The future Indian revolution.

By Andrey Alexakha.

The theory of progress that I propose¹ distinguishes two types of revolutions – the peasant and colour revolutions. These two types of revolutions are very different in how the revolutionary process proceeds and how it ends. The difference between these types of revolutions is determined by the society in which the revolution takes place. If a revolution happens in a pre-industrial society, then it is a peasant revolution. If the revolution takes place in an industrial society, then this is a colour revolution.

Why do I think that a peasant revolution in India is very possible? According to the theory of progress, pre-industrial society is a society in which the majority of the population is engaged in agriculture. The majority of India's population works in agriculture. Research shows that even in the most industrialized states, such as Maharashtra, the majority of the population works in agriculture. It is a very difficult task to determine precisely the proportion of people employed in agriculture in a pre-industrial society. In such a society, especially at the last stages of its development, many people were part-time workers in agriculture, as there are few opportunities for employment in non-agricultural sectors of the economy. Till the second half of 19th century, the cottage industry was widespread. People worked in agriculture, and when there was no agricultural work, they spun wool, linen and cotton at home, weaved fabrics, made lace, woven straw hats and even mined coal and ores. There were numerous industrial villages, the inhabitants of which were both peasants and industrial workers.

However, in our time, the cottage industry cannot compete with large industry, since the mechanization of the industry has made labour productivity very high. There are no more industrial villages with rare exceptions. Therefore, the percentage of urban population has become an important indicator. Only 34,9 per cent of India population is urban², so India is a pre-industrial country.

Why peasant revolution did occur in such countries? According to the theory of progress the peasant revolution is a result of last filling of reservoir. The territory of any pre-industrial country may be considered as a reservoir. The capacity of the reservoir is equal to maximal number of people which may live in the country. The number is determined by natural conditions and the intensity of land use. When the population reached its maximal number the reservoir is filled up. Further population growth forces people to intensify land use and in such way to increase the reservoir's capacity. However, sooner or later there comes a time when the all opportunities for intensification of agriculture have exhausted i.e., the reservoir is filled last time. The population growth in conditions when land reserves are absent while intensification of land use is impossible caused that most peasants will lose their land. The division of plots between the heirs sooner or later makes their plots too small for the peasant family to live on. Usually if the harvest was good, the peasant family could hardly survive. But if the harvest was bad and the family began to starve, the peasant had to borrow to survive. If the following harvests were not excellent, the peasant could not repay and sooner or later he had to sell his land. The land was bought by more enterprising and wealthy neighbours who would hire landless peasants as farm labourers. The result was a concentration of land in the hands of a few, while the majority were landless.

For some time the landless peasants remain in the villages due to the fact that the system of family and social ties there allows them not to starve. However, sooner or later they realize that staying in their native village is futile, and then a stream of landless peasants

¹ Alexakha A. (2016), "A model of social progress" in *The Journal of European economic history* XLV, 3, pp. 137-209. <https://www.jeeh.it/articolo?urn=urn:abi:abi:RIV.JOU:2016;3.137&ev=1>

² <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>

rushes to the cities, where they hope to find a better life. But there will not enough jobs for unskilled, semiliterate and illiterate mass of redundant rural population. Most of these people will become low-paid workers and urban unemployed. The difficult and impoverished life of the many migrants to the cities always contrasts with the wealth of the small part of the population who have succeeded. As a result, social tension in society reaches its maximum. In these conditions, the peasant revolution begins.

This is how the revolution in Iran began in 1978. After World War II the population of Iran began to grow rapidly and doubled by 1970s. The Iranian reservoir was filled up and social tensions escalated. The top social strata of the Iranian society knew it well. That is why Shah undertook a series of reforms that were called the White Revolution. Shah really did almost everything possible to prevent the social revolution and to avoid bloodshed. He understood that the main source of tension in Iranian society, as well as in every pre-industrial society, is landless peasants, so the essence of the White Revolution was a land reform³. However in the conditions of the last filling of the reservoir it is impossible to reduce the number of landless peasants significantly by any land reform. Land reserves have long been exhausted and redistribution of land cannot increase the capacity of reservoir.

According to the theory of progress, economy of pre-industrial country develops especially swiftly before the revolution because more and more people become redundant in agriculture so they look for jobs in trade and industry. Iran's successes before the revolution were impressive. The manufacturing sector grew at average real annual rate of about 14 per cent during 1963-1978, it was the second highest in the world after South Korea⁴. However the population growth in these years was impressive too. From 1956 to 1976 the population of Iran increased from 18 955 000⁵ to 33 662 000⁶, or 77,6 per cent.

As a result the mass of redundant rural population migrated to the cities but could not find a job there. The migration to the cities before revolution was very large. According to census in 1966 in the cities lived 38,7% (9.8 million people) of the country's population⁷. In 1976 the urban population reached 46.9% (15.8 million people) of the total population⁸. So in 10 years, mainly as a result of migration, the urban population has grown by more than 60 per cent. Most of these people became low-paid workers and urban unemployed. According to official data living standards of 54 per cent of Iranian families were below the poverty line⁹. It was a very difficult time for the vast majority of Iranians. However, it could not be otherwise, since the revolution would not have occurred.

Let us consider the situation in India. First of all we have to analyse the geography of the country. According to the proposed theory of progress geographical conditions determine the development of any pre-industrial society. The geographers speak about the Indian subcontinent. Geopolitically the Indian subcontinent includes besides India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. These countries have many similarities in common: natural conditions, culture, history, etc. India is the largest of these, so we will focus on the country. According to the theory of progress the smaller the reservoir, the more quickly it develops because progress occurs only when reservoir is full. So the smaller reservoirs develop more quickly than the larger ones.

³ JAMES B. A. (1970). "Modernization and Reform from Above: The Case of Iran". The Journal of Politics. 32 (1), p19-44.

⁴ AMUZEGAR J. (1977), Iran: an economic profile. Washington. The Middle East Institute, p. 6.

⁵ National and province statistics of the first census of Iran: November 1956. (1961), Ministry of interior, v. I., xv.

⁶ Demographic yearbook, 1979. (1980), N.Y. , p. 191.

⁷ National census of population and housing, November 1966. (1969), Iranian statistical centre, Part II., r.

⁸ Demographic yearbook, 1979. (1980), N.Y. , p. 191.

⁹ AMUZEGAR J. (1977), Iran: an economic profile..., p. 255.

Thus, based on the reservoir capacity criterion, we will analyse the natural conditions of India. The Himalayas, Karakoram, the Hindu Kush mountains and Iranian plateau form the northern boundary of Indian subcontinent. There is Indus-Ganga Plain south of these mountains. The plain has an area of 2.5-million km² and is a gigantic trough of the earth's crust filled with fertile alluvium brought by rivers from the mountains. Further south is Peninsular Plateau, which contains mountain ranges and plateaus. In peninsular India plains are only on the coasts. The Eastern Coastal Plain has the width which varies between 100 and 130 km. The Western Coastal Plain is much narrower ranging from 50 to 100 km. Thus the Indus-Ganga Plain is not only the most capacious sub-reservoir in India; it is the most capacious reservoir in the world. Owing to warm climate and monsoon rains it is possible to grow three rice crops a year there. The most populated regions of the countries of the subcontinent, except only for Shri Lanka - the eastern parts of Pakistan, the northern and eastern India, all of Bangladesh and southern part of Nepal – are situated there.

The Indus-Ganga Plain

According to the theory of progress the more capacious Indian sub-reservoirs on the Indus-Ganga Plain, especially in its eastern part, must develop slowly. The south and west of India has much lesser capacity therefore develop faster.

Net state domestic products of States and Union Territories of India.

Rank	State	NSDP capita (INR at Current prices)		\$ (2014)	NSDP capita (INR at 2004-05 prices)	
		2018-19	2017-18		14-15	13-14
1	Goa	467,998	422,149	4,903	-	137,401
2	Delhi	365,529	328,985	4,642	125809	118,411
3	Sikkim	357,643	317134	3,861	-	83,527
4	Chandigarh	--	297313	3,433	-	82,798
5	Puducherry	220461	203583	3,143	102965	94,787
6	Haryana	226644	203340	2,919	71493	67,260
7	Maharashtra	---	176102	2,561	72200	69,097
8	Tamil Nadu	193750	171583	2,464	66635	62,361
9	A. & N. Islands	-	159664	2,350	-	72,716
10	Gujarat	-	174652	2,337	-	63,168
11	Kerala	-	184000	2,271	-	58,961
12	Uttarakhand	198738	182320	2,269	63820	59,161
13	Telangana	205696	180697	2,086	51017	48,881

Rank	State	NSDP capita (INR at Current prices)		\$ (2014)	NSDP capita (INR at 2004-05 prices)	
		2018-19	2017-18		14-15	13-14
14	Punjab	154598	142644	2,020	51403	49,529
15	Himachal Pradesh	179188	167044	2,019	-	54,494
16	Karnataka	210887	187649	1,959	48907	46,012
17	Arunachal Pradesh	--	127748	1,870	37683	36,019
18	Andhra Pradesh	164025	143935	1,780	44831	42,170
19	Nagaland	...	102581	1,696	51888	49,963
20	Mizoram	-	141,210	1,665	-	41,094
21	West Bengal	109491	93711	1,532	38624	36,293
22	Tripura	-	105,044	1,525	-	47,261
23	Rajasthan	109105	99487	1,443	33186	31,836
24	Meghalaya	69516	81,098	1,346	39503	37,154
25	Jammu & Kashmir	58888	83,717	1,297	30612	31,448
26	Chhattisgarh	98887	89,813	1,281	29047	28,373
27	Odisha	93352	84,854	1,150	26531	24,929
28	Madhya Pradesh	90998	82,941	1,133	29218	26,853
29	Jharkhand	76019	69,265	1,009	30950	28,882
30	Assam	...	74204	968	23968	23,392
31	Manipur	...	65411	909	-	24,042
32	Uttar Pradesh	461351	55456	793	20057	19,233
33	Bihar	43822	38631	682	16801	15,506
	India	126,406	114,958	1,627		39,904

Source: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

As you can see from the table the largest domestic product per capita have Goa, Delhi, Sikkim, Chandigarh and Puducherry. Goa, Sikkim and Puducherry are small states (Puducherry is a union territory) that generate significant tourism revenues that allow them to have large GDP per capita. Delhi is the capital of India and very large financial and human resources are concentrated here. Chandigarh is a city, district and union territory in India that serves as the capital of the two neighbouring states of Punjab and Haryana. Obviously, as a capital city, it also has a higher income level. The next largest NSDP per capita after these five states is Haryana in which most of the National Capital Region is located. There are most cities and towns that make up the Delhi Extended Urban Agglomeration.

Next are Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Kerala. Maharashtra and Gujarat located in the west of India, so they have not very large capacity therefore must develop faster. Due to the fact that they are located on the shore of Arabian Sea they have long been centres of trade with the Arab world, and later with Europe. So they became centres of attraction for surplus population from neighbouring Indian territories. Therefore, today they are the most industrialized Indian states and Maharashtra's capital Mumbai is India's biggest

commercial city. Maharashtra is the largest contributor to the national economy with a share of 15% in the country's GDP.

States and Union Territories of India

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Kerala and Tamil Nadu are located in the very south of India. The human capacity here is not very large too. Therefore these states are among the most developed in India. Kerala ranked first in India Human development index, has the highest literacy rate, 96.2 per cent, the highest life expectancy, 77 years. According to the 2011 Census, Tamil Nadu is the most urbanised state in India, 49 per cent of the state's population live in towns.

If we look at the end of the table, we can see that the states with the lowest income are Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Why, when these states are located in the most fertile area on earth? The reason is that these states are not only the poorest; they are also the most backward ones. Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have the lowest Human development index in India. Only 11.3% of the population of Bihar lives in urban areas. Above 52 per cent of Bihar population is illiterate. It is the only Indian state where the minority of the population can read and write. The backwardness of these states is a result of their enormous capacity. The people from these states are as capable for progress as the inhabitants of the most developed states of the world today, but the enormous capacity of their reservoirs has delayed their development.

As you can see on the map, the states in the north of India have less per capita net product than south states except only for the states around National Capital Region. The southern and southwestern states differ greatly in their ethnic composition, the availability of minerals, in their location on the coast or inside the mainland. They are distinguished from the northern and north-eastern states only by the smaller capacity of the reservoirs, which allows us to conclude that this is precisely the main reason for their advanced development.

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The population of Uttar Pradesh is 229 million by 2020¹⁰. It is the most-populous country subdivision in the world. If Uttar Pradesh were an independent country, it would have the fifth largest population in the world. Maharashtra has second largest population in India of about 123,7 million and Bihar is the third with 121,9 million. However, the peasant revolution occurs not because the population is large, but because the last filling of the reservoir took place. As was said above, when further intensification of agriculture is impossible, population growth leads to the emergence of a surplus population in agriculture. The migration of these people to cities in the absence of sufficient jobs there creates a revolutionary situation. Then even a minor conflict is enough to start a revolution.

What's happening in India now? The Green revolution has greatly increased the capacity of India reservoir but population of the country is growing rapidly. Between 1975 and 2010, the population of India doubled. India is projected to surpass China to become the world's most populous country in 2024. Can we say that the huge Indian reservoir is close to filling and what symptoms indicate this? Obviously, due to the huge size of the country, all Indian sub-reservoirs cannot be filled at the same time. According to the theory of progress, signs of filling will be seen earlier in less capacious sub-reservoirs. What signs of filling should you pay attention to first? First of all, it is a decrease in the birth rate. As it is known, in an industrial society, a so-called demographic transition occurs, in which mortality falls, and then fertility. The reason for these processes is the growth in the level of development of the population, which I wrote about in detail in my articles¹¹. However, in a pre-industrial society, a drop in the birth rate is also possible, although the reason for this is completely different. Fertility in such a society always falls when the reservoir is full, because the resulting economic hardship impedes marriage and childbearing.

¹⁰ POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR INDIA AND STATES 2011–2036, REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL GROUP ON POPULATION PROJECTIONS November, 2019–NATIONAL COMMISSION ON POPULATION MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE NIRMAN BHAWAN, NEW DELHI–110011, 2017 https://nhm.gov.in/New_Updates_2018/Report_Population_Projection_2019.pdf

¹¹ For example: Alexakha A. (2016), “A model of social progress”, p. 152.

India total fertility rates.

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<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=42713753>

fact that in Kerala the lower fertility and mortality rates have been achieved earlier than in the other states. Census 2011 found in Tamil Nadu the lowest fertility rate in India. At the same time the share of urban population in Tamil Nadu is the highest in India. Thus, since the south is ahead in development, there the process of moving the redundant rural population to cities has already begun. In Kerala the redundant population emigrated in large numbers, especially to the Arab states of the Persian Gulf. Today around 3,000,000 Keralites are working abroad. More than a third of the state's GDP is remittances from abroad. Rural migrants to cities cannot find work there, so Kerala and Tamil Nadu has one of the highest unemployment rates in India. The most rural migrants can find work in cities only where industry is developing rapidly, as for example in the western states Gujarat and Maharashtra.

So the leading in development south shows us how events in the more populated north will develop when reservoirs there will fill up. As a result of the division of plots between the heirs in the villages, more and more peasants will not have land or their plots will be too small to live. After that, the surplus rural population will migrate to cities. However, in cities, these people will either not find work at all or become low-paid workers. In such way an environment will form that is receptive to revolutionary ideas.

In India, the number of landless peasants is increasing every year. For example, even in such industrialised state as Maharashtra in 2001 the marginal (below 1 ha) and small holdings (1-2 ha) accounted for 73,4 per cent. I have no data on what percentage of small plots is now, but there is no doubt that their number is growing. The share of marginal holdings in Maharashtra increased from 25 per cent in 1971 to near 45 per cent in 2001, while the share of large holdings (10 ha and more) decreased from 10 per cent to near zero. For ten years (1991-2001) in Maharashtra the average size of holdings decreased by more than 25 per

On the map you can see total fertility rates in different Indian regions. The total fertility rate (TFR) is the average number of children that would be born to a woman over her lifetime. If a total fertility rate is about 2,1 children per woman then population would neither grow nor decrease. On the map regions with TFR about 2,1 are shown in light green. Thus the south of India has low fertility while the north has high one. The highest fertility has regions located on the Indus-Ganga Plain.

Both in the south and in the north of India, the birth rate is declining, only in the south this process began earlier, so today in some southern states the birth rate is already below the replacement level. Thus we can conclude that in some south states, for example in Kerala and Tamil Nadu reservoirs have filled up.

This conclusion is confirmed by the

cent¹². The average size of operational holding in India in 2001 was 1,33 ha and average size of holdings is declining¹³. Even in such backward state as Bihar more than half of peasants are landless or near to landless. So the mass of redundant population is increasing and time when they will begin to migrate to the cities in great number is coming.

The peasant revolution begins because the majority of the population feel at a dead end, from which they see no way out. It is impossible to live the way their fathers and grandfathers lived, since the reserves of the land ran out. They do not know how to live in a new way, engaging in non-agricultural activities. Therefore, they are looking for a way out of the difficulty in which they find themselves. To do this you need to understand why life has become so bad and what needs to be done to change it for the better. In this way ideology of the future revolution is formed. The ideology must be understandably for broad masses of population, the majority of who are ignorant, illiterate peasants. All revolution ideologies may be of two sorts: it can be religious ideology or leftist ideology.

The main thesis of any religious ideology is simple: people by their sins angered the Almighty God and he punishes them. In order to make life better we need to repent and live according to the laws of God. God wants from people to be pious and if the people are corrected their life will improve. The authorities are the main sinners. They themselves do not want to repent and prevent others from doing so. Therefore, the authorities must be replaced by one that will force society to live according to God's laws. In Europe, the emergence of heresy, and later Reformation was always before the revolution. Since that time nothing has changed and today's Muslim extremists are revolutionaries. They want to create god's kingdom on the Earth, where all true believers will be happy. For such great aim, all the tools are good. The Muslim extremism is typical revolutionary ideology.

The main thesis of any leftist or communist ideology is simple too – many people are poor because few are very rich. Wealth is enough for all but distributed unequally. Redistribution of property is necessary to make the life of majority of people better. It is interesting to note that both ideologies are interdependent: very often the religious ideology presuppose the property redistribution because God doesn't like rich while to live in poverty is good for salvation of soul. The leftist ideology practically always includes religious elements: blind faith in holy scriptures of prophets like Marx, Lenin or Mao Zedong, cult of revolutionary martyrs, sacred rituals and singing of hymns.

What kind of ideology is possible in the Indian revolution? The bitter religious conflicts in India have long been known and in 1947 led to the partition of India into two states. The communist ideology is also well known. For example, Communist Party of India (Marxist) was in power in West Bengal during 34 years but the most interesting for our research are leftist (Maoist) rebels known as Naxalite movement. The movement began in 1967 from a revolt in north Bengal. The centers of activity of the Naxalites are forest areas inhabited by Adivasi tribes. In Sanskrit Adivasi means "aboriginal". The conflict between Adivasi and the Indian government is mainly caused by the requisition of tribal lands for the extraction and processing of minerals. However the Naxalite movement included not only Adivasi but also students and many people from socially disadvantaged classes. Every year death toll as a result of Naxalite actions numbered hundreds.

The Naxalite movement is caused by the filling of reservoirs of small capacity in forest areas and the government manages to control it. But if the huge reservoirs on the Indus-Ganga Plain will completely filled and the colossal masses of the population will set in motion, then the government will be powerless. The likelihood of such a development of events is very high. The question is when this can happen. I have already stated above that

¹² Kalamkar S.S. (2011), *Agricultural Growth and Productivity in Maharashtra: Trends and Determinants*, p. 38.

¹³ Ibid. p. 38.

the most important sign of filling the reservoir is a drop in the birth rate. As we have seen, this phenomenon is observed, and it is stronger in the south than in the north. The second most important sign is the migration of the rural population to the cities. In the north, this is not yet happened in great scale, but in the south this phenomenon is observed. There are also significant migrations from the northeast to the industrial west, to the metropolitan area as well as abroad. And finally, the last important sign, which I have not yet noted, is the deterioration of the economic situation. Before the peasant revolution there is always an economic crisis, although before that the economy always develops at a record pace. The economy of India developed very quickly since 2000. India ranked 5th in terms of GDP growth per capita in the world during 2000-2010 and 3rd during 2011-2018. However, since 2017, the growth rate has been steadily declining, albeit still high: 2016-7,08%, 2017 – 5,9%, 2018 – 5,02%, 2019 – 3,96%. In 2020, the fall will accelerate.

All of the abovementioned suggests that the next decade will be a period of growing social tension for India. This will result in clashes based on religious and ethnic strife. In addition, the spread of revolutionary teachings is possible, which will lead to extremist manifestations and terrorism. It is possible that a revolution that could embrace the entire country will not begin, and social tension will result in scattered actions in individual states. However, it is very likely that the next 10-15 years India will face big shocks.

Besides, all that I said about India can be attributed to the countries such as Bangladesh and Pakistan. They are also pre-industrial countries and they also have all the signs of the last filling of the reservoir. The peasant revolution has already occurred in Nepal in 1996-2006 and Sri Lanka (known as the Sri Lankan Civil War from 1983 to 2009), the smallest countries of the subcontinent. According to the theory the smaller reservoirs outstrip larger ones, therefore, it is possible that the next revolution will not start in India, but in Bangladesh or Pakistan.