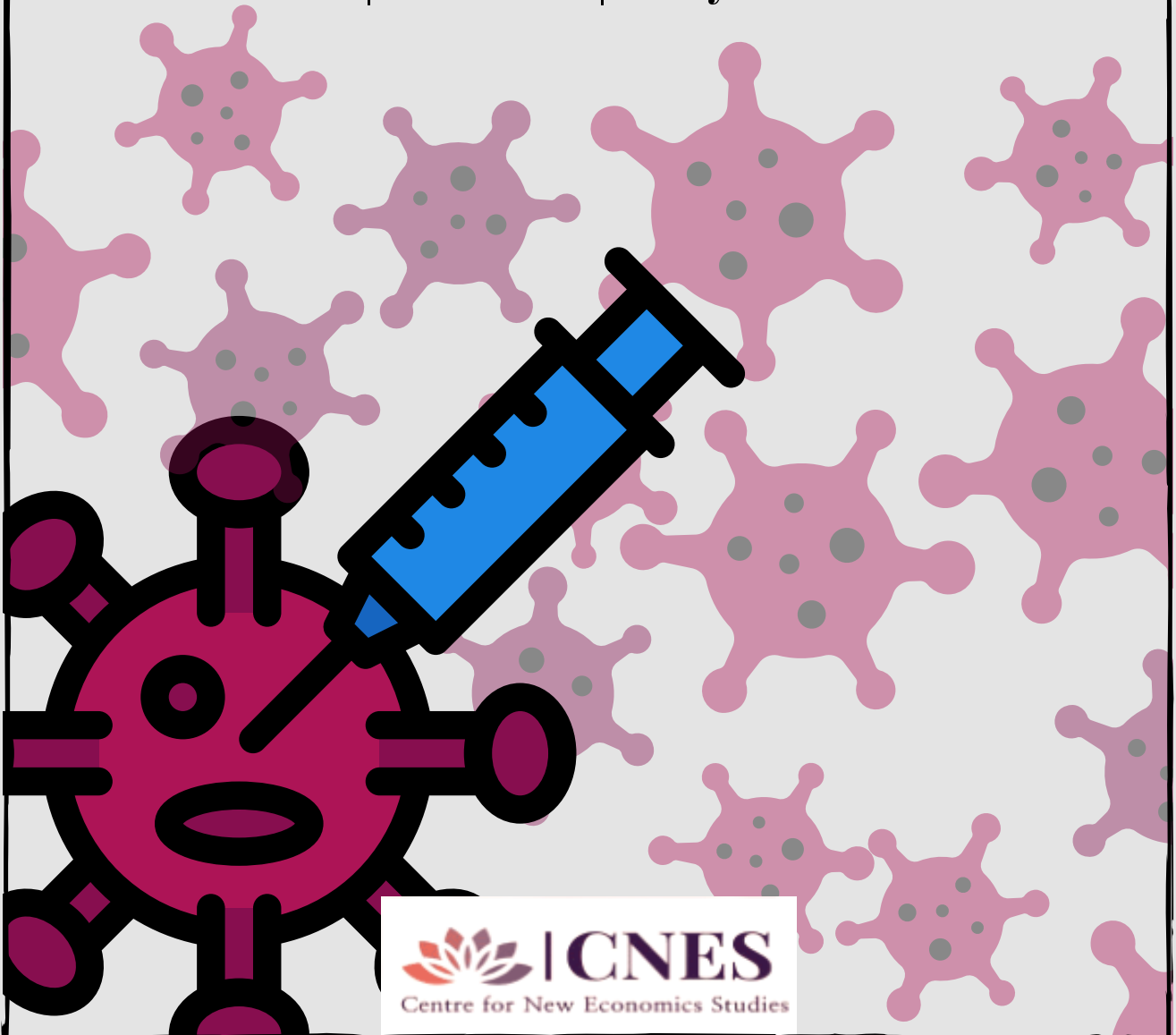


Nickeled and Dimed



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Trending | May 2021

A PARALLEL 'PUBLIC-PRIVATE' APPROACH TO THE CORONAVIRUS VACCINE

By Deepanshu Singal

With a number of vaccines coming up globally, several countries have launched widespread inoculation drives. Although most of these producers are private players (barring some like the Chinese manufacturer Sinopharm), the inoculation process remains largely government controlled. Though it makes sense for government control to be put in place at this time, a planned privatisation of the vaccine's production and distribution could complement these efforts tremendously.

According to a report in ThePrint, India was not ready to bring the vaccines in the private sector because of limited stocks and a global urgency to inoculate the priority groups i.e., the frontline workers and people with comorbid conditions. India is the world's largest producer of vaccines and a recent NDTV report indicates that there shall be no shortage of supply of vaccines in India should the government choose to allow some extent of privatisation. In fact, it goes on to say that India is able to export a huge chunk of vaccines to neighbouring states, almost free of cost to ensure that the already produced vaccines do not expire and go waste. Although officially India's 'Vaccine Maitri' was meant as a gesture of goodwill towards neighbours/poorer friendly nation states to help them combat coronavirus, some critics see it as a mere attempt at consolidating India's dwindling relations abroad.

There is clearly a capacity for India to produce more doses and distribute them to more Indians (who can afford it) through already well-established private channels. Most of the vaccines for diseases other than coronavirus are privately produced and distributed. In India, one can say that, with the expertise and the scale of operations, Serum Institute of India (SII) and Bharat BioTech have a 'monopoly' over ideas of coronavirus vaccine production. Hence, for other manufacturers to start producing, there needs to be some sharing of these rights over the vaccine 'code'. In general, privatisation will allow technological transfers and help move the system closer to a 'pareto efficient' state in some sense.

The differential pricing of the vaccine in private/open channels can be justified through classic demand-supply curves. However, the price must be regulated by the government to some extent in order to prevent the market from sending the price through the roof, given a relatively inelastic private demand for the vaccine. Although the current prices are considerably lower than the foreign counterparts according to the SII statement, the politics and scrutiny of the opposition parties in India over it hasn't stopped. The big question that remains for now is, how the government will handle this. Ideally, it should subsidise vaccines to the government hospitals in order to make it accessible to the poorer population.

The privatisation of the coronavirus vaccine has numerous pros at the cost of increased price. Practically, this increased price (as long as it is somewhat regulated and does not go through the ceiling) should not be a problem as the primary target of this market would be to make the vaccines available to corporates and private individuals and entities like schools, hospitals who can afford to administer the vaccine at market price. Opening of the private channels would speed up the vaccination rate, allowing faster resuming of economic activity throughout the country. This will allow the vaccines to reach places where the government couldn't meet the demand. This would also boost productivity in the healthcare sector because it would open more channels of inoculations of the citizens.

Along with this, a certain level of Vaccine Universalisation and Vaccine Nationalism must also be practiced. Given the worsening conditions in the country, a move towards universalisation i.e., removal of any and all eligibility criteria for receiving the vaccine, at least in the adult populations, is a must. In this regard, the central government's move to bring the eligibility age criteria down to 18 years is quite reassuring. However, the potential roadblock to this would only be in the supply side of the vaccine. Given India's huge youth population, the suppliers (governmental and private) need to make sure that the demand is satisfied, for the move to be a success. With very low vaccination rates, India also needs to rethink its 'Vaccine Maitri' and practice some kind of vaccine nationalism, where the export of the vaccine is slowed down for the domestic demand to be satisfied.

In conclusion, privatisation will in a way incentivise these firms to produce more (to the fullest of their capacities), expediting the inoculation drives and simultaneously generate extra revenue in the process – a win-win situation for the government and the private sector.



IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLE'S REPRESENTATION ACT IN ELECTIONS

By Sanchali Bhowmik

Representation of People's Act, 1951

The Act was enacted for the citizens of the country to know about the candidates who fill the seats of the Houses of the Parliament and each State based on the terms of their qualification and disqualification. This will benefit the citizens to vote as it will help them get to know the best candidate while standing for elections. A candidate gets disqualified if there are any criminal allegations against them or even if the applicant has been sentenced previously for any offense that they have committed or been complicit in. The Article focuses on important aspects highlighting the parts of the Act i.e. Article 324 to 329 Part XV of the Act. It enumerates the provisions that an individual with criminal past record and convictions cannot take part in the electoral seats of both the Houses of the Parliament.

Grounds of disqualification for a Representative

There are several provisions which deal with the candidate's disqualifications which are dealt with in this article. Some of the provisions which are enumerated here are Section 8 of the Representation of People's Act, Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 Section 11 of the Customs Act, 1962 Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 The Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, and The Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988. There are remedies as well available to people who can take part in the election even if they are convicted. One of the landmark judgments 'Lily Thomas vs Union of India' sets the guidelines for remedies for those who wish to contest in the election of both the Houses after conviction.

How did the Act affect the West Bengal 2021 elections

This article mainly focuses on the recent elections that were held in West Bengal and deals with the recent turnover of events that led the Supreme Court to intervene. During elections, it should be kept in mind that fundamental rights of any citizen in India should not be violated. The rally's in Bengal were violating the basic fundamental rights i.e. Articles 21 and 14 of the Constitution. One cannot bring religious slogans and lure people into campaigning and voting. The chanting of any religious slogan to gain electoral benefit is a serious offence under the Indian Penal Code and the People's Representation Act. This is a serious ground as it is a clear violation under Sections 123 and 125 of the Act and this is what was raised in the Supreme Court as a plea as well.

Any kind of appeal by any religious persons, group, temple, mosque, church, and others to cast their vote in favor of a specific party must be counted as a serious violation of the law. It is an offense not only under the Act but also under the IPC. The plea reads, it is akin to committing fraud upon the constitution of India alongside citizens of India, and they must be barred from fighting elections or participating in any election in the future. The plea also stated that the election commission and parliament did not frame any law and rule to conduct elections in different phases to favor any one political party in any state. Therefore the impugned decision of the election commission is unlawful and violated Art.21. It must be quashed and elections must be held in one phase in Bengal as well as in Assam, like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Puducherry.



US WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN: IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

By Amisha Singh

In a recent televised address, US President Joe Biden announced the withdrawal of all combat troops from Afghanistan by September 11, ending the longest-running war in American history, which witnessed the death of over 2300 US soldiers, lakhs wounded, countless Afghan lives lost, and an estimated expenditure of \$2 trillion. The removal of approximately 3000 troops happens to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks, which provoked the US invasion of Afghanistan.

Timeline of the US war in Afghanistan

In October of 2001, the American and British forces carried out 'Operation Enduring Freedom' that managed to soften the Taliban defenses, following which several US Special forces, Northern Alliance, and ethnic Pashtun anti-Taliban forces provided support on the ground. In December 2001, Hamid Karzai was elected to head the Afghan Interim Administration, subsequent to which the UNSC established the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to assist the new authority. In 2020, the US and Taliban signed an agreement paving the way for the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, following which US Defense Secretary, announced plans to halve the troops to 2500 by January 2021. In the recent address, Joe Biden announced that the US would be unable to meet the May 1st deadline as laid down in the agreement but instead the troops would retreat completely by September 11, 2021.

Implications and the way ahead for India

The withdrawal of the US, as well as NATO troops from Afghanistan, has become a matter of great concern for the South Asian countries, especially India, who are wary of the resurgence of the Taliban and the country again becoming a haven for terrorists. The presence of the US, NATO and ISAF troops on ground checked such mis-adventurism to a great degree. However, the withdrawal of troops is bound to increase the likelihood of such practices gaining traction again, which is why India has not been particularly appreciative of this move but has accepted it for the sake of the greater good. In light of the withdrawal of troops, India might use its role in the regional efforts to bring peace and stability in Afghanistan to ensure that the Afghan territory cannot be used by anti-India forces.

MEA spokesperson iterated, "We are closely following the ongoing intra-Afghan peace progress. Afghan people have seen more than four decades of war and unrest and deserve long-lasting peace and development." India is already playing an active role in working with the Afghan stakeholders, alongside the regional and international partners in deciding the next steps after the withdrawal. In an official statement from the MEA, India reiterated its support for the peace process to be 'Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan controlled' which is reflective of its aim to strengthen the Afghan government and forces to maintain peace and stability in the nation. India can find an opportunity amidst the US pullout by deciding to take up the slack in the training of the Afghan army by ramping up its existing programs and training them in using special forces, missile attacks and other surgical tactics.

The changing dynamics of the Afghan state will not only have implications for its future but will weigh on the future of China, India, Russia and other regional powers. Like in the past, when India maintained a studious silence in committing troops on the ground in the US-led military coalition, it has so far been the most reticent to join the rush to embrace the Taliban. While its domestic compulsions and regional rivalries amid the coronavirus pandemic have prevented it from forcefully confronting the possibility of a Taliban return to power; it may not be able to maintain this calibrated indifference for long, especially in the event of an impending state collapse in Afghanistan. In the absence of international military personnel, these regional players will now have to evolve a more sui generis approach committed towards ensuring an enduring peace in Afghanistan while being cognizant of the peculiarities of the Afghan nation-state.

For a nation that shares historical association and a 106 km long border through the Wakhan Corridor, India must exercise greater military vigil and diplomatic tact as Afghanistan passes through yet another vicissitude in its troubled history. Qua Afghanistan, India may now have to cease viewing its involvement through the prism of domestic policy compulsions and also move beyond the traditional hyphenation of Af-Pak. The two decades of US-led efforts at nation-building will soon be put to test; while others may argue, and quite ironically so, that nation-building might just be about to begin. Notwithstanding, for India the lessons from the interplay of history and geography are all too obvious to ignore. We may do so only at our own peril.

VOLUNTARY RECRUITMENT OF WOMEN

By Diya Narag



Historically speaking the general understanding of terrorism has been associated with 'masculine' aggression, and an underlying assumption that terrorists are often men. The field of gendering terrorism is an area of study that has gained traction especially in the last two decades. It aims to view terrorism from a gendered lens.

The three specific ways of terror that have been recognized by scholars include- 'The Anarchist Wave' of the 1880s to 1920s, 'The Anti-Colonial Wave' of the 1960s to 1979, 'The New Left Wave' and 'The Religious Wave' from 1979 to present times. The first wave focused on the ideal of rebels who attacked oppressive political regimes, like the rule of the Tsars in Russia. The second wave was a range of anti-colonial movements and natives who fought back colonial masters for their freedom. The third wave was an ideological war, also called international terrorism and embodied conflicts like the Vietnam war, with a rise in communist ideology worldwide. The last wave included the rise of religious pushback, with Islam at the heart of the wave and a clash between religious and ethnic values.

Al-Shabaab as a Case Study: The active involvement of women has attracted a keen interest in the nature of recruitment tactics of terrorist organizations. In Kenya, the role played by women in organizations like Al-Shabaab has been studied closely. Such recruitment is most prominent in Kenya's coastal and north eastern counties. Women are recruited in roles of logistics planner, spies, conveners of terror cells and in some cases the masterminds behind an attack. Al-Shabaab stands for 'the youth' and emerged in the 2000s after the rise of the Jihadist movement which took place during Somalia's civil war. It remains active in Somalia, Uganda and Kenya. Fathima Badurdeen conducted primary research in this by interviewing 36 women who had returned back from terror camps, out of which 16 claimed to have voluntarily joined the organization. 'Voluntariness' is perceived as joining due to one's own volition and not being forced, threatened or deceived to join the network. Women terrorists calculate their actions "inside a matrix of constraints, social expectations and political pressures" which are not merely influenced, but are the very constituents of their decision-making processes. Al-Shabaab is an interesting case study because it analyses women's autonomy within these social structures.

Political Motivations and Religious Beliefs: As sexist notions of subservience are predominant, especially within the household, some women feel devalued and join terror groups to be emancipated through the caliphate. Women state that the ideology of the organization gave them a purpose in life, by supporting tenet like Shahid (martyrdom) or Jihad (a struggle against the non-muslims or kafirs who are enemies of Islam). Al-Shabaab propagates a theory deeming Kenya to be a Christian state that oppresses Muslims in Somalia and Kenya. Many women are moved by such an ideology and would like to protect their community against a dominant religious group that threatens their identity. Two women explained their motivations to be wives of martyrs and to play their role to support the Muslim Ummah, or community. Nine interviewees explained how ideology influenced their decisions to support the Al-Shabaab. These statements are contrary to the view that all women are 'lured' and manipulated to be 'jihadi wives' or have been brainwashed for the same.

Coercion or Volition? It is of utmost importance to evaluate the independent or autonomous decision-making that women in such organizations use to join the group. Liberal feminists would argue that women are rational beings who are capable of independent thinking. Cultural feminists are women who highlight differences between men and women and believe masculine values and views of the world shape society. They would argue that cultural factors surrounding women's conditions like the social, cultural and psychological as discussed above, affect their choices.

Autonomous agency and the patriarchal structures need to be deconstructed to analyse if one takes precedence over the other, or if they are working in tandem with each other to motivate women to join terror organizations. On one hand, women joining groups as a form of liberation from traditional oppressive gender roles would be considered liberating and on the other hand feminists would say that these very structures oppress women and propel them towards joining terror groups. If they had a real choice, or were not stifled in the first place, they wouldn't have to prove themselves and hence their choice is affected by undue influence.

The debate between reducing women's choices to their environment is blatant infantilization and to not consider their socio-cultural environment is a reductive reading. This debate is ongoing and can be argued both ways. The idea of relative autonomy needs to be studied further to understand women's agency more comprehensively. As Radical feminist Catherine Mackinnon says, a key aspect is to materially alter women's conditions by aiming at grassroots inequalities, like providing them educational and economic opportunities first, for them to make informed decisions and be active participants in any decision-making process.



PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION BILL (2019)

By Wynnona Fernandes

You only need to text your friend about how you would love to own red boots once in order to see advertisements for red boots every time you open your phone. The ‘internet’ knows you. It knows what movies you like, what your family looks like, and where you are at any moment in time. But what can it, and the corporations moulding it, do with this infinite knowledge of you?

Personal data refers to any information about an individual stored online. This includes transactions, social media posts, messages, internet histories, etc. Data of this nature has become a currency of its own, one priced at a very high value. This process of commodifying your digital presence creates incentives for those that control your information to misuse it. Which is why the government needs to establish and enforce protections to safeguard an individual's online privacy. These protections are what the Personal Data Protection (PDP) Bill aims to provide.

Rights Awarded to an Individual under PDP

(What control do you have over your information?)

The bill seeks to safeguard Personal Data, which is data tied to the identity of a person, that is, data that could be used to identify them. Sensitive Personal Data includes information such as financial data, biometric data, caste, religious, or political beliefs, etc. Under the PDP, an individual can:

1. Access their personal data, confirm whether it has been processed and request it be transferred to another company.
2. Correct inaccurate, un-updated or incomplete data.
3. Withdraw their consent to share their data. This right is referred to as “The Right To Be Forgotten”. Under it, you can have your data erased from all online platforms.

The Bill also outlines a Data Protection Authority, a committee that an individual can approach if they believe any of their rights under the PDP have been violated.

Duties of Data Fiduciaries

(What can a company do with your data?)

The PDP sets out regulations for data fiduciaries. Data fiduciaries are individuals or organisations that decide what data is processed and for what purpose. An internet service (Google), social media site (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter) or e-commerce site (Amazon, Flipkart, Mynta) would be classified as a data fiduciary.

Under the PDP these companies must :

1. Only collect data that is necessary for a clear and lawful process.
2. Inform the individual and obtain consent when their data is collected or processed.
3. Delete personal data after it has been processed.

The bill describes punishments for corporations that violate data privacy. These include hefty fines — up to ₹150 million or 4% of the firm's global turnover in the preceding financial year — and jail time.

PDP and the Government

The PDP bill has received severe criticism for the exemptions it makes for the Central Government. Under the bill, the Centre has been given the ability to process an individual's data without needing their consent. The bill also allows the Centre to command firms to share non-personal data that they have collected with the government. It does not outline how this data will be used or whether it can be shared with other private businesses. This could potentially allow the government to use this data as a surveillance tool. These criticisms are especially relevant in the wake of the government's employment of surveillance technology - for eg. in the Anti CAA protests and the Aarogya Setu app.

Nuances Necessary to the Bill

(TW : Mentions of Sexual Assault)

How does an Act differentiate between “Kill all Queers” and “Kill all Nazi's”. Between "I hate women" and "I hate sexist people". The same law that protects the survivor could also protect the abuser. Sexual assaulters could have online records of their allegations deleted and erased. Individuals could have racist, homophobic, or casteist content they created no longer linked to them. Digital memory is permanent and laws relating to erasing or updating it will fundamentally change how the internet functions. Therefore, it is necessary for these laws to be clear, well-defined and comprehensive.

Conclusion

The Personal Data Protection Bill is, in some ways, a step in the right direction. An individual's digital presence directly ties into their identity and self image. They deserve to be able to control this image, editing and updating it to make it accurate. Controlling who we are online should be our right. However, the Bill has a veiled motive - allowing the Centre better access to data it should not have. Data it can exploit. Independent checks need to be kept on this right to access and process data. The PDP Bill requires strict regulations for the government in order for it to safeguard the interests of those it aims to protect - vulnerable individuals.



FROM CHIPKO TO DISHA RAVI: ECOFEMINISM AND INTERSECTIONALITY IN INDIAN ENVIRONMENTALISM.

By Sriramy Ghanta

Environmental activism in India is largely intersectional in the manner in which it interacts with various issues pertaining to sustainability, conservation and environmental degradation. Over 40 years after the Chipko movement started, historian Ramchandra Guha wrote that in India, environmental activism arose out of the imperative of human survival. To him, this was an “environmentalism of the poor”, he argued that the present patterns of resource use disadvantaged local communities and devastated the natural environment. Furthermore, in much of the historical writing on imperialism, ecology and politics, women are hardly spoken of despite their considerable vulnerability to policies that dictate the distribution of natural resources, in turn affecting their livelihoods. In this context, the Chipko movement stood at the root of the ecofeminism approach and the involvement of women in environmental activism all over the world.

In response to the gender bias in environmental history and policy, two approaches took prominence among activists and policy-makers; the “Women, Environment and Development (WED) approach and Ecofeminism.” The WED approach emphasizes that women have a special relationship with nature owing to their daily interactions with it, as a result of the gendered division of labour. Similarly, ecofeminism too views women to be close to nature in a spiritual and conceptual sense. Françoise d'Eaubonne coined the term in reference to the ideological links between the climate crisis and gender while also highlighting the role that patriarchal societies play in the oppression of both nature and women. In particular, ecofeminism in India also has underlying interlinkages with issues of caste and class.

Ecofeminism as an approach took two major turns, namely, radical and cultural ecofeminism. The latter focuses on how ecological problems tend to affect women more than men and on the premise that women have a more sustainable relationship with nature, which is reciprocal rather than exploitative. This approach then argues that women contribute to the preservation of nature rather than just exploit its resources. Dr Vandana Shiva has been a strong advocate for this approach. Dr Shiva's Navdanya movement is an earth-centric, women-centric and farmer-led movement that focuses on the conservation of traditional varieties of seeds, organic farming practices and the rights of farmers. She claims that an “ethic of care” towards the environment informs the relationship between women and nature, not simply as a socially developed intimacy, but a biologically necessary one.

In recent times, there have been numerous reports of the effects of climate change and its impact on women. The most recent of which were the stories of the fisherwomen of Kashmir and the impact of a looming water crisis on women farmers who produce about 60 to 80 per cent of our food and 90 per cent of our dairy products. The negative externalities of tourism, excessive fertilisation of vegetable crops on floating gardens that lead to algal blooms, and the spike in pollution due to the dumping of waste in both Dal lake and Wullar lake led to a decline in the compound growth rate of fish production in the region. Fisherwomen called Gadhi-wajni have traditionally been the oldest entrepreneurs in Kashmir, even through the events of modernisation. Notably, while state authorities like LAWDA (Lakes and water development authorities) and pollution control board spent large amounts of money to rectify the wrongs, they failed to bring scientists and expert onboard in the process of formulating policies on the matter.

It is also important to note the experiences of women such as Nodeep Kaur and Disha Ravi whose voices of dissent were stifled by what is perceived as the legitimate authority of the state. Disha Ravi is a Bangalore-based environmentalist who was arrested and charged with sedition and criminal conspiracy. Ravi's alleged crimes are related to a “toolkit” document connected to India's ongoing farmer protests, which police say is evidence of a coordinated international conspiracy against India. In a statement she released after her release, she deliberates her own privilege in comparison to those who are still in jail. She writes that “although their physical forms are trapped behind bars because of collective silence, their ideas continue to live on as will the united resistance of the people.”

Nodeep Kaur was one such activist who spent 46 days in custody. She is a Dalit labour rights activist from Punjab, who was arrested by Sonipat Police on January 12, on charges of attempt to murder, rioting, and assault to deter a public servant from discharge of his duty under the Indian Penal Code, among others. Since her release after receiving bail, she accused the police of custodial torture. Moreover, she also alleged that Kundli Station House Officer Ravi Kumar had said: “Dalits can't rise so high in society that they become the voice of the people. Who gave you the right to speak for everyone?” It becomes clear that while ecofeminism may have paved a path for understanding the relationship between gender and environmentalism, it is imperative for us to acknowledge the nature of environmental issues as intersectional.



PROJECT SHAMशान

By Behind The Scenes (BTS) [Tanaya Ramani]

The second wave of Covid-19 in India saw an exponential rise in the number of cases and deaths.

Experts believe the wave was partly due to a false sense of security about the worst of the pandemic being behind India, and lack of attention paid to the augmentation of healthcare. Several cities have continuously reported a shortage of beds and resources, and deaths have risen due to lack of adequate and timely treatment. Citizens have turned to social media, with a multitude of distress calls being circulated on various platforms, amplified by friends, family and prominent influencers. Others have been working day and night to collate lists of verified resources, publishing these on social media in order to get them to those that require them. Strangers are helping strangers, by tirelessly attempting to arrange resources required for treatment.

While it is heartening to see the citizens come together in a dire situation like this, it is imperative to recognise that posting and amplifying distress calls on social media is a privilege in itself. With only a quarter of Indian households able to access the internet, the poor become doubly disadvantaged - they cannot access resources conventionally due to rampant shortages, but also unable to amplify their calls for help via social media to access help from those that are collecting information on Covid-related resources.

One such segment of society that becomes greatly invisibilised, even as they face a significantly higher risk with regards to Covid-19, are workers in crematoriums and burial grounds. While the nation vaccinated frontline workers on a priority basis, these workers have not been recognised within this category - even though they handle deceased Covid patients, putting their health at risk. They have been working long hours to keep up with the rising number of bodies to be cremated and buried - largely without enough pay, protective equipment, food as well as having to contend with regular breach of Covid protocols by grieving families.

“It’s been very difficult for us here and BBMP has not helped us in any way. They don’t give us gloves, PPE kits. Whatever we are wearing is bought by us. The only thing provided by BBMP is the JCB.” ~ Bhaskar, a digger at Kalahalli

With the aim of providing immediate relief to these workers, the Behind the Scenes team has taken up the cause of 7 burial ground workers at a burial ground in Kalahalli, Bengaluru. Our team interacted with these workers and found out that they handled about 20-30 bodies a day during the months of April-May, which has now reduced owing to new regulations. Although only 7 workers are on the government’s payroll, about 40 individuals live on the land. These are the workers’ families, who help with the work, and have been staying at the burial ground for several generations. The government is supposed to provide them with housing amenities, but has not done so yet, compelling them to live in makeshift sheds. There was one government-sanctioned toilet, which has been unusable for years, forcing these workers to use open fields near the ground - with women feeling unsafe without a private bathroom, and inconvenienced during menstruation. During summer, there is a problem of snakes and there is inadequate water provision - with only one tanker to be shared by everyone. Furthermore, they have no job security, since their jobs are not formalised and face erratic payments by the municipal corporation - they had not received their salaries for a year, which were only recently released to them. Discrimination against them is rampant, with their children being stigmatized at school and the women losing their jobs as domestic helpers once employers learnt they lived at the burial ground.

Project Shamशान has been initiated to dignify these workers. Our team is currently focusing on immediate relief in light of the pandemic that would give these diggers their right to basic sanitation and working conditions. The larger systemic issues that they face, such as caste-based discrimination, lack of health cards and affordable healthcare, lack of access to education, proper housing, social and job security as well as erratic pay will be taken up on a longer term by holding the government accountable. We will also expand to more crematoriums and burial grounds beyond Kalahalli. Dignity of labour begins with the recognition that no job is ‘dirty’ or menial and the burial ground workers are undoubtedly frontline workers. Project Shamशान is a small step towards helping them, and we have been working actively to raise funds. At the moment, we have procured 1 litre steel thermoses, reusable masks and gloves and sanitisers for them but there is more to be done.



Burial ground at Kollahalli, Bangalore

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OTHER INITIATIVES BY THE CENTRE FOR NEW ECONOMICS STUDIES

SAMVAAD: A student run discussion forum initiated by the Centre for New Economics Studies. The forum seeks to promote active public engagement by distinguished scholars who have expertise in areas of law, economics and other social studies, present an interdisciplinary perspective.

CONVERSATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES: The student-run publication is an in-house, peer-review journal of OP Jindal Global University which aims to promote a variety of perspectives from different scholars over a stated theme.

INFOSPHERE: Being the centre's latest research platform, InfoSphere offers a space for a fact-based, objective analysis on some of the most contemporary issues of economic and social policy concern in South Asia.

INTERLINKED: Interlinked is a podcast series which focuses on topics relating to globalisation. It provides valuable insights on global issues that help understand India better in its socio-political climate.

AZAAD AWAAZ: This monthly magazine (Patrika) aims to focus on the marginalized sections whose voices are often muted in the cacophony of flashy mainstream media discourse.

SWABHIMAAN: The premise of Swabhimaan is based on the themes of Gender and Entrepreneurship but not limited to the conventional meanings they are commonly perceived as.