

# Physician, Heal Thyself

## The Rhetoric and Reality of the Anti-Globalisation Brigades

○ Madhu Kishwar

**N**o society can make progress unless there is a deep-rooted sense of “we” and “us” pervading all sections of that society, even while there may be a number of internal differences between them. No country can become economically powerful if its economic and social elite does not feel ashamed of the destitution and degradation of their fellow citizens. No society has the right to be called civilised if it fails to provide a life of dignity and opportunities for advancement to all its members.

One of the outstanding achievements of our freedom movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi was that people of different strata, castes, communities, regions and economic sectors came together on a common platform with a sense of a shared mission and a shared destiny to realise certain common purposes. Gandhi tried to create an atmosphere whereby a significant section of wealthy and relatively powerful groups began to use their clout, not just for their own self-interest, but in favour of marginalised members of society. Large sections of our people were able to draw strength from their traditional group identities while rising above various ‘us’ and ‘they’ divides, thus experiencing a sense of ‘we’ that cut across class, caste, religious and other divides.

In today’s India, that sense of a shared destiny has been seriously

eroded. The poor are seen as a drag on our society, an embarrassment to be got rid of or wished away out of sight. For example, when people from destitute farm families are forced off their lands to come in search of meagre livelihoods in cities, and are compelled to live on footpaths and in slums, not just the urban educated elite but also most of our

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policy makers and administrators see them as a menace and a source of urban squalor. They forget that the domestic help and the gardeners and chauffeurs they hire, and the tailors, plumbers, electricians and auto- and cycle-rickshaw pullers whose services they use on a regular basis at abysmally low wage rates, all reside in these slums.

### Widening the Divide

The increasing emotional gap between the urban elite and the rural population is even more glaring. It is fairly common, for instance, for our national newspapers to report untimely rains in mid-April with the

headline: “Welcome showers in North India bring down temperatures” – without realising that the mid-April showers that the urbanites welcome signify the destruction of ready-to-harvest crops and great economic distress for our already impoverished farmers.

Unfortunately, most of those who champion the rights of the poor are not working to bridge this divide but are further widening it. Too many of our social movement leaders and non-government organisations (NGOs), who work hard to bring to focus the plight of the impoverished and the marginalised, seem to act out of the belief that they can safeguard the interests of the vulnerable only by raging against and undermining the legitimate interests of others.

The tendency to see all social inequities and poverty-related problems only through the prism of class struggle, and to project the interests of the various economic strata as being permanently mutually hostile, has remained dominant among intellectuals and activists in India, despite their own elite backgrounds and despite the fact that India’s social reality is far more complex. For example, many of those attacked by the Left as rich farmers or *kulaks* earn less than a Class IV employee in a government office. A large number of them are, in fact, heavily indebted and can keep their farms running only by

sending off one or more of their sons to work for meagre wages in extremely low-paid occupations. And yet those who organise the landless poor tend to seek all the answers to the poverty of farm labourers by whipping up sentiments against landowning farmers, rather than by understanding the causes for the poverty of the entire farm sector. Similarly, many of our left leaders have articulated the rights of industrial workers in ways that forced the closure of those industries, not realising that ensuring the economic viability and vibrancy of industries is in the long-term interests of workers, for it gives them relatively better bargaining power than a sick enterprise or a loss-making industry.

### The New Crusaders

Till about the 1980s, organised Left parties and intellectuals exercised a tremendous ideological influence in imposing a restrictive environment on economic activities. However, in the last two decades, that space has increasingly been occupied by a highly articulate group of NGOs who have assumed a crusading role as the Anti-Globalisation Brigades (AGBs). These groups specialise in whipping up frenzied campaigns against the liberalisation of India's economy – campaigns for which generous political and monetary support is available from a host of Western funding agencies, most of whom work in close collaboration with their respective governments. In the year 2003 alone, the Indian

NGO sector received \$1 billion from various foreign donors. A very substantial part of these funds are going to AGBs, who, with these fabulous grants at their disposal, are then to be seen jet-setting from one exotic destination to another, preaching, mainly to their own incestuous fraternities and to

and defeat the forces of globalisation – all with generous monies, of course, from the aid organisations and governments of “capitalist imperialist” countries!

The entire thrust of AGB politics is to internationalise every local problem that comes to their notice. When there is a riot in U.P. or

Gujarat, you find the AGBs running to Western capitals to give fiery speeches on human rights violations, instead of being on the scene to protect those under attack or to organise relief for them. The AGBs want global networks for themselves, but insist that the rest of us must live like frogs in a well. They may purchase their cheese and chocolates from Switzerland and France, but if they see an Indian villager

buying an inexpensive packet of Maggi noodles, they go into fits of anxiety over the increasing hold upon Indians of decadent, Western consumer culture.

### Pious Banalities

Since Arundhati Roy has emerged as the most celebrated pamphleteer of India's AGBs, I would like to illustrate the basic features of their worldview by quoting from a speech delivered by Ms. Roy at the World Social Forum (WSF) meeting at Porto Allegre in Brazil in 2003. This speech presents, in a very condensed and accurate form, all the key diagnostic clichés offered by our *samajik neem hakims* (quack social scientists) to explain what ails our politics and economy.

“India – the world's biggest democracy – is currently at the forefront of the corporate



**Mumbai 2004: Our world's not for sale, but our social concern comes with a price tag. (Photo, courtesy *The Indian Express*)**

foreign donors and governments, of the need to protect our people from both the global economy and the evil influence of Western culture.

The AGBs seldom bother to explain how any economy can be kept ‘closed-door’ without a draconian bureaucracy, backed up by a matching police establishment, to prevent the flow of goods and capital across its borders. They generate the politics of emotive outbursts and think that these can be a substitute for any meaningful analysis of social and economic problems. While these mantrachanting leftists once called upon the workers of the world to unite under the red flag to defeat the forces of world capitalism, they have now recycled their slogans to call upon the NGOs of the world to unite under the World Social Forum

globalisation project. Its 'market' of one billion people is being prised open by the WTO. Corporatisation and Privatisation are being welcomed by the government and the Indian elite. It is not a coincidence that the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, the Disinvestment Minister – the men who signed the deal with Enron in India, the men who are selling the country's infrastructure to corporate multi-nationals, the men who want to privatise water, electricity, oil, coal, steel, health, education and tele-communication – are all members or admirers of the RSS. The RSS is a right-wing, ultra-nationalist Hindu guild, which has openly admired Hitler and his methods.

"The dismantling of democracy is proceeding with the speed and efficiency of a Structural Adjustment Programme. While the project of corporate globalisation rips through people's lives in India, massive privatisation and labour 'reforms' are pushing people off their land and out of their jobs. Hundreds of impoverished farmers are committing suicide by consuming pesticide. Reports of starvation deaths are coming in from all over the country...

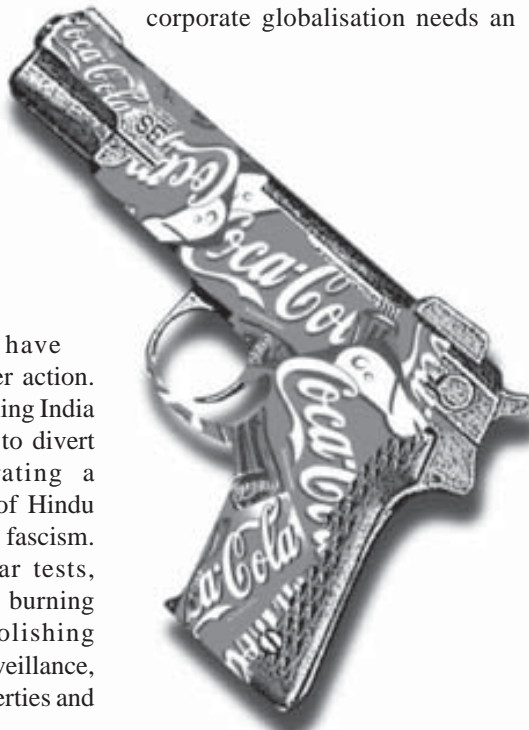
"The two arms of the Indian government have evolved the perfect pincer action. While one arm is busy selling India off in chunks, the other, to divert attention, is orchestrating a howling, baying chorus of Hindu nationalism and religious fascism. It is conducting nuclear tests, rewriting history books, burning churches, and demolishing mosques. Censorship, surveillance, the suspension of civil liberties and

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human rights, the definition of who is an Indian citizen and who is not, particularly with regard to religious minorities, is becoming common practice now...

"[I]t is a myth that the free market breaks down national barriers. The free market does not threaten national sovereignty, it undermines democracy.

"As the disparity between the rich and the poor grows, the fight to corner resources is intensifying. To push through their 'sweetheart deals,' to corporatise the crops we grow, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the dreams we dream, corporate globalisation needs an



international confederation of loyal, corrupt, authoritarian governments in poorer countries to push through unpopular reforms and quell the mutinies...

"The corporate revolution will collapse if we refuse to buy what they are selling – their ideas, their version of history, their wars, their weapons, their notion of inevitability.

"Remember this: We be many and they be few. They need us more than we need them."

### **Toy Guns, Straw Targets**

In January this year, Ms. Roy gave concrete shape to her crusade against Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) at the WSF meet held in Mumbai, by giving a call to the AGBs to target two MNCs involved in Iraq and drive them out of business by boycotting their goods. The absurdity of this call is exemplified by the fact that Ms. Roy doesn't even bother to mention which MNCs she wants her followers to target.

The farcical nature of these boycotts becomes evident when one remembers that last year, the AGBs had issued a similar call against American imperialism by pasting stickers and posters, mainly in and around their own offices, asking people to boycott McDonald's, Pepsi and Coke. The manufacturers of soft drinks and junk food undoubtedly make for easy and culturally compelling targets, but they certainly do not represent the full and real might of the imperialist West. If the AGBs are truly anti-globalisation, why don't they kick-start their campaign by eschewing foreign aid money, foreign consultancies, foreign TV channels, *firangi* book publishers, internet services, fax machines, Nokia cell phones, IBM computers, Ford, Honda or Suzuki cars, Sony TVs, and DVDs as well as all the

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aeroplanes they ride while on their ceaseless globe-trotting? Could it be that they really have not understood that microchips are the real symbols and enablers of globalisation – not potato chips?

### **The Algebra of Bloated Rhetoric**

There are basic flaws in the way the AGBs diagnose India's problems. To take Ms. Roy's rhetoric point-by-point:

➤ In the AGBs worldview, globalisation = privatisation = selling off India's assets to evil marauders. All this is ostensibly carried out by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and other rightwing members of the Hindu "guild" who are Hitlerian fascists out to muzzle the free press and trample underfoot the rights of the disadvantaged. The AGBs have hypnotised themselves into believing that the opening-up of the Indian economy is due to the evil designs of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and their RSS cohorts. The truth is that the position of the RSS outfit, the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch, on globalisation is, in fact, identical to that of most AGBs. The BJP position, on the other hand, is much closer to that of the Congress Party of the late 1980s and the early 1990s. Rajiv Gandhi was the first politician to have sensed the need to open up the Indian economy, but he was successfully thwarted by his own party-men because of his inexperience. Therefore, it fell to

Narasimha Rao to give the reforms process its earliest real impetus. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee of the BJP wants to carry forward the process of reforms that the Congress set in motion. He, however, is also being obstructed in his endeavours by influential elements in his own party, as well as in other outfits of the Sangh Parivar, who share many of Arundhati Roy's phobic fantasies.

➤ In her eagerness to prove an integral connection between communal violence and a 'sell-out' to MNCs, Ms. Roy attributes corrupt deals, like the one signed with Enron, to the BJP regime. In actual fact, it was the Congress who first signed the contract with Enron. The deal came undone during the BJP regime – not so much by design as by a series of unpredictable events. Leaders from both parties, as well as from the Shiv Sena, are alleged to have lined their pockets with hefty bribes paid by Enron.

### **A Convenient Amnesia**

➤ It is only very recently that the AGBs appear to have noticed, with the excessive zeal of new converts, that Indian farmers are committing suicide by consuming pesticides. Unfortunately, the debt-ridden farmers of India have been committing suicide for much longer than the Anti-Globalisation Brigade finds it convenient to remember. Till not very long ago, AGB narratives on the rural poor were confined largely to the oppression inflicted by the landed peasantry on landless wage earners. The chronic economic distress of the Indian farmer did not evoke a sympathetic response among them. The plight of the Indian farmer became a popular subject of NGO discourse only when globalisation started hurting First World economies. Western governments, needing a moral arsenal to oppose the emerging freer

trade regime, have made Third World corpse-counting into a lucrative career option for all those willing to obstruct economic reforms.

➤ So mesmerised are the AGBs by their own rhetoric that they fail to notice that the cotton-producing farmers of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra choose to commit suicide by consuming the same sub-standard *swadeshi* pesticides they are forced to use for their crops. What more do we need to drive home the sad truth that 'Made in India' pesticides are great at killing human beings but are useless for killing pests? The Indian farmer, however, is denied access to far less expensive, relatively safer *videshi* pesticides – as a result, he keeps losing his crops and falls deeper and deeper into debt. Indian farmers did not become impoverished after the arrival of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) or the BJP. There is a much longer history of oppression and exploitation by almost all the governments of post-Independence India. Whether left, right or centre, successive *sarkars* have devised no less devious ways than did the British of depressing the incomes of people in the farm sector and of siphoning off economic surplus from rural areas.

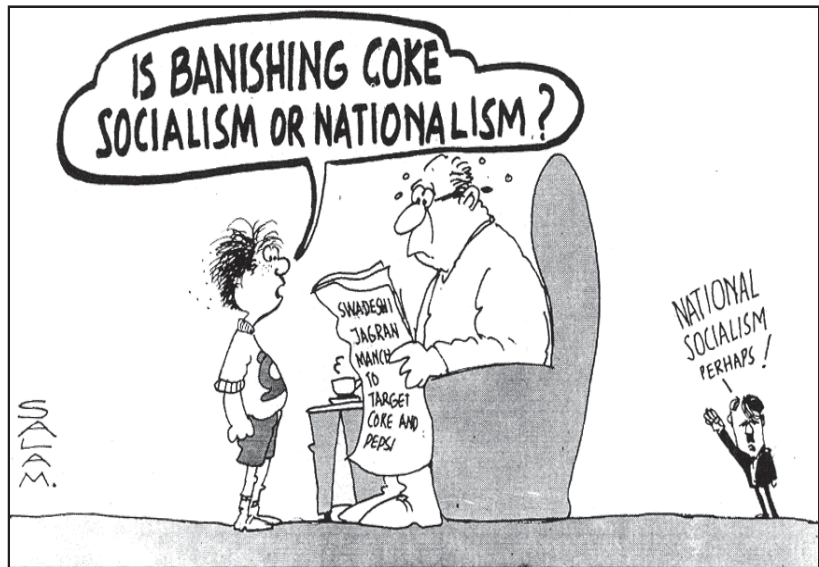
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## Recalling the Midnight Knock

➤ Ms. Roy and the AGBs would have us believe that the forces behind India's liberalisation are also hard at work undermining democracy, promoting rabid censorship and leading us into a descent into fascism. Facts tell a contrary tale. The closed-door economy was synonymous with a servile, state-controlled broadcast media. In print, a regime of government-rationed paper-quotas was used, along with patronage through release of advertising to political sycophants, to arm-twist newspaper establishments into playing a game of cautious "neutrality". Today we have dozens

of private news channels beaming more uncensored news to our homes than was ever possible during the heyday of State-monopolised TV. Easy access to the Internet has made censorship even more difficult. To understand how much our media has matured, compare the kind of well-deserved outrage expressed by our newspapers following the Gujarat pogroms of 2002 to the newspaper coverage of human rights violations in Nagaland or Kashmir during the euphoric days of the closed-door economy.

➤ The iron-fisted clampdown on the press during the Emergency of 1975-77 was not the only sign of the political authoritarianism of that time. The independence of the judiciary and even the powers of Parliament were severely curtailed as the entire country was subjected to an excessively centralised regime. The Emergency represented the height of India's closed-door economy and spelled the denial of economic freedom to many segments of society, especially the peasantry. Not surprisingly, the toughest challenge to the Emergency came from Punjab



Courtesy: The Economic Times

farmers, led by the Akali Dal, who had been fighting the government's policy of compulsorily procuring wheat at officially-controlled prices. *Shahidi Jathas* courted arrest every single day of the 18 month long Emergency, with lakhs filling up government jails to protest against the lack of economic liberty and the muzzling of political freedom.

➤ The worst communal outbursts and riots in post-Independence India took place during the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, long before India began opening up to global markets. During the same period, most of the

border states witnessed secessionist movements involving virulent popular upsurges against the authoritarian role of the Centre. Chief Ministers of almost all states in India were in constant battle with the Central Government over issues of regional autonomy. The secessionist upsurge in Punjab, and the consequent Hindu-Sikh conflict of the 1980s and 1990s, were settled only in the post-reform period. Kashmir witnessed its first free and basically fair elections in October 2002. A measure of peace with dignity has been restored in the perennially troubled North-Eastern States, including Nagaland, once racked by the longest and bloodiest secession movement in India.

### Agents of Change

➤ It is a fact that the hardcore *hindutvavadis* and the Islamic *jehadis* have not made peace with this changing face of India. But their influence has been substantially reduced. Politicians of all hues have had to learn that they cannot stay in power for long if they are openly associated with fomenting communal hatred. This has forced a sea change in the strategies (and, hopefully, perhaps the attitudes) of

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several BJP leaders ever since they came to power. They seem to have understood that, leave alone foreign investors and NRIs, even the resident sons and daughters of Mother India will not invest in this country if there are recurring outbreaks of deadly, inter-community violence. Political leaders such as Chandrababu Naidu of Telugu Desam-ruled Andhra Pradesh, S.M. Krishna of Congress-ruled Karnataka and Buddhadeb Bhattacharya of West Bengal's Communist Party (Marxist) are far more vigilant that the country in general, and their states in particular, are not associated with caste, class or communal violence because they are all vigorously inviting investments in their states. Bhattacharya has let it be known to his CPM cadres that they cannot create law and order problems through irresponsible and violent trade unionism because he is no less keen on inviting Indian and foreign investment to his state than the BJP leaders.

➤ States like Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka that are wooing capital are precisely the ones that are bringing in measures for reforms in governance. By contrast, states like Bihar which have not responded to the challenges of globalisation remain the poorest, the worst administered and the most corrupt. Laloo Yadav, no doubt, deserves credit for keeping communal violence out of Bihar. But, under his rule, Bihar is witnessing serious human rights violations at the hands of the criminal mafias that have come to rule the state and the economy is hopelessly stagnant. Consequently, millions of the educated and the illiterate alike are abandoning Bihar in search of job opportunities outside the state.

### **Rationalising Governance**

➤ A helpful outcome of a globalising economy is that it reduces some of the top-heavy

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powers and oppressive influence of many national governments, making the world relatively more democratic. Many countries, where business communities have been freed from the clutches of insular and corrupt bureaucracies, politicians and army generals, are more democratic today than they were when they were locked behind protectionist walls. China, the former Soviet Union, Korea, Malaysia and Indonesia have all yielded relatively more space in recent years for voices of dissent than was available before. Even within India we have witnessed more democratic reforms in governance during the take-off period of economic reforms than in the previous five decades. To cite

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just a few initiatives that are, however, not yet implemented with full seriousness:

- a) Enactment of the Right to Information Act at the Central level with several regional governments following suit with similar laws. The Act is not radical enough and has not been appropriately implemented but it represents an important breakthrough.
- b) Compulsory disclosure of assets for all those entering the electoral arena – this may start to bring in a measure of accountability for politicians.
- c) A law mandating disclosure of criminal records at the time of filing nomination.
- d) Open voting for the Rajya Sabha to prevent MPs from flouting party discipline and selling their “secret” ballot to the highest bidder.
- e) A fairly stringent law against defections, to curb horse-trading after elections.
- f) Important first steps towards e-governance. This includes computerising land records so that farmers can secure title-documents without having to grovel before the local *patwari* (the government land-record keeper). Government rules and regulations are beginning to be simplified to reduce the harassment of citizens by government officials.

### **Our Predatory Babudom**

➤ One of the big campaign points of the AGB is that India's natural resources are being sold out to MNCs and corporate interests who are going to monopolise and commodify our forests, our water and even our air, making it harder for the poor to survive. Why do they want us to forget that the State's monopoly over our natural resources has already caused deadly environmental havoc for all

citizens, but especially for poor rural communities?

Most AGBs are well aware that the Indian State prevented farmers from selling their land at market prices through the use of laws like the Land Acquisition Act. This criminal piece of legislation gave the government sweeping powers to force farmers to surrender their land in return for absurdly low compensation, which, in any case, often never reached them. These lands were then handed over at dirt-cheap prices to industrialists, miners and hoteliers or were used for creating housing enclaves for the elite, including those in the bureaucracy. Ask the owners of the palatial bungalows in New Delhi's Vasant Vihar and Shanti Niketan what peanuts they paid for the land given to them, after existing villages were uprooted, and see the real face of the State machinery at work, robbing the poor to benefit the rich. Nearly 50 million people have been uprooted from their villages and rendered destitute by the forcible takeover of their lands by the Indian State in post-Independence India. All this before we ever heard of liberalisation.

Similarly, the fouling of India's air and other natural resources took place long before India began inviting MNC capital. Poor people in large parts of the country have, for decades, been walking great distances to fetch pitiful supplies of water, so polluted as to be unfit even for animals. Those who breast-beat today about the contamination of our water sources by *videshi* MNCs, would do well to remember that all of us *desis* also allow the sewage from our toilets, and the wastes from the *swadeshi* petty production units situated in our city slums, to poison our river systems and ground water supplies. *Desi* pesticides, produced by



**Larger-than-life images: playing to the global gallery**

government-controlled factories, have laden India's farm produce with more deadly chemicals than are to be found in any food produced by First World MNCs.

➤ There is no denying that many MNCs indulge in unethical practices and behave like marauders in poorer countries. However, the conduct of MNCs or, for that matter, even of petty shopkeepers, depends on the quality of the regulatory mechanisms institutionalised in each country. Societies that have

effective and transparent means to punish business malpractices often find that they are more likely to be able to create a sense of responsibility among both big and small market players. Companies like Union Carbide and Enron get away with their criminal behaviour only because our politicians and bureaucrats are more interested in extracting bribes than in ensuring accountability.

### **State-Sponsored Loot**

It is only too self-evident that our state machinery actively violates the rights of its own citizens and helps anti-social elements dominate public life. It is not an effective instrument for protecting our people from the greed and rapacity of outsiders. Even after a decade and a half of reforms, India commands only a small proportion of world trade and does not attract the necessary types and amounts of foreign investments that have gone to many other Asian countries. This fact alone shows that the economy of India is still over-politicised and marred by instability,

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corruption and red tape. Moreover, the infrastructure is still too poor to inspire enough confidence in investors. Despite all the hype surrounding it, there has only been a small trickle of foreign investment in India, totaling no more than \$3 to 4 billion a year as compared to \$55 billion a year for China. Between 1980 and 2002, China welcomed \$336 billion in foreign investment; India received only \$18 billion.



**Cosmetic appeal: picnic politics as activism**

A government like ours that cannot prevent State-owned industries from poisoning air and water sources is not likely to be able to enforce high standards on private industry – be it *desi* or *videshi*. This underscores the urgent need for reforms in governance rather than for statist controls over business and trade. Constricting the market inevitably leads to corruption and authoritarianism because closed-door economies can only be built by giving more powers to *babus* and *netas* than is healthy for any society.

Trade is the lifeblood of any economy. Just as a human body starts to show signs of disease and decay if its blood supply is not allowed to flow freely to all parts as per its natural requirements, so also do economies decay when artificial barriers are put in the way of trade. Smuggling, bribery, protection rackets and the rise of criminal mafias are some of the common symptoms of rigidly controlled economies. There is not a single example in the world today of a completely closed-door economy

which is also wealthy and successful. Countries like Burma are rich in natural resources and had relatively high standards of living a hundred years ago. Today, they lie wrecked and impoverished by authoritarian regimes that block economic access to the world, in the same way that the Soviet rulers led their economy to collapse.

In 1995, Jeffrey Sachs and Andrew Warner published a report on the trade policies of 117 countries from 1970 to 1989. They found that economic growth was three to six times higher in freer trade countries

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than in more protectionist ones. Countries that are open to trade and investment grow faster than those that are not. North Korea was once richer than South Korea; after 50 years of hermit economics, it is now 16 times poorer. In closed developing countries, per capita GDP fell by an average of 1.1 per cent per year. In industrialised countries, it rose by 1.9 per cent. The fastest growth – at an average of 5 per cent – occurred in developing countries that had liberalised their economies. The simple fact is that the globalisers are catching up with rich countries while the non-globalisers fall further behind. As pointed out by Vikas Singh, it took England 58 years, from 1780 onwards, to double its wealth. A century later, a vigorously reforming Japan did the same in 34 years and, in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, South Korea repeated the feat in little more than a decade. (*The Times of India*, June 17, 2003).

Without economic freedom, whatever political freedom we have becomes an empty ritual. That is a major reason why, despite such an actively involved electorate, our political democracy remains deeply flawed and has become hostage to anti-social elements. Since our intellectuals and media remain obsessed mainly with the political and electoral dimensions of democracy, they have more or less ignored the systematic and routine loot, extortion, violence and indignity inflicted by a parasitic



sarkar on our people, even when they are engaged in perfectly legitimate economic pursuits. Neither our economists nor our political theorists have tried to come to grips with the predatory role of the Indian State and how it has worked hard to wreck people's livelihoods and their self-confidence.

### Their Farcical Harangues

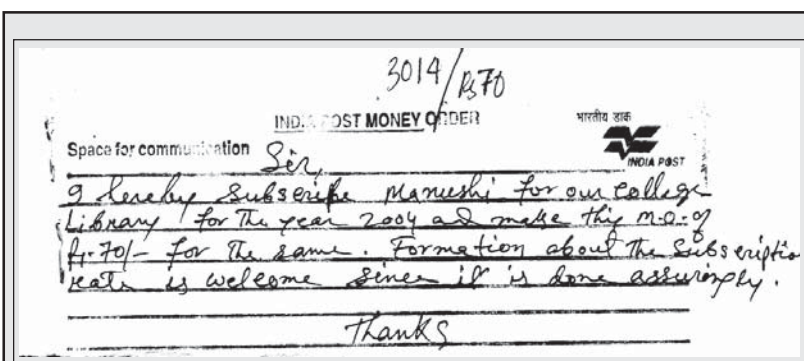
The Anti-Globalisation Brigades have made their politics resemble a theatrical farce by putting everything into one messy bag they call globalisation. Opening borders for world trade translates, for them, into servility to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, and the hapless surrender of our intellectual property rights to rapacious MNCs. The failure of the ruling elite in various parts of the Third World to provide honest governance in their respective countries is also projected as part of one grand global scheme through which Third World countries will be raped and enslaved by diabolical corporate giants, in full partnership with the World Bank.

There is, however, a world of difference between India becoming an active player in world trade and its being a hostage to IMF-World Bank policies. Even if we assume that all the evil that is attributed to the IMF and the World Bank by the AGBs is a fact, it is also clear that these institutions can only arm-twist those governments that are reduced to begging-bowl status and appear as supplicants for aid or loans before them. Well-managed economies do not have to listen to the dictates of outsiders. Only poorly functioning, troubled, corrupt economies require bailouts by international donors and therefore end up liable to be subjected to self-detrimental conditionalities. Those governments that have played a catalytic role in wealth generation for their people are not beholden to aid agencies and therefore cannot be coerced into following self-harming policies. Countries like China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan, which have successfully taken on the might of First World industry and have succeeded in dramatic improvements in their national

incomes, do not allow outsiders to dictate policy.

Unfortunately, the very same AGBs who pant and fume at India opening up to foreign investments have very little objection to India being aid-dependent. They are, in fact, upset at the recent feeble attempts of the Indian government to lessen India's aid dependence. There is something comic about representatives of the AGBs warning us about the evils of globalisation despite their own politics being altogether reliant on international aid money. They have no problem in being tied to the apron strings of international donor agencies to finance their politics, but they do not trust Indians to benefit from partnership in world trade. Their policy of 'No to Free Trade, Yes to Tied Aid' explains their real worth.

*This essay is an extract from the author's book **Deepening Democracy: The Challenges of Globalisation and Governance**, shortly to be released by the Oxford University Press.* □



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