars shine brightly.

These stars experience high tension between transforming hydrogen into helium and the gravitational force of the centre of the star. When such high energies are produced, much of the helium become heavier elements and their gravitational field increases. The star in such a state searches for helium in space.

Its centre attracts to such an extent that a gravitational collapse occurs. The massive body tends towards the centre to form a single conglomerate. This varies according to the amount of mass that the star initially has. If the mass is not very large, a white dwarf is formed consisting of an incandescent mass, the size of the Earth, but with a slightly weaker gravitational field.





If the central massive body already has millions of solar masses, its final destination may be a neutron star or a black hole. Thus, the black hole is a star that goes out but in the gravitational collapse, its gravitational field is so great that not even light can escape it!

An observer can stand on the surface of the black hole and shine a very powerful flashlight. The gravitational field of the black hole is so great that the light stream from this flashlight cannot get out and immediately returns to the centre of the hole. In physics and mathematics, this point is called a singularity. Here the laws of physics are not specified and, so a lot of research and mathematical calculations are done to trace their laws.

About thirty years ago, black holes were somewhat exotic objects. They were difficult to detect and were very far from our reach. But in 2019, the space around the hole was photographed. This massive body is 55 million light-years away. It is located in the galaxy called Messier 87. After achieving the technique of 'photographing' a black hole, more investigations detected the presence of numerous such celestial objects. In the centre of almost every galaxy, there is a black hole.

An astrophysicist, who studied black holes, was Stephen Hawking. One of his contributions was to relate the laws of thermodynamics with the processes that take place around the black holes.

In the study of black holes, three basic elements are crucial: mass, rotation or angular momentum, and charge. Depending on how each of these elements appears, a different name is given to the black hole. If it has no mass, it is studied through a metric called Schwarzschild. If the hole has mass and rotation, it is called a Kerr hole. A third category is that which has mass, and electric charge but no rotation, and it is called Reissner-Nordstrom.

In astrophysics, researchers place 'test particles', that is, very small masses placed near the black hole, and depending on how close or far these particles are, we get more information about them.

At the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia, we did a theoretical investigation on blackholes. We placed a test particle in orbit with rotation



Stephen Hawking

around the massive blackhole, rotating in the same direction to the black hole.

Simultaneously another rotating test particle was located, but this time against the direction of rotation of the rotating black hole. By proper computing, we realised that, if these two particles start from the same point from a distant celestial object, when they make a complete rotation, they arrive out of phase in time. This phenomenon is called the 'Clock Effect'.

This time lag depends on the observer. It is not the same measure if the observer is very far from the hole, or on the surface of the hole, or if he or she could travel in the same orbit of the particles. This type of phenomenon is relativistic because it depends on the reference system and will measure very different time lags.

People ask some general questions: What are these studies for? A practical application of such studies is the GPS that our cell phone uses. If the engineer who builds the cell phone does not take this phenomenon into account, then the signal coming from the satellite would be out of phase. Therefore, it would not give a proper account of the satellite application.

Black holes are truly fascinating objects! They are worth further investigation and will give us valuable insights about the origin and evolution of our universe.

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**SCIENCE  
& PEACE**

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# OUTER AND INNER EXPLORATION

THE  
IMPERATIVE  
OF MORAL  
AND SPIRITUAL  
PROGRESS IN  
THE QUEST  
FOR THE  
EXPLORATION  
OF MARS AND  
MOON





**T**he Chandrayaan-3 aimed at a region with water, ice, or frozen water that could be a source of oxygen, fuel and water for future moon missions or a more permanent colony. **While congratulating the Indian scientists, we can reflect on the need for both outer and inner explorations**



## **I**ntroduction

Chandrayaan-3 made history on August 23, 2023, by becoming the first mission to soft-land on the lunar South Pole. This is a region that has never been explored before. The mission aimed to demonstrate safe and soft lunar landing, rover mobility, and *in-situ* scientific experiments.

The Chandrayaan-3 aimed at a region with water, ice, or frozen water that could be a source of oxygen, fuel and water for future moon missions or a more permanent colony. While congratulating the Indian scientists, we can reflect on the need for both outer and inner explorations.

“Two things fill me with awe and wonder – the starry sky above me and the moral law within me,” said the greatest German thinker, Immanuel Kant. The human race has always sought to push the boundaries of its existence, exploring new frontiers, and seeking solutions to seemingly insurmountable challenges.

The recent missions to colonise Mars and the Moon spearheaded by visionaries like Stephen Hawking and Elon Musk represent the latest chapter in our quest for survival and progress. However, as we embark on these grand adventures, it is essential to recognise that our problems extend beyond the physical limitations of Earth.

The need for moral and spiritual progress is paramount in the context of our mission to the Moon and Mars, as merely transferring our earthly behaviour to these new worlds will not offer a lasting solution.

## **The Urgency of Space Colonisation**

Stephen Hawking was the greatest physicist of the last several decades. His dire warnings about the future of humanity on Earth are rooted in the recognition of the environmental, geopolitical, and existential challenges that we face.

The escalating climate crisis, nuclear proliferation, and unsustainable lifestyles have created a precarious situation for our species. The idea of colonising Mars and the Moon offers a potential lifeline, a backup plan to ensure the survival of humanity in the face of imminent threats. Elon Musk's SpaceX programme, dedicated to the colonisation of Mars, exemplifies this determination to secure a future beyond Earth.

## **The Pitfalls of Human Nature**

While the prospect of relocating to Mars or the Moon may provide a temporary respite from the problems of Earth, it does not guarantee a utopian existence. Human history is rife with examples of how we have carried our flaws, such as selfishness, rivalry, and greed, to new territories.

**T**he initial spirit of collaboration and cooperation efforts may give way to familiar patterns of conflict and competition. **Consequently, without addressing the underlying moral and spiritual issues that plague our species, we risk recreating the same problems on distant planets.**



The initial spirit of collaboration and cooperation efforts may give way to familiar patterns of conflict and competition. Consequently, without addressing the underlying moral and spiritual issues that plague our species, we risk recreating the same problems on distant planets.

### **The Need and Limitations of Technological Progress**

We need to pay heed to the warning of the great scientist Albert Einstein, who said, "Technological progress is like an axe in the hand of a pathological criminal." He cautioned that technological progress could become a tool in the hands of those with ill intentions. The allure of advanced technologies can be intoxicating, but it cannot solve the fundamental issues that plague humanity.

Our problems have deep moral and spiritual roots that transcend the realm of science and technology. We cannot expect to find a lasting solution to our challenges by employing the same thinking that led to their creation. The imperative lies in fostering a profound shift in our values and consciousness.



Einstein said, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." We can only raise our level of thinking and solve our problems by attaining moral and spiritual growth.

### **The Moral and Spiritual Imperative**

Activist Martin Luther King, Jr. was forceful, when he said, "We must learn to live together as brothers, or we will all perish together as fools." He eloquently articulated the dire consequences of our failure to address our moral and spiritual shortcomings.

To survive and thrive on Mars or the Moon, we must learn to live together as a harmonious, empathetic, and cooperative global community. This entails a transformation of our value system, a shift away from greed and rivalry toward compassion and solidarity. The colonists of Mars and the Moon should endeavour to create societies that prioritise cooperation, sustainability, and the well-being of all.

In this context, Isaac Asimov, one of the greatest science-fiction writers, said, "The saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom."





Our society lags in wisdom compared to the rapid accumulation of knowledge through science. The exploration and colonisation of space have indeed been driven by scientific and technological advancements, but the ethical and philosophical dimensions of these endeavours cannot be overlooked. Wisdom must accompany knowledge if we are to avoid repeating the mistakes of our past.

**To survive and thrive on Mars or the Moon, we must learn to live together as a harmonious, empathetic, and cooperative global community. This entails a transformation of our value system, a shift away from greed and rivalry toward compassion and solidarity. The colonists of Mars and the Moon should endeavour to create societies that prioritise cooperation, sustainability, and the well-being of all.**

## Conclusion

The mission to colonise Mars and the Moon represents a noble and ambitious endeavour, driven by the urgent need to secure the future of humanity. However, the challenges of human nature, the limitations of technology, and the imperative of moral and spiritual progress cannot be ignored. Merely transplanting our existing behaviour and value systems to new worlds will not provide a lasting solution.

As we venture into the cosmos, we must carry with us the wisdom and insights of great minds like Martin Luther King, Jr., Albert Einstein, and Isaac Asimov. Our survival and success in space colonisation depend not only on our scientific prowess but also on our ability to rise above our moral and spiritual shortcomings.

Only then can we hope to create a better future for ourselves, both on Earth and in the boundless realms of the universe. Exploring the outer world of Mars and the Moon is certainly a noble task and must be coupled with the exploration of our inner world – of morals and spirituality.

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*Kuruville Pandikkattu is a Physicist and currently the Chair Professor of JRD Tata Foundation on Business Ethics at XLRI, Jamshedpur.*





**Neena Joseph**  
facultyimgdrnj@gmail.com

# WOMEN IN CONFLICT AREAS



**I**n conflict areas, whether it is a war zone or areas of internal or external aggression, the attention is on the issues which triggered the conflict. These include the power struggle between the parties, the valour of heroes on both sides, the technology of the weapons, the strategy and tactics of encounters, the logistics of encounters, political and economic concerns, and negotiations.

The trials and tribulations of vulnerable groups, especially women, who live and work in those areas do not get the deserved attention. Generally, women are already oppressed, exploited and discriminated against along one or more axes of intersectional identities such as gender, class, caste, race, sexual orientation and geographical location.



**T**he trials and tribulations of vulnerable groups, especially women, who live and work in those areas do not get the deserved attention. **Generally, women are already oppressed, exploited and discriminated against along one or more axes of intersectional identities such as gender, class, caste, race, sexual orientation and geographical location.**



The Global Gender Inequality Index is 0.465. There is no dearth of reports, studies and conventions highlighting the vulnerabilities of women in terms of factors such as violence within the family, at the workplace and in public spaces; custodial rape; lack of property ownership; feminised poverty; and exclusion from positions of decision-making.

But it is forgotten that these problems get exacerbated in conflict zones. The condition of women recruited by outfits, those of ordinary women, female reporters, migrant women, widows and grass widows, victims of horrendous gang rapes fuelled by crowd psychology, women who are forced into sexual slavery and the state-sponsored 'comfort girls' warrants more attention. In the context of conflicts, horrendous crimes against humanity happen.



The incident of two Kuki women being stripped, paraded naked, groped by the crowd, raped and murdered shook the conscience of the world and shamed humanity. The mob acts like a single body and brain. This type of social crime is encouraged by the relative anonymity, assured impunity, lack of individualised accountability and the mob psychology of perpetrating a crime of much greater magnitude than a crime ever done all by oneself.

Women are weaponised and their bodies are treated as a battleground to dishonour and humiliate the enemies and branding them as effeminate and total failures in discharging their masculine roles as 'protectors' of their women.

Genocidal rapes happen because it is targeted at ethnic cleansing. Sexual gratification is not the objective of such crimes.

The hapless victims are stigmatised and ostracised. Suicidal ideations, nightmares and Post Trauma Stress Disorders are common. The brutal act is sometimes done with the intention of forced pregnancy. The children born out of these cruel acts are living memories of a horrifying past for the mothers. The women of erstwhile Yugoslavia, Myanmar, Kashmir, and North Eastern states of India have many stories of excruciating pain to tell the world.

Some acts were performed under the instruction of the commanding officer. The sanction for sexually using the women of the vanquished group by the victorious group is scripturally inscribed in a religious text. Between 1932 and 1945, the practice of sexual slavery prevailed in the Imperial Japanese Army. The 'comfort girls' were sourced from Vietnam, China, Korea and other occupied countries under false promises of better education and jobs. The number ran to two lakhs. It is a reality that there are state-sponsored massacres and mass rapes.

In countries with low Gender Empowerment Measure, the national spending will be more on feminine values such as education and health while the high Gender Empowerment Measure countries spend more on militarisation i.e. on masculine values.

The yet-to-be-bridged global gender gap of 31.6 percent, with the gaps of sub-indices shown in the brackets – economic participation and opportunity (39.9 percent), educational attainment (4.8 percent), health and survival (4 percent) and political empowerment (77.9 percent) – speak for themselves.

The figures show that the gaps in economic participation opportunity and political empowerment are disproportionately high,

vis-a-vis that of education, and health. This shows the strong bias against women entering positions of power and decision-making. Their absence in spaces of budget allocation for militarization, allocations for protection and rehabilitation of women in conflict areas can be assumed.

The women recruited in outfits like that of the Maoists undergo many violations including insufficient supply of nutritious food, drinking water, and sanitary napkins. Marriage is allowed only if the groom is willing to fight. Vasectomy is enforced. Enforced abortions are done without proper medical attention. Only 5 percent of women rise to the top echelons. Exit is difficult.

The everyday experiences of women living in conflict areas are dismal. Peace was shattered in many previously peaceful and resource rich places, consequent to predatory business interests and their unholy alliances with political and administrative players. The peace status of conflict zones in Jharkhand and Chattisgarh may be examined. Outfits proliferate and recruitment and untimely deaths happen. Forced labour in dangerous conditions have happened in mineral rich areas. Pre existing communal and ethnic divides will be strategically deepened. Besides the usual problems faced by widows (loss of





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family income, added family responsibilities, property issues with in - laws), women in conflict areas have to additionally grapple with problems of unconfirmed deaths of husbands, demolished houses, forceful evictions, destroyed crops, withdrawal of rights such as pension, inevitable migration, food insecurity. Rapes are common. Sexual services are forced out of migrants at the borders. In camps and shelters, women face sexual assaults. Imaginably the plight of pregnant women are still worse with nutritional deficiency and unsafe childbirths.

Conflict areas within our country are prone to the unjust application of the draconian laws such as Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Indeed, women suffer immeasurably in combat. Women are often portrayed as victims. But there are stories of women who put up a valiant fight against the atrocities. Nadia Murad, a Yezidi girl survived brutal genocide. She saw her brothers murdered in front of her. Nadia was kidnapped and raped. But she finally escaped and testified about the atrocities in international human

rights forums.

She recounted everything that happened in her book, 'The Last Girl – My Story of Captivity and My Fight Against the Islamic State'

She is a co-winner of Nobel Peace Prize, 1918; Sharkov Prize and Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize. She is the UN's first Goodwill Ambassador for the Dignity of Survivors of Human Trafficking.

Though it happened in 2004, the story of 12 mothers protesting after disrobing themselves in front of Assam Rifles headquarters is fresh in our memory. The protest was against the rape and murder of Thangjam Manorama allegedly by the army, invoking Armed Forces (Special Powers Act).

The grit and resolve of the women in Greenham, England who established the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp in 1981 to protest the governmental decision to store cruise missiles with nuclear warheads at that location is admirable.

A unique mode of resistance was demonstrated by Shia women in Beirut. It was done through practices and ideology which harmoniously blended politics of resistance, religion, piety, and high moral values. They drew inspiration from the Karbala war (680-683) AD which commemorates the martyrdom of Husayn Ali who was killed by the army of Caliph Yazid I.

Often women's language of resistance is compassion and caring. For instance, they have creatively resisted through performative acts such as hanging clothes and articles of day today use on the fence of army camps, thus challenging the culture of death in contrast to the culture of life.

Malala Yousafzai passionately championed the right to education for girls and broadcast her protest against the Taliban's imposition of regressive laws in Pakistan's Swat Valley.

On October 9, 2012, when she was returning home on a bus after taking part in an exam, a Taliban gunman shot at her. She survived and fled to the UK where she got a larger platform to amplify her voice through radio broadcasts, TV shows, writings and talks.

She was joint-winner, along with Kailash Satyarthi of India, of the Nobel Prize of 2013. Malala also won the Sakharov Prize. Today, the Malala Fund finances the education of girls around the world.<sup>9</sup> Women's involvement in the peace movement is crucial. Erom Sharmila's 17 years of hunger strike demanding the repeal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, of 1958 is legendary.

There are grassroots organisations with affiliations to international groups or otherwise had overthrown war-hungry dictatorial regimes. They have rebuilt relationships lost in conflicts, found out the burial place of war widows, secured from the family of the late husbands, provided mobile health care, and raised voices against war and militarism. Women have worked successfully for peace. The functioning of Women Wage Peace founded in 2014, endeavouring to end Israeli Palestine conflict deserve special mention.

There are human rights laws such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and

**P**owerful positions and war and peace-related spaces need equal representation of women who can bring new perspectives for peace-building. Again, women bear a disproportionate brunt of war in multiple forms. **Women have proved their capabilities in conflict zones. Modern-day international laws and covenants lay down the rights of women in war and other zones of conflict.**





Cultural Rights, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

The Geneva Conventions are applicable in international conflicts. Rights during internal conflicts are laid down in the two Protocols of the Conventions. Rape needs to be considered as a serious social crime and not merely as a matter of losing honour. The 1974 UN General Assembly Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergencies and Armed Conflicts acknowledged the need for the protection of women and children.

The above lists of rights are only indicative and not exhaustive. India is yet to sign the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court which prohibits all kinds of sexual crimes during conflicts and crimes against humanity.

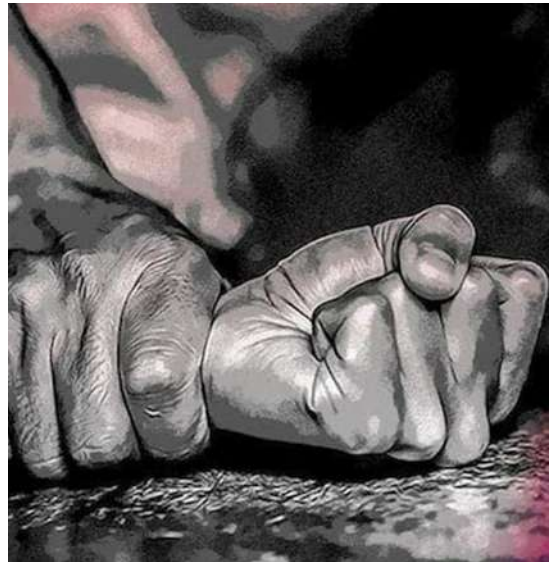
Powerful positions and war and peace-related spaces need equal representation of women who can bring new perspectives for peace-building. Again, women bear a disproportionate brunt of war in multiple forms. Women have proved their capabilities in conflict zones. Modern-day international laws and covenants lay down the rights of women in war and other zones of conflict.

Much more remains to be done such as sensitisation of officials and managers to the special needs of women, criminalisation of war crimes, witness protection in war crimes, protection of the health of women, availability of reproductive health services, property rights, reparation programmes, reintegration of female victims to society, reconciliation activities, and attempts for restorative justice.

The UN Vienna Conference, 1994, recognises that women's rights are human rights. American politician Hilary Clinton added that human rights are women's rights. This is specifically relevant in the war zones.

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*Neena Joseph is former Professor,  
Institute of Management in Government.*



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Human Development Report, 2021/2022 arrived at this figure based on the measurement of reproductive health, empowerment and labour market. An index of 0 and 1 respectively indicating nil inequality and complete equality.
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BOOK  
REVIEW

*Pax Lumina* 4(5) / 2023 / 78-80

# THE MARTIAN'S DAUGHTER

## A MEMOIR OF AN ECONOMIST

by Marina von Neumann Whitman

Whitman began the memoir by writing about her immigrant parents who fled in the mass exodus from Hungary in the 1930s to the US. **In the next 25 years, her father was responsible for the development of major scientific breakthroughs such as game theory, the bomb, and the programmable computer.**

Marina von Neumann Whitman is an American economist and Professor Emerita of Public Policy and Business Administration at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business and The Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy. She is also the daughter of John von Neumann, the renowned Hungarian-American mathematician.

He was one of the five Hungarian Jewish scientists who immigrated to the United States from Budapest in the early 1930s and worked on the Manhattan Project at Los Alamos.

Four of them – Leo Szilard, Eugene Wigner, Von Neumann, and Edward Teller – were at the forefront of developing the atomic bomb. The fifth, Theodore von Karman, was a pioneer in supersonic flight. 'The story goes that some of the participants in the Manhattan Project, speculating on how there came to be so many brilliant Hungarians in their midst, concluded that these colleagues were creatures from Mars who disguised their nonhuman origins by speaking Hungarian,' wrote Whitman.





Marina von Neumann Whitman  
THE MARTIAN'S DAUGHTER

a memoir



The book was published by the University of Michigan Press in 2012, and was dedicated to the rising generation, 'on whom, as always, the hope of the world rests'.

Whitman began the memoir by writing about her immigrant parents who fled in the mass exodus from Hungary in the 1930s to the US. In the next 25 years, her father was responsible for the development of major scientific breakthroughs such as game theory, the bomb, and the programmable computer.

'He chose A-bomb targets in Japan, advocated a pre-emptive attack on the Soviet Union, and was the most influential member of the Atomic Energy Commission,' wrote Whitman. He guided the careers of two other prominent scientists, Robert Oppenheimer and Edward Teller.

She said that as the daughter of the Martian, she was an officer of the General Motors Corporation, and then served as a member of the President's Council of Economic Advisers. 'I became the first woman on the President's Council of Economic Advisers when I was appointed by Richard Nixon,' she wrote.

She began to create a professional reputation distinct from her father's. Whitman defied her father's expectations by building a career while raising a beautiful family. 'Perhaps the most powerful motivator of all was my determination to escape from the shadow of this larger-than-life parent, my desire to prove him wrong in his fear that my marriage would thwart his hopes and ambitions for my future,' she wrote.

Whitman remembers her parents to be the golden couple of Jewish origin. She hated her mother for hiding her Jewish identity. Later on, she found out that most of her schoolmates and colleagues went through this phase of hiding their Jewish identities because of shame, guilt and fear.

'Throughout my childhood and my adolescence, my mother impressed on me the importance of concealing my Jewish ancestry, convincing me that it was some sort of shameful secret', wrote Whitman.

Whitman switched her narrative towards her successful academic and professional life. It appeared to be a bildungsroman, though it shifted to a stream-of-consciousness style of narration. She cleverly shifted from history, politics, and economics to personal life narration from time to time.

**W**hile watching the Christopher Nolan movie 'Oppenheimer', the audience wondered why the character of John von Neumann was missing, **Whitman gave a glimpse of the proceedings, 'While I was absorbed in my busy but sheltered college life, my father was caught up in a whirlwind at the centre of which was Robert Oppenheimer.**



Whitman was all at once a successful student, daughter, wife and mother but she seemed to have failed on one or two occasions. Once during a course given by the Columbia Business School, she failed to get an A grade. She considered this a shame when compared to her very successful father.

She also condemned the 'Pittsburgh Post-Gazette' and other media which tried to objectify her. One news item said, 'She bristles at the thought of becoming the sex symbol of the Nixon Administration, and her tall good looks are more a cross between country wholesome and middle European than Hollywood-style sexy.'

While watching the Christopher Nolan movie 'Oppenheimer', the audience wondered why the character of John von Neumann was missing, Whitman gave a glimpse of the proceedings, 'While I was absorbed in my busy but sheltered college life, my father was caught up in a whirlwind at the centre of which was Robert Oppenheimer.

'Oppenheimer, who, as head of the Manhattan Project, had successfully led his team to victory in the race against Germany to produce an atomic bomb, was enjoying the adulation of a grateful nation'.

The wealthy investment banker, Lewis Strauss, the chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Institute for Advanced Studies, was behind the cancellation of the security licence of Oppenheimer. He was like a godfather to the Neumann family but Marina's father, who was one of the jury members, rejected the false accusations against Oppenheimer.

'My father had described himself in a letter to me as "an ambitious bastard," and that trait had been implanted in my genes and upbringing'. Whitman could be ambitious and honest at the same time.

Whitman moved on to criticise the Richard Nixon Administration. 'In foreign policy, Nixon had long been known as an anti-communist hawk and had acquired a reputation as "tricky Dick" when he painted his opponent as a communist "fellow traveller" during his successful race for a Senate seat in California in 1950', she wrote.

She pointed out Richard Nixon's secretiveness and paranoia, his method of using legal and illegal methods to destroy his political enemies and his secret bombings of Cambodia.

Whitman described the personal and professional life of her parents in the backdrop of Hitler's regime to Richard Nixon's administration, during and after the world wars.

Whitman explored everything from the rationing of bread to Keynesian Economics, from rumours in the family circle to the scandals in the White House. The rising young daughter of the renowned mathematician indeed has a mind of her own.

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*Surya Joy is a Research Scholar,  
Department of English, University of Kerala.*





## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pax Lumina 4(5) / 2023 / 81



Dear Editor,

I read the latest issue of Pax Lumina while in California. I appreciate the COVERAGE of Topics and especially those with Focus on Manipur Violence.

**Hardev Singh Virk**, Mohali/California.

Dear Editor,

Just finished reading July 2023 issue of PaxLumina. Thanks a lot for sharing the same. It is, Indeed, a relevant theme of this month. Some of the articles are very inspiring and information based. Articles on identity are truly eye opening.

**Professor Sr. Christina Louis** (Principal),  
St. Joseph's Girls degree college, Sardhana, Meerut.

Dear Editor,

Thank you for sending the latest issue of Pax Lumina. Inspiring and challenging are the articles on identity, violence and peace. Excellent presentation. In places like Manipur, peace is possible only when human consciousness is evolved to such a level that it can transcend the boundaries of ethnicity and tribalism. It is true of all those places of the world where any conflict exists.

Best regards,

**Jacob Parappally** MSFS

Dear Editor,

The July issue of Pax Lumina has very well focused on the Manipur issue with analysis of identity, violence and peace. It is good to make the issue of Manipur known to the international community which Pax Lumina has candidly done. The topics were presented very well with relevant, apt and attractive photos. Congratulations to the managing editor and the Team

Yours sincerely,

**Dr. Mathew Aerthayil**, Director AADI (Attappadi Adivasi Development Initiatives), Palakkad.

Dear Editor,

Thank you for July 2023 volume of Pax Lumina on Manipur riots. Let us join together for peace at least in India.

**N.P. Hafiz Mohamad**, Calicut.

Dear Editor,

Congratulations to you and the Pax Lumina Team for bringing out a timely volume on "Identity, Violence and Peace" even as the embers of the violence in Manipur are still burning. The many articles in the issue highlight the need to celebrate our multiple identities rather than weaponize our identity to target other communities. I am sure the readers of this issue will get the message loud and clear.

Best wishes,

**Dr. Denzil Fernandes**,  
Indian Social Institute, Delhi.

Dear Editor,

Well done. Super job.

**John Dardis**, Rome

Dear Editor,

Well researched, a mine of information and suggestions for reconciliation on the Manipur Issue. The Pax Lumina needs to be studied, reflected, discussed!

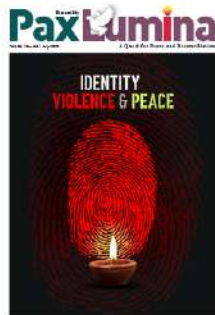
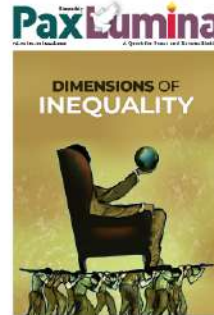
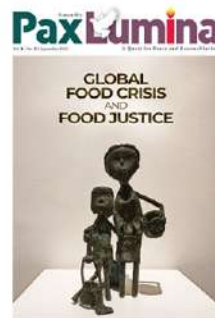
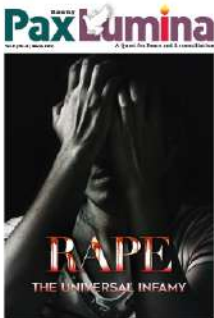
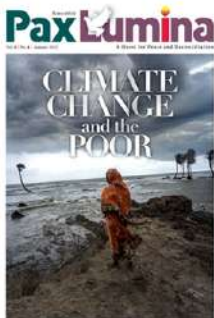
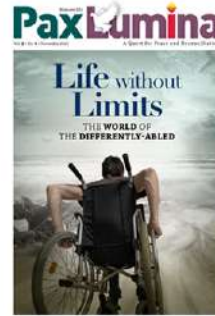
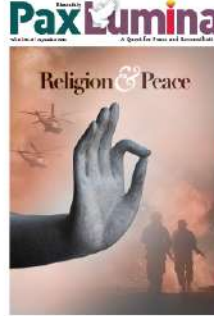
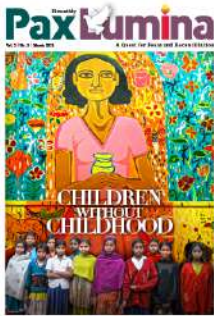
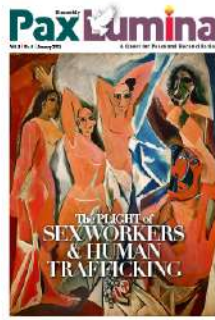
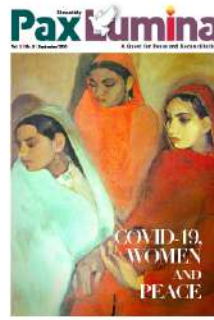
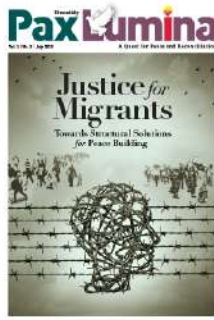
**Joel Urumpil**

Dear Editor,

Greetings. Thanks for the copy of Pax Lumina - The content and the layout are excellent. I am happy to see an article on Jesuit Worldwide Learning project.

All the best.

**Francis P. Xavier**, SJ,  
Global Chief Academic Officer,  
Jesuit Worldwide Learning (JWL), Switzerland.



# Center for Peace and Justice (XLRI) & LIPI ONLINE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN **PEACE STUDIES**



**CENTRE  
FOR PEACE  
AND JUSTICE  
(XLRI)**



CERTIFICATE COURSE IN PEACE STUDIES IS PART OF NON-PROFIT INITIATIVE OF  
CENTRE FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE, XLRI, JAMSHEDPUR AND LIPI, KOCHI.

Jointly Offered by  
**Centre for Peace and Justice (XLRI), JAMSHEDPUR  
& Loyola Institute of Peace and International Relations (LIPI), KOCHI**

The course will consist of online sessions held on Saturdays, along with project components.

**SCOPE:** The course primarily aims at fostering peace in the contemporary context. It also envisages fostering of right attitudes and values along with enhancing professional skills. The Course Certificate adds to the academic credentials of the participants.

**ASSESSMENT:** Assessment will be based on active engagement and project work. The project work will be supervised by competent faculty of CPJ-XLRI & LIPI.

**TARGET GROUP:** Working Professionals, Bureaucrats, Social Workers, Activists, Artists, Researchers and College/University Students with aptitude for peace and reconciliation.

**CERTIFICATE:** The certificate awarding ceremony, scheduled for November 25, 2023, will take place at LIPI- Kochi, and to this, participants are strongly encouraged to attend in person.

## MODULES

01. UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT AND PEACE
02. CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND RECONCILIATION
03. IDENTITY, VIOLENCE AND EMPATHY
04. STRUCTURAL INEQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS
05. GENDER AND CASTE VIOLENCE
06. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR PEACE
07. WORLD RELIGIONS AND INNER PEACE
08. INTERNATIONAL PEACE INITIATIVES
09. ENVIRONMENTAL PEACE
10. EDUCATION FOR PEACE
11. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
12. PROJECT WORK/INTERNSHIP

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(Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogota, Colombia).
02. **Dr. Sophia Opatska**  
(Catholic University, Ukraine)
03. **Dr. Kifle Wansamo**  
(Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations, Nairobi)
04. **Dr. Jane Kimathi**  
(Peace Practitioner, Kenya)
05. **Prof. Ted Peters**  
(CTNS, Berkeley, California)
06. **Adv. Irfan Ali Engineer**  
(Director, Centre for Study of Society and Secularism, Mumbai)
07. **Dr. Paramjyot Singh**  
(Director, Centre for Peace and Justice, XLRI, Jamshedpur)
08. **Prof. Dr. K. Babu Joseph**  
(Former Vice Chancellor, Cochin University of Science and Technology)
09. **Dr. Jacob Thomas IAS, Retd.**  
(Editor, Pax Lumina & Ex-Additional Chief Secretary, Uttar Pradesh)
10. **Prof. Dr. M.P. Mathai**  
(Faculty, LIPI & Adjunct Professor, Gujarat Vidyapeeth)
11. **Dayabai**  
(Social Activist)
12. **Dr. Shiv Visvanathan**  
(Professor, OP Jindal Global University, Sonapat, Haryana)
13. **Prof. Kuruvilla Pandikattu**  
(Chair Professor, JRD Tata Foundation on Business Ethics, XLRI, Jamshedpur)
14. **Dr. Augustine Pamplany**  
(Director, ISR, Aluva)
15. **Prof. Dr. Neena Joseph**  
(Formerly Professor, Institute of Management in Government)
16. **Prof. Dr. K.M. Mathew**  
(Formerly Professor, KUFOS, Kochi)
17. **Dr. Denzil Fernandes**  
(Director, Indian Social Institute, Delhi)
18. **Dr. Binoy Pichalakkattu**  
(Director, LIPI, Kochi), et al.



**SEPTEMBER -  
NOVEMBER 2023  
12 SATURDAYS  
(9.00 AM - 12 NOON IST)**

**ADMISSION | LIMITED  
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Selected students will be offered internships at XLRI and at LIPI

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Send a brief CV and Statement of Purpose (max. no. of words 350) to [directorlipi5@gmail.com](mailto:directorlipi5@gmail.com)

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**PEACE AND RECONCILIATION NETWORK**

Jesuit Conference of South Asia  
225, Jor Bagh, New Delhi-110 003, India



**Violence is the weapon of weak,  
non-violence that of the strong.**

Mahatma Gandhi

