

Farm Laws, Federalism and Farm Protests: India and Punjab

Pritam Singh

Oxford Brookes University, UK

This article discusses three main nodes of resistance (farmers, states and regional identities) to the BJP government's farm laws and demonstrates that the linking wire between these three nodes is that these laws weaken the states' federal agricultural rights through an increasingly centralised agrobusiness restructuring of Indian agriculture. It also touches on the ecologically damaging consequences from the operation of these Acts through the destruction of locally - and state-based agriculture and its incorporation into all-India and global agricultural marketing systems. It argues for an eco-socialist vision to inform the farming laws debate in India as a critique of both the traditional right-wing and traditional left-wing discourses on agriculture and development. It concludes that protecting agriculture as a state subject within Indian federalism and resisting the influence of agrobusiness capitalism would be India's key economic, political, social and cultural battle in the coming years. Grasping the seriousness of this issue would be a critical prerequisite of developing the perspective to strengthen federalism, decentralisation, diversity, democracy, local farming, small scale farming, cooperative farming and ecological sustainability.

‘There seem to be but three ways for a nation to acquire wealth. The first is by war...This is robbery. The second by commerce, which is generally cheating. The third by agriculture, the only honest way, wherein man receives a real increase of the seed thrown into the ground, in a kind of continual miracle, wrought by the hand of God in his favor, as a reward for his innocent life and his virtuous industry’ (Benjamin Franklin cited by Sova, 2018).

The three farm laws enacted by India's BJP government in 2020 have provoked the largest, longest and most peaceful farmers' protests in human history. In terms of the scale of mass mobilisation in India and international solidarity these protests have generated, they have surpassed even India's struggle for independence.¹

Within India, the solidarity of the non-farming sectors of the population with the farmers' protest has two sources: first, the hope created by the protest as a robust and so far, successful democratic fightback against the BJP government's authoritarian mode of governance, which has been used successfully to silence all previous forms of resistance; and second, the sympathy of vast sections of India's population with the farmers, who in the popular imagination are seen as providers of food. The word *andaata* used to characterise farmers (meaning producers and providers of food) is common to many languages in India and

evokes responses of respect and admiration for those who, working hard with mother earth in all weathers, continue to provide sustenance not only for their own families but also for all of society.

International solidarity with the protests also has two sources: first, the perception of the movement as demonstrating the democratic vitality of India - a vast 'Third World' country which has retained the important institutions of democratic governance despite massive distortions; and secondly, the perception of the movement as providing a new vision of 'development'. This new vision (eco-socialism or green socialism) gives primacy to small-scale and cooperative farming, in opposition to the vision of large-scale agrobusiness farming that has shaped capitalist policy in richer and poorer countries alike. This new vision is also critical of the attempts to create a 'socialist' alternative to capitalism, as practiced by the USSR, which focused on large-scale, collectivised farming, with the resulting destruction of small farms.² We discuss this new vision in some detail in the last section of the article.

As a marker of the BJP government's major policy initiative on agriculture, the government brought in three Ordinances on June 5, 2020, in the name of agricultural marketing reforms and farmer welfare. All three were given hurried Parliamentary and Presidential approval, with neither stakeholder consultation nor proper parliamentary scrutiny, before becoming law in September 2020 (Singh, T et al, 2021).³ These Ordinances were the following: the Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Ordinance, 2020; the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Ordinance, 2020; and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020.

The farming policy of the present government as articulated through these Ordinances constitutes a watershed moment in the development of the government's drive to expand agrobusiness capitalism and to increase centralised control of agriculture in India. Opposition to these laws is emerging from three groups: first, from the farmers' organisations, who are fearful about the survival of their communities as a result of the takeover of the farming sector by agrobusiness corporations; second, from state governments, who are concerned about central intrusion into states' federal rights over agriculture; and third, from regional parties who suspect that these laws will further empower the government's many aggressive assaults against regional identities and aspirations. The theme of centralisation versus decentralisation, albeit with different nuances and varying degrees of emphasis, runs through all three strands of opposition to the farm laws.

The haste with which first the Ordinances and later the Bills were rushed through provide a reasonable clue to the government's economic and political agenda.⁴ There was no food emergency in the country that required that the government should act with such haste. It can be inferred, therefore, that agrobusiness interests that fund and support the BJP must have impressed upon the government the importance of using the health emergency created by Covid-19 to have these ordinances approved quickly, without attracting attention or criticism. Naomi Klein's thesis of 'Shock Doctrine', according to which

governments use moments of deep crisis - economic, political, or environmental - to push through controversial legislation, fits in very well with the BJP government's use of the health crisis to approve these farm laws (Klein, 2007).⁵ The government, it seems, had not anticipated the scale of opposition that these measures have provoked.

Farmers' Protests against the Agro-business Takeover of Indian Agriculture

The central objective behind the two Bills - the Farming Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 and the Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020 - is to encourage private investment by agrobusiness corporations, based at home and abroad, in the production, processing, storage, transportation and marketing of agricultural products both within India and overseas. For some time, there has been lobbying for foreign direct investment (FDI) into Indian agriculture by multinational agrobusiness corporations, and for neo-liberal reforms in agriculture. There is already a degree of FDI in Indian agriculture, especially in contract farming for some products, but these legislations open the way for a major increase in FDI and implementation of neo-liberal reforms in agriculture. Agricultural marketing reforms are, therefore, crucial components of these laws. One key government policy advisor views the laws as 'forwarding the unfinished agenda of reforms started in 1991 and the fragmented, piecemeal and patchy reforms undertaken across states to their ultimate culmination' (Chand, 2020:3). Initiatives by the Indian government and by agrobusiness corporate interests aiming to minimise the role of the public sector and to promote privatisation in the agricultural market are not new (Chadda et al., 2008; Mandal, 2020). A 2015 government report (Shanta Kumar Committee Report) named the 'Report of the High-Level Committee on Reorienting the Role and Restructuring of Food Corporation of India', hints at the dispensability of the state-regulated Public Procurement System (PPS) and Minimum Support Price (MSP) (Government of India, 2015). Balbir Singh Rajewal, the most prominent, articulate and well-informed leader of the current farmers' protest, has mentioned in several publicly available lectures, that he was invited to attend a Niti Aayog meeting in 2017 as one of three representatives of Indian farmers. At this meeting, a blueprint for pro-agrobusiness reforms was openly proposed. Rajewal had opposed this blueprint. In his words,

'In a Niti Aayog meeting in Delhi on 10 October 2017, the whole discussion was about agricultural reforms aimed at creating clusters of farms of the size of 5000 and 7000 acres which would be given on 50 years lease contracts to private corporate businesses. The initial idea of organising farmers' protests to oppose this proposal came to my mind in that meeting' (Rajewal, 2021, translation from the original Punjabi by the author).⁶

The government defends these initiatives by claiming that they are aimed at increasing the choice and freedom of the farmers to sell beyond local *mandis* i.e., notified APMC (agricultural produce market committee) marketing yards, and beyond state boundaries. The aim of the government's massive media campaign is to make its policy acceptable to the farming community. The massive farm protests demonstrate that the farming community has seen through the media campaign, and the farmers' successful counter-narrative has made it known very widely that it is the large agrobusiness corporations who will benefit from this freedom - both within India as well as abroad. The worst affected would be the marginal, small and medium farmers whose ability to bargain for pricing and contracts would be so inconsequential against the huge resources of the large corporations, that such farmers would end up economic slaves.

The Farming Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 covers wheat, rice, sugarcane and cotton, along with other products. These are the major agricultural products of Punjab and Haryana, the two major food-producing states. The mechanism for 'Dispute Resolution' between a farmer and a trader, as stipulated in the Bill, is heavily loaded against the farmer due to the unequal power relations which, in reality, exist between farmers and traders. This is particularly the case if the farmer is marginal, small or medium and the trader is a large agrobusiness corporation. The dispute can be taken through various stages of the administrative/legal process starting with the sub-divisional magistrate. A dissatisfied farmer with limited resources, knowledge and time would not dare challenge the legal prowess of a powerful corporate entity. The penalty stipulated in the Bill, if a legal challenge in a dispute fails and the contract is judged to have been contravened, would also make any farmer extremely fearful about challenging a powerful corporation. Depending upon the nature of contravention of a contract, the penalty could be anywhere between twenty-five thousand to ten *lakh* rupees. If the contravention continued, a further penalty of between five thousand rupees and ten thousand rupees per day could be imposed. Even a big farmer would fear such massive penalties and would not dare to mount a legal challenge.

There is no provision in the Bills for the continuity of the MSP, which is mainly relevant for wheat and rice - the two major food crops - grown in Punjab and Haryana and, to a lesser extent, in other states such as UP, Uttarakhand and Rajasthan. The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020, instead of stipulating the MSP, merely mentions a 'remunerative price' to be contractually agreed between a farmer and 'agrobusiness firms, processors, wholesalers, exporters and large retailers'. Such a contract must also specify the 'quality, grade and standard' of the product to be sold by the farmer. The wording of the provision for changing or terminating the agreement raises more concerns about farmers' vulnerability. Section 11 of the Act states: 'At any time after entering into a farming agreement, the parties to such agreement may, with mutual consent, alter or terminate such agreement for any reasonable cause.' Given the unequal power relations between a farmer and an agrobusiness firm, the consent of the farmer to changing or terminating a contract can be subject to powerful economic and

non-economic pressures. The mechanism for dispute resolution on the contract regarding price and quality of the produce is also loaded against the farmer.

Once it became publicly known that the MSP is to be abandoned, fears were expressed that outright removing the MSP for wheat and rice, apart from alienating the farming communities in the wheat and rice producing states, might jeopardise government procurement targets which can then lead to regional food insecurity and resulting social unrest. Many government spokespersons have been carrying out damage limitation by making announcements that the MSP would be continued. Even if we trust these announcements and the MSP is temporarily retained for strategic reasons, it should be kept in mind that the MSP would be used for paying the farmers only to the extent that it ensures the fulfilment of procurement targets decided by the government.⁷ Once this target is achieved, there would be no need for the government to purchase more. After that, the farmers would lose their support structure and become vulnerable to market fluctuations which would push prices of their products down due to excess supply.

It is not beyond the realms of possibility that for the first couple of years, the Central government may encourage and incentivise big agrobusiness traders to offer higher prices to the farmers than the ones available in the APMC market yards. Once the APMC trading structures are destroyed through this rigged competition, the farmers would be completely at the mercy of the big traders who would exploit their new vulnerability. It is this fear that has led to the two key demands of the protesting farmers: first, that the three laws be repealed; and second, that the MSP for procuring farmers' produce be made a legal right.

My reading of the government's many initiatives in the agricultural sphere, including these latest ones, is that their aim is to weaken the economic sustainability of the marginal, small and medium farmers so that they are forced to sell their lands to large agrobusiness corporations, either domestic or foreign owned. Farmers dispossessed of their tiny holdings will turn into wage labourers. The excess supply of such labourers in the rural economy and through economically-forced migration towards the urban economy will push down wage rates and lead to increased profits for agrarian and urban capitalist enterprises. This is the hidden meaning of the phrase 'transformation of agriculture' which is used to promote this latest initiative.

Farmers' resistance to these farming laws and the scale of the solidarity this resistance has received from a variety of social groups was demonstrated most impressively through the massively successful *Bharat Bandh* on September 25, 2020. This resistance and solidarity may turn out to be the biggest political challenge the BJP has faced since coming to power for the second time in 2019.

States' Resistance against Central Intrusion into their Federal Rights in Agriculture

From the very framing of India's Constitution in 1949 to various amendments later made to it, there has been a continuous process of invasion by the Centre into the sphere of agriculture, which in the constitution was designated as a

subject to be controlled by the states. The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance 2020 takes this process much further and is certainly the most devastating attack so far on the federal agricultural rights of the states. The 'One India, One Agriculture Market' slogan used by the government clearly exposes the drive towards centralisation implicit in this move.

There is a widespread misconception among academic and journalistic writings on the Indian political economy in general and on these latest agrarian initiatives from the Centre in particular, that the weakening of the government's regulatory regime giving more prominence to privatisation, as envisaged in these deregulatory reforms, would lead to decentralisation and devolution of more powers to the states. The roots of this misconception can be traced to a failure to recognise that the key to the shaping of India's capitalist economy has been centralised/unitarist nationalism as opposed to plural nationalisms, and that the Centre has been given vast powers to build such unitarist nationalism. As a result, increasing privatisation resulting from deregulatory reforms does not necessarily work against centralisation.⁸ The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance 2020 is the most clear-cut confirmation of the thesis that centralisation and privatisation in India can co-exist and, moreover, that they can reinforce each other. Strengthening centralisation and privatisation are the two most prominent features of this Ordinance.

The Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution contains three lists. List I refers to the departments/activities/subjects under control of the Centre/Union; List II refers to those under control of the states; and List III (or the Concurrent List) refers to cases where the states and the Centre share power and responsibility. Entry 14 of the State List refers to agriculture: 'Agriculture, including agricultural education and research, protection against pests and prevention of plant disease'. If we were to deduce from this that agriculture is a state subject under the Constitution, that would be formally correct. However, other provisions of the Constitution in the Centre/Union List and in the Concurrent List have provided legal justifications for Central interventions in the sphere of agriculture. In general, national goals and imperatives are invoked in order to use these Union and Concurrent List provisions. In some cases, Central intrusions into agriculture have been made without any constitutional sanction at all. The states can be constitutionally deprived of all powers, including in the sphere of agriculture, under provisions mentioned in Part XI of the Constitution, which discusses 'relations between the Union and the states'. Under Article 248 in Part XI, the Centre has residuary powers of legislation relating to any item which is not mentioned in any of the three lists. Under Article 249, the Central Parliament has the power of legislation regarding any subject, even in the State List, if the Centre considers this to be necessary 'in the national interest'. There is no similar provision in the constitution of any other federal country. Even the 1935 Act, made during the British Rule in India - whose format was the basis for drafting the Constitution of independent India - did not have a clause giving such overriding powers to the Centre.

Entry 33 in the Concurrent List limits the power of states in agriculture and empowers the Centre by stating that both the state and the Union government

can legislate regarding production, trade, supply and distribution of a range of foodstuffs and agricultural raw materials. The Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State Relations had pointed out that the Centre had used Entry 33 in the Concurrent List to enact in the Parliament the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. This Act had disproportionately empowered the Centre in the management of agriculture, and it is the 2020 Amendment of this Act that is now being brought in to further increase the powers of the Centre in the agricultural sector.

Entry 34 in the Concurrent List mentions 'price control', once more giving scope for the Centre to impose control over agriculture and invade the powers of the states. The Government of Tamil Nadu recognised that Entry 33 and 34 in the Concurrent List had a damaging impact on state autonomy in the sphere of agriculture, and in its memorandum to the Sarkaria Commission demanded that Entry 33 and 34 be transferred from the Concurrent List to the State List. West Bengal's Left Front government led by Jyoti Basu went even further in demanding in its memorandum that not only the existing entries in the Concurrent List but also those in the Union List that constrict the states' jurisdiction in agriculture should be deleted, and that 'agriculture, including animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries, should be exclusively a states' subject...The recent trend, with the Centre progressively encroaching in the sphere of agriculture, must be reversed.'⁹ What is happening now through the 2020 Amendment of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 is not only the opposite of what Tamil Nadu and West Bengal had rightfully demanded but, in fact, will increase the power of the Centre yet more.

The manner in which the Amendment is being pushed forward using Ordinances is also extraordinary. Indira Gandhi used the Emergency (1975-77) to make harmful amendments that curtailed the power of the states over education and forestry. This government is using the health emergency caused by Covid-19 to push this amendment through - using Ordinances - to cause devastating damage to the powers of the states in the sphere of agriculture. The scale of the threat posed by this Ordinance to the states' already limited autonomy can be understood from these words:

'The Central Government may, for carrying out the provisions of this Ordinance, give such instructions, directions, orders or issue guidelines as it may deem necessary to any authority or officer subordinate to the Central Government, any State Government or any authority or officer subordinate to a State Government.'

This alarm bell about the emasculation of powers of the states by federal powers can only be ignored if state leaders have a very limited vision of politics.

The undermining of autonomy of the states cannot be more starkly implied than in the words in Section 16 of the *Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020*:

'The Central Government may, from time to time, give such instructions, as it may consider necessary, to the State Governments for effective implementation of the provisions of this Act and the

State Governments shall comply with such instructions' (italics added).

Thus, no scope is left for any escape for a state government from these Central directives.¹⁰

The Ordinance's attack on the limited revenue resources of the states is also clear in the provision that 'no market fee, cess or levy' can be levied by a State APMC Act or any other state law on the agricultural market transactions taking place outside the APMC marketing yard. After depriving the states of the sales tax revenue they earned earlier and replacing it by a centrally controlled GST, and now by resisting paying compensation to the states for this loss of revenue, indicates another clear attempt to weaken the states financially and make them more dependent on the Centre.¹¹

Aside from the vertical tensions between the Centre and the states caused by these agrarian reforms, the reforms have the potential to generate new, horizontal tensions between states, and class conflicts aligned with inter-state tensions. Agriculturally dependent states such as Punjab and Haryana, and the farmers of those states, would be the most adversely affected due to the weakening of the minimum support price (MSP) structures. In contrast, industrially advanced states such as Gujarat and Maharashtra and the big business interests (especially agrobusiness interests) based in these states would be beneficiaries as a result of increased and easier access to foodstuffs and agricultural raw materials from other states. This would increase regional and class tensions.

The MSP was already a centrally governed policy instrument designed to shape the cropping pattern of Punjab, and to a lesser extent of Haryana, towards two principal food crops. This instrument was used to incentivize farmers to grow and market wheat and rice to overcome food scarcity and dependence on PL 480 food aid from USA (Singh, 2008). Having achieved national food self-sufficiency through the Green Revolution that ravaged the ecology of Punjab and Haryana, the Centre is on the brink of causing economic and social ruin for the peasantry in the two states. They should, instead, be rewarding and compensating states for the damage the Green Revolution has caused to their ecological resources and health of the people. Though the farmers in other states of India are not as directly reliant on the MSP system as are the farmers of Punjab and Haryana, and to a lesser extent the farmers of UP, Uttarakhand and Rajasthan, they are still apprehensive about the takeover of agriculture by corporate agrobusinesses. Additionally, there has been increased awareness among farmers of other states where the MSP system did not operate about the existence and operation of the MSP system. They have therefore demonstrated visible support to the farmers' organisations protesting on the borders of Delhi.

Together with Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab has a proud history as part of the vanguard of the movement for greater federal devolution of powers to the states. Sardar Prakash Singh Badal, the former Chief Minister of Punjab once emphasised his commitment to federalism by stating that the Anandpur Sahib Resolution is the past, present and future of Akali Dal politics¹² but unfortunately, Akali Dal was uncertain whether to support or

oppose these laws. At first it supported the laws because of its political partnership with the BJP, but then, faced with wholehearted opposition from Punjab's farming community and pressure from rank and file of the party, the representative of Akali Dal in the BJP-led NDA government, Harsimrat Kaur Badal, was forced to resign her ministership. Captain Amarinder Singh, the Chief Minister of Punjab till recently before being replaced by Charanjit Singh Channi as the new choice for the post by his party's central leadership, had written an excellent English translation of the historic Anandpur Sahib Resolution, along with an introductory note for the entry on the Resolution in the *Encyclopaedia of Sikhism* edited by the late Professor Harbans Singh (Amarinder Singh, 1992). Every entry in the *Encyclopaedia* is a document of lasting importance, and it is a sign of the intellectual, political and moral weakness of most Punjabi politicians that Amarinder Singh has now been criticising the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. Amarinder Singh has further weakened his pro-federal credentials by his recent launch of Punjab Lok Congress with which he wants to hitch an alliance for the 2022 Punjab Assembly Elections with the anti-federalism BJP (Singh, 2021f, 2021h). The late Harkishan Singh Surjeet, the CPM leader, once made an important contribution to strengthening the wording relating to the federal dimensions of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution though unfortunately he moved later more towards unitarist/centralist nationalism.¹³ Punjab's political leaders, intellectuals, opinion makers and social activists need to recover the moral and intellectual strengths to again become vanguards in the struggle for federalism in India. The struggle for federalism and diversity is also the struggle for democracy. The weakening of federalism contributes to the concentration of economic and political power at the Centre and the rise of authoritarian political tendencies and practices.

Regional Aspirations/Identities against Hindutva Centralism

The increased central intrusion through these Acts into the federal agricultural rights of the states has alarmed all the states, though the BJP-ruled states have either remained silent or endorsed the central government's moves. The increasing centralisation is viewed by regional groups as a threat to the solidity of regional interests, aspirations, and identities. The troubled relations with Shiv Sena and Akali Dal, two of the oldest allies of the BJP, are manifestations in different ways of the tension between the ideological perspectives of centralist Hindutva and of the regions (Singh, 2020b). The tension over the farm Acts led to resignation of the Akali Dal representative Harsimrat Kaur Badal from the Union Cabinet; this was the first resignation ever from a BJP-led government at the Centre over a policy issue. The BJP-controlled coalition government in Haryana, with its regional ally in Dushyant Chautala's Jannayak Janata Party, remains under constant tension, because the deputy chief minister Chautala is being forced by farming organisations to support their campaigns against the farm laws.

Though different in many other respects, the BJP and Congress are both centralist in their political goal of building a single unified Indian national identity. Therefore, both are opposed to the articulation of regional identities. The Congress's distrust of regional identities was guided by the Nehruvian project of building one unified Indian nationhood after India gets freedom from British Rule (Chandra et al, 2007). It was partly this project which was responsible for not acceding to the Muslim League demand for regional devolution of powers as outlined in the Cabinet Mission proposals. It was the rejection of Muslim League demand and Cabinet Mission proposals by the Congress leadership led by Nehru which eventually led to the partition of India (Jalal, 1985). Nehru was also a strong believer in central planning as a strategy for capitalist industrialisation of India (Bettelheim, 1968; Chakravarty, 1989; Desai, 1959, 1984, 1975, 2004). This belief led him to push for centralisation. Additionally, central planning in the Nehruvian strategy was not merely an economic project; it was also seen as a political project to unify the nation by using central planning to reduce inter-regional disparities through regulation and allocation of centrally-controlled public sector investment in different regions (Singh, 2008). The Nehruvian project was ostensibly 'secular' in character but the fact that Hindu majoritarianism was structural, it had the consequence of entrenching Hindu majoritarian bias in Indian institutions (Singh, 2015; Rehman, 2016; Mohapatra, 2017; Deshpande & Palshikar, 2019). Nehruvian centralisation wedded to strong Indian nationalism created crucially the conducive ideological, cultural and institutional space for the emergence of Hindu version of strong Indian nationalism.

Despite the continuity and similarity provided by shared centralism between Nehruvian Congress perspective on Indian nationalism and Hindutva nationalism, the crucial difference between Nehruvian Congress inspired nationalism and BJP-RSS inspired nationalism is that the latter is explicit in its ideological commitment to build Hindu India. This ideological adherence to build unified Hindu India leads to BJP showing a much more aggressive approach than the Congress towards centralisation. Its propagation of 'One India, One Agriculture Market' in defence of its farming policies articulated through the farm acts, the aggressive promotion of Hindi over regional languages (far more than the Congress ever did during its reign), its decision to scrap Jammu and Kashmir's constitutional status and statehood, and its New Education Policy are some of the key indicators of the BJP's aggressive centralisation agenda. More recently, the central BJP government has extended the powers of Border Security Force (BSF) beyond the initial 15 Km limit from the international border to 50 Km limit (Jagat, 2021). The significance of this measure as much as of the farm laws must be seen as links in the same chain of aggressive centralisation agenda being pursued by the current BJP regime.

The BJP sees the emergence of regional nationalist identities such as Tamil identity and Bengali identity, to name just two regional identities in the states which have Hindu religious majority but strong history of opposition to Hindu/Hindi identity, as obstacles to the emergence of transregional Hindu identity in India. Conversely, the more articulate proponents of regional

identities such as the anti-caste Tamil thinker and politician Periyar E.V. Ramasamy viewed regions as spaces of ‘counter-hegemonic force’ against Brahmanical Hinduism (Dhanda, 2021). Just as the BJP views regional identities with suspicion - as a subversion of its agenda to create an overarching Hindu identity - the regions suspect the BJP vision to be one aimed at the annihilation of regional identities. The tension between the states - the locations of different regional identities - and the Centre over the farm acts has contributed to heightening regional fears about the BJP’s unitarist Hindutva agenda.

The Left in India, especially the parliamentary left represented by CPI and CPM, is increasingly oriented towards centralised nationalism and has surrendered to the flawed discourse of ‘unity and integrity of the country’ (Singh, 2002). As a result, it has not been able to capture the progressive potentialities of regional nationalisms in India especially in opposition to centralised Hindu nationalism (Singh, 2008a, 2009). However, two developments are now slowly making the Left rethink about its perspective on regional identity. One relates to the involvement of the Left-oriented farmers and agricultural labour organisations in the recent farmers protests against the farm laws. This involvement has brought them in contact with many farmers’ organisations from Punjab which have articulated strong positions on the farm laws as attacks on the federal rights of the states in agriculture. The second relates to the dynamic of the politics in Bengal where the Left has been strong for many decades but has now been reduced to an opposition status with the strong emergence of the regionally based party All India Trinamool Congress (popularly known as TMC) led by Mamata Banerjee, the current chief minister of Bengal. In the recently concluded assembly elections in Bengal, Mamata Banerjee, by articulating the aspirations of Bengali regional identity against the Hindu identity that was vociferously projected by the BJP during the election campaign, was able to convincingly defeat BJP. The farmers’ organisations had actively campaigned against the BJP in this election, and the active role played by Punjab based organisations during the campaign against the BJP, seems to have played a decisive role in shaping the election results in constituencies with substantial numbers of Sikh voters.

The farmers’ movement has played a critical catalyst role in drawing attention to the anti-federal and anti-regional implications of the farm laws and Hindutva centralism.

The Ecological Dimensions of the Farm Laws and Centralised/Corporate Agriculture

We have discussed the three main nodes of resistance (farmers, states and regional identities) to the BJP government’s farm laws, and all these modes have shown one common concern; namely, the weakening of the states’ federal agricultural rights through an increasingly centralised agrobusiness restructuring of Indian agriculture. Nevertheless, it is important to mention, even if briefly, the ecologically damaging consequences from the operation of these Acts because this dimension has remained almost completely unexamined in the

current debates on this issue.¹⁴ The destruction of locally and state-based agriculture and its incorporation into all-India and global agricultural marketing systems will lead to increased transportation. An increase in transportation everywhere leads to an increase in carbon emissions, pollution, ecological destruction, and damage to the health of all living beings, human and non-human. It is the antithesis of the 'self-reliance' (*Aatmanirbharta*) which the BJP government has been falsely proclaiming as its aim.

There is also a need to start rethinking the wider importance of agriculture in the 'development' discourse. Both traditional right-wing thinking (such as Rostow's stages of growth or Lewis' dual economy model) as well as dominant left-wing thinking (Stalin's collectivisation is an extreme strain) view development and growth as a path of moving from agriculture to industry to services. In the era of global climate change, where the planet earth faces an existential threat from global heating and loss of biodiversity resulting from traditional economic growth paths, whether of the traditional right or the traditional left, the centrality of farming and of farming ways of life, compatible with ecological sustainability, needs to be rediscovered. The eco-socialist vision - as a critique of both the traditional right-wing and traditional left-wing modes of thinking - is an attempt to grapple with the ecological challenge humanity is currently facing (Singh et al, 2021).

Eco-socialist vision is the new paradigm of re-organising economy and society in such a way that such re-organization is compatible with ecological sustainability. This vision is a critique of the 20th century's two main alternative politico-economic paradigms- capitalism and traditional socialism of the Soviet variety (See Singh and Bhusal, 2014 for further elaboration).

Eco-socialism's critique of capitalism is focused on critiquing the main driver of capitalist mode of accumulation namely profit-maximisation. Capital in search of profit looks upon every natural resource- human labour, land, water, air, forests, animals, birds and mines etc., from the viewpoint of exploiting that resource for profit maximization. An individual firm in a capitalism economy is engaged in competition with other rivals in the market to survive and outcompete. This competitive pressure leads an individual firm to focus, in the short run, on exploiting every available natural resource in the least cost-effective and the most profitable way for itself without any consideration for the externalities i.e., the macro-economic environmental implications of its business strategy, not only in the medium or long run, but also in the short run. This neglect of externalities is intrinsic to capitalism because if the collective state level regulation of pricing the externalities in the decision-making process of an individual firm has to be imposed, it will lead to the erosion of the main institutional regulatory mechanism of capitalism i.e., the market. Because of the operation of external and internal economies of scale, capitalism as an economic system tends towards concentration and centralization of capital which leads to the rise of monopolies and international conglomerates. So far, the legislative infrastructure of capitalist states has tried to reduce this anti-competitive monopolistic tendency of capitalist accumulation through various anti-monopoly legislations to restore the essential characteristic of capitalism i.e., the

competitive market. However, despite the enormous paraphernalia of anti-monopoly legislations, the monopolistic power of big corporations has expanded beyond any level reached before in the history of capitalism. In the same way as regulatory mechanisms of capitalist states have not been able to overcome the inevitable consequence of market competition i.e., monopolisation, the environmental regulatory mechanisms of these states will not be able to defy completely the anti-environmental implications of the profit-maximising objective of the firms involved in competitive market structure of capitalism. Therefore, the idea floated by some theorists of capitalism that capitalism can become green capitalism is structurally flawed. That capitalism is inherently destructive of nature is central to the eco-socialist critique of capitalism (Singh, 2021e). This does not mean that eco-socialists reject green reforms under capitalism; what they reject instead is the inherent capacity of capitalism to protect ecology and ecological balance (Singh, 2022 forthcoming).

Eco-socialist critique of capitalism also looks upon capitalism from the angle of consumption. Capitalist accumulation and expansion requires expanding consumption to the point of even creating fictitious needs and deliberate obsolescence (Panayotakis, 2011). This unceasing expansion of consumption creates enormous amount of waste to the point where the rate of waste generation becomes higher than the planet's capacity to absorb that waste. It is this excess of waste generation over waste absorption which leads to pollution of land, water and air; and this pollution, in turn, damages the quality of the availability of these natural resources and the health of human and non-human beings (Rogers, 2006).

Eco-socialist critique of the old Soviet style socialism is based on the recognition that though those regimes rejected the market logic of capitalism and replaced it with the regulatory instrument of central planning, the objective of that planning had one commonality with one central objective of capitalism i.e., continuous economic growth without any consideration for its environmental consequences. The managers of this growth obsessed socialist regimes believed that through central planning, they would be able to achieve greater efficiency than that achievable under capitalism by avoiding waste which was unavoidable under capitalism. They hoped that through this higher economic growth rate, they would be able to win the ideological battle with capitalism by demonstrating to the world that socialism was a better socio-economic system than capitalism. The central planners believed in the gigantism of large-scale production in both industry and agriculture and in the worship of technology in achieving that gigantism. Undoubtedly, one of the stated objectives of that unceasing growth, gigantism and technology was social-economic equality that is unachievable under capitalism. This social objective was admirable but the dominant factions in these regimes did not understand or appreciate that unceasing growth had adverse ecological consequences. Some socialist ecologists who tried to highlight the possible ecological and social disasters that will result from this growth obsession were either ignored, and, in some cases, ruthlessly purged and punished. Those socialist ecologists eventually proved correct. The Soviet type economies were big ecological

disaster stories. The Chernobyl nuclear disaster in Ukraine in 1986 was just one of those disasters that the world came to know.

In the sphere of agriculture, the Stalinist collectivisation in Soviet Russia by ruthlessly destroying small family farms for the purpose of large-scale industrialisation of agricultural production is one of the most known environmental, social, economic and political disasters of the Soviet type regimes.

Eco-socialists, therefore, reject both the paradigms of capitalism and its claimed alternative i.e., Soviet style socialism. Different types of capitalisms (Anglo-Saxon, European social democratic and Asian) and socialisms (Chinese, Vietnamese and North Korean) fall within the same spectrum of capitalism and socialism though Cuba did show some departure by emphasising and encouraging organic agriculture (Singh, 2008b).

Informed by the ecological failures of capitalism and Soviet style socialism, ecological socialism advocates a different development paradigm based on reorganisation of the existing chemical and industrial agriculture regime towards a new regime of small scale, local, family and cooperative farming that is organic and natural in character (Singh, 2010a, 2010b, 2014). The transition path towards that ecologically oriented agriculture requires innovating and embedding new modes of energy use and concomitant agricultural practices (Singh and Singh, 2019a) which can, in the case of Punjab, draw upon the ecological teachings of Guru Nanak and other Sikh gurus (Singh and Singh, 2019b).

Punjab's farmers' organisations have so far shown only a limited understanding of the ecological dimensions of the existing chemicals-oriented Green Revolution strategy in Punjab and, even less of the strategy of agrobusiness takeover of Punjab agriculture which is at the core of the farm laws these organisations are fighting against. Disengagement from the agrarian strategy supported by these farm laws involves fighting against centralization of agriculture and upholding the federal rights of Punjab to initiate an autonomous agrarian strategy suited to the ecological conditions of the Punjab, albeit within the constraints impinging on Punjab due to the state being placed in the web of Indian and global capitalism. The extent to which these constraints can be overcome have not been fully tested. Struggling to weaken these constraints have to be at the centre of politico-economic strategies of the farmers' organisations. The fact that the farmers' organisations have drawn such wide-ranging degree of mass support in their struggle, unparalleled in Punjab's recent history, is a sign of hope that they can dare to move towards ecologically oriented agriculture, that the present conjuncture and needs of future generations demand.

Some individuals and NGOs such as Kheti Virasat Mission (Sharma, 2017), All India Pingalwara Society founded by Bhagat Puran Singh and Dalit agricultural organisations such as Punjab Khet Mazdoor Union (Singh et al, 2021) have already shown through their organic agricultural practices the potential for moving forward towards ecological agriculture in Punjab. La Via Campesina (meaning the peasants way), an international peasant movement, is

coordinating the international struggles for natural farming which now are mainly concentrated in Latin America and Africa (Singh, 2021g). Those are inspiring experiences for Indian and Punjabi farmers to draw upon.

Conclusions

It is only through concerted and collective action of the organisations representing marginal, small, and medium farmers that the multi-dimensional destructive turn in economic policy symbolised by these farm laws might be reversed. It is also in the economic interest and moral duty of all political groups and state governments that stand for federalism, pluralism and ecological sustainability, to coordinate their efforts to oppose this move. The struggle for federalism and diversity is also the struggle for democracy. The weakening of federalism contributes to the concentration of economic and political power at the Centre and the rise of authoritarian political tendencies and practices which are also anti-ecological in their orientation.

One indicator of the sincerity and commitment of those making coordinated efforts to reverse the policy package contained in these farm laws, would be for them to declare, that in any future Central government they may be part of, they would undo these changes and would look anew at the Constitutional provisions in order to increase the power of the states in agricultural management. There are other areas too, such as industry, finance, and education, where federal devolution must be fought for (Singh, 2008), but agriculture being linked to the land and source of food, remains the most crucial area in which states must obtain the right to retain their autonomy. The US, China, Europe, UK, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand are all closely integrated into the global capitalist economy, but each of these countries makes every effort to protect its agriculture even if that protection does not meet the standards of ecological sustainability.

Protecting agriculture as a state subject within Indian federalism and resisting the influence of agrobusiness capitalism, would be India's key economic, political, social and cultural battle in the coming years. Grasping the seriousness of this issue would be a critical prerequisite of developing the perspective to strengthen federalism, decentralisation, diversity, democracy, local farming, small scale farming, cooperative farming and ecological sustainability.

Farming organisations have still to develop an understanding and awareness of the ecologically destructive nature of existing agricultural practices especially in the so-called Green Revolution belt of Punjab and Haryana. The ecological destruction of Punjab in general and its rural sector in particular will intensify if the agro-business strategy enshrined in these farm laws is not defeated and pushed back. The fight for Punjab's federal rights in agriculture is closely linked with the strategy to move towards more autonomous agrarian strategy oriented towards ecological agriculture. A broader and deeper understanding of the strategy towards ecological agriculture would involve understanding of the eco-socialist or Red/Green vision of agriculture. Some initial steps, which can be

called transition steps towards that direction, have already been taken by some individuals, NGOs and agriculture labour organisations. Learning from similar international experiences in Latin America and Africa would further enrich the understanding of the historic need for transition towards the eco-socialist vision of decentralised agriculture.

Notes

¹ An exhaustive account of the scale and degree of international solidarity attracted by these protests would be a fit subject for a substantial research project. As one small indicator of international interest based just on my individual engagement with this subject, I note that I have spoken at webinars and given interviews for print media, radio and TV (not counting UK and India) in USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, France, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Slovenia. My articles on the subject have been published in French (Singh, 2020f, 2021a) and Spanish (Singh, 2021b), as well as the ones published in English, Hindi and Punjabi, and pieces are likely to be published in the coming months in Italian, German and Portuguese.

² For a set of brief elaborations of the eco-socialist vision and reflections on the farm laws and farmers' protests from this perspective, see P. Singh (2020f, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2021d).

³ The materials from two earlier articles – (P. Singh, 2020c and T. Singh et al, 2021) – have been so extensively used in this article that the relevant passages have not always been cited here except in those cases where a specific point refers to the earlier articles. It is strongly recommended that T. Singh et al (2021) be read for an in-depth examination of many aspects of the political economy of these laws, policies and protests that have a bearing on argument developed here, which focus mainly on aspect of federalism, farm laws and farm protests.

⁴ Since the three Ordinances were later introduced as Bills in Parliament to become Acts or laws, the words Ordinances/Bills/Acts or laws are used interchangeably in the paper.

⁵ Klein (2007) developed this argument in the context of the rise of neo-liberalism as a policy doctrine. She argues that governments seize upon disasters - environmental, economic and political - in order to push through policies and programmes to advance neo-liberal management of economy, politics and society.

⁶ Rajewal has also argued consistently that these farming laws, if not repealed, would open many more avenues and paths of central intervention into federal rights of states in agriculture.

⁷ For a more detailed examination of different dimensions of the MSP system, see P. Singh and Bhogal (2021) and P. Singh and Bhogal (2021 forthcoming). See also S. Singh and Bhogal (2021). For a critical examination of the government claims on retaining the MSP and APMC, see P. Singh (2020e).

⁸ For an elaboration of this thesis, see P. Singh (2008). See also S. Singh et al (2020) for book review panel discussion on the book.

⁹ For a more detailed investigation of the constitutional centralism in Indian agriculture, see Chapter 5, 'Centre-State Relations in Agriculture and their Implications for Punjab Agriculture' in Singh (2008) and for the assault of these farming laws on states' federal rights in agriculture, see Singh, 2020a.

¹⁰ See also P. Singh 2020a for further elaboration.

¹¹ Punjab' Finance Minister Manpreet Badal has estimated that Punjab alone would lose Rs 4000 crore revenue per year because of this farming initiative of the Centre (*Punjabi Tribune*, 2020).

¹² A retired Punjab civil servant, also named Pritam Singh, who worked for many years under different governments in Punjab, including those led by Akali Dal, and had proximity to many top Punjab politicians, shared with me this proclamation made by Sardar Parkash Singh Badal.

¹³ An Akali leader confided this in me, and his view was that it was widely known in Akali and CPM circles that during the 1970s when Surjeet had close ties with the top Akali leadership, he had a significant role in influencing their thinking. Surjeet is known to have influenced the wording of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution (1977 version) issued by Sant Harchand Singh Longowal as the President of Shiromani Akali Dal. The Akali leader who confided in me was not judgmental about Surjeet's role - he was neither appreciative nor critical of the role played by Surjeet in shaping the wording of Anandpur Sahib Resolution.

¹⁴ T. Singh et al (2021) remains the only scholarly contribution so far that puts ecology at the centre of the analysis when examining the farm laws and drawing attention to the digital capitalist strategy underpinning these laws.

References

Badal, Manpreet (2020). 'Kheti Billan Naal Punjab Nun Har Saal 4000 crore rupai da nuksaan hovega' (The Farming Bills will lead to 4000 crore rupees annual loss to Punjab). *Punjabi Tribune*, September 19, p.2.

Bettelheim, C., (1968). *India Independent*. London: MacGibbon & Kee.

Chadha, R., Davenport, S., and Elumalai, K. (2008). *Competition and regulatory reform in Indian agricultural markets, International Workshop, Agricultural Trade Liberalisation and Domestic Market Reforms in Indian Agriculture* (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271474881_Competition_and_Regulatory_Reform_in_Indian_Agricultural_Markets).

Chakravarty, S., (1989). *Development Planning: The Indian Experience*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Chand, R. (2020). 'New farm acts, understanding the implications', *NITI Working Paper Series 1/2020. National Institution for Transforming India, Government of India*.
<https://niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2020-11/NewFarmActs2020.pdf>.

Chandra, Bipin; Mukherjee, Mridula; Mukherjee, Aditya; Mahajan, Sucheta; Panikkar, K. N. (eds.) (2017). *India's Struggle for Independence: 1857-1947*. Penguin India.

Desai, A. R. (1959). *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan.

Desai, A.R. (1984). *India's Path of Development: A Marxists Approach*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan.

Desai, M. (1975). India: Emerging Contradictions of Slow Capitalist Development. In: Robin Blackburn ed. *Explosions in a Subcontinent*. London: Penguin, 1975, pp 11-50. Included also in Desai 2005.

Desai, M. (2005). *Development and Nationhood: Essays in the Political Economy of India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Deshpande, Satish and Sanjay Palshikar (eds) (2019). *Sectarian Violence in India: Hindu-Muslim Conflict, 1966-2015*, India: Orient BlackSwan and EPW.

Dhanda, Meena (2021). Closing address to the International Conference 'Anti-Caste Thought: Theory, Politics and Culture', University of Wolverhampton, UK, October 30 (unpublished).

Government of India. (2015). *Report of the high-level committee on reorienting the role and restructuring of Food Corporation of India*. Government of India, New Delhi.

Jagat, Gurbachan (2021). 'BSF imbroglio in Punjab'. *The Tribune*, October 31.

Jalal, A. (1985). *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Klein, N. (2007). *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. Random House.

Mandal, M. (2020). 'India's uninspiring record of deregulating farming could explain why many are worried about new laws.' *Scroll.in*, December 4, 2020. <https://scroll.in/article/980171/indias-uninspiring-record-of-deregulating-farming-can-explain-why-many-are-worried-about-new-laws>.

Mohapatra, Subas (ed) (2017). *Indian Society and Culture*, Taylor and Francis.

Panayotakis, C. (2011). *Remaking Scarcity: From Capitalist Inefficiency to Economic Democracy*. London: Pluto.

Rajewal, B. S. (2021). 'Kisan Andolan: *Lekha Jokha ate Bhavikh*' (translation; Farmers' Struggle: Current Assessment and its Future). *Punjabi Tribune*, July 17, p.7.

Rehman, M (ed) (2016): *Communalism in Postcolonial India: Changing Contours*, India: Routledge.

Rogers, H. (2006). 'Garbage Capitalism's Green Commerce'. *Socialist Register 2007 Coming to Terms With Nature*: 231-253.

Sharma, Divya (2017). 'Technopolitics, Agrarian Work and Resistance in Post-Green Revolution Indian Punjab'. PhD diss., Cornell University. <https://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/59067>.

Singh, A. (1992). 'Anandpur Sahib Resolution' in Harbans Singh (ed.) *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*. Patiala: Punjabi University, pp. 133-141. (The author's name is mentioned as 'M.A.S. (Maharaja Amarinder Singh of Patiala)').

Singh, P. (2002). 'Political economy of nationalism: minority left and minority nationalisms vs mainstream left and majority nationalism in India'. *International Journal of Punjab Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 287-298, July-December.

Singh, P. (2008). *Federalism, Nationalism and Development: India and the Punjab economy*. London/New York: Routledge (Second Indian reprint 2019).

Singh, P. (2008a). 'Political Economy of the Third Front in India'. *Contemporary South Asia*, Vol 16, No. 4 (Dec 2008), pp. 465-69.

Singh, P. (2008b). 'Contemporary Global Capitalism: Multi-pronged Crises'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, October 11, pp. 36-40.

Singh, P. (2009). 'Left and the Third Front'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol XLIV, No.12, March 21, pp. 8-11.

Singh, P. (2010a). 'Capitalism, Nature and Eco-Socialism'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol XLV, No.12, March 20, pp. 29-33.

Singh, P. (2010b). 'Interrogating Marxian, Neo-classical and Green Perspectives on the Contradictory Implications of Third World/Asian Development and Poverty' In Sucha Singh Gill, Lakhwinder Singh and Reena Marwah (eds.) *Sustainability of Asian Economic Development*, Routledge, New Delhi.

Singh, P. (2014). 'The Competing Theories of Development and Underdevelopment: A Critical Evaluation from an Eco-Socialist Perspective'. *LIMES Plus* Vol. XI, No. 3, pp. 117-146. September-December 2014.

Singh, P. (2015). 'Institutional Communalism in India'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol 50, No 28, pp. 48–56.

Singh, P. (2020a). 'Centre's Agricultural Marketing Reforms Are an Assault on Federalism', *The Wire*, June 20 (<https://thewire.in/agriculture/agriculture-marketing-reforms-federalism>).

Singh, P. (2020b). 'As cracks in NDA Widen, Is BJP Ideology Compatible with Regional Identities'. *The Wire*, 22 September. (<https://thewire.in/politics/bjp-punjab-akali-dal-shiv-sena-regional-alliances>).

Singh, P. (2020c). 'BJP's farming policies: deepening agrobusiness capitalism and centralisation'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, October 10, 55(41):14-17.

Singh, P. (2020d). 'BJP's Agrarian Agenda: Strengthening Agro-Business Capitalism and Weakening Federalism'. *Radical Socialist*, December 4 (<http://www.radicalsocielist.in/articles/national-situation/906-bjp-s-agrarian-agenda-strengthening-agro-business-capitalism-and-weakening-federalism>).

Singh, P. (2020e). 'Glaring flaws in farm laws'. *The Tribune*, December 9.

Singh, P. (2020f). 'Les agriculteurs contre l'agenda agro-industriel de Modi'. *Le Grand Continent*, 22 décembre (<https://legrandcontinent.eu/fr/2020/12/22/les-agriculteurs-contre-lagenda-agro-industriel-de-modi/>).

Singh, P. (2021a). 'Aux sources de la révolte paysanne en Inde: capitalisme de l'agrobusiness et centralisation', *CONTRETEMPS REVUE DE CRITIQUE COMMUNISTE*, 26 janvier (http://www.contretemps.eu/inde-modi-bjp-capitalisme-agrobusiness-mouvement-paysan/?fbclid=IwAR1h1Uhc51enzvGavQ_VeoFet6QELny75dP3ciTxmmU3hnxzYQYEo8Qz4Eg).

Singh, P. (2021b). 'INDIA, Las raíces de la revuelta campesina: contra el agronegocio capitalista y la centralización', *viento sur*, 30 ENERO (https://vientosur.info/las-raices-de-la-revuelta-campesina-contr-el-agronegocio-capitalista-y-la-centralizacion/?fbclid=IwAR3GMZjybl_2_rfo_PFIX7UzmxGzSwGJ39OKCnmVMUN0ak1zJAKLkR7N6UA).

Singh, P. (2021c). 'Behind the Indian Farmers Struggle', *Anti-Capitalist Resistance*. February 10 (<https://anticapitalistresistance.org/behind-the-indian-farmers-struggle/>).

Singh, P. (2021d). 'Indian farmers confront agribusiness and Hindu nationalist agenda of Modi'. *Red and Green Labour*, February 21 (<https://redgreenlabour.org/2021/02/21/indian-farmers-confront-agribusiness-and-hindu-nationalist-agenda-of-modi-government/>).

Singh, P. (2021e). 'Capitalism, Ecology and Eco-socialism' In *Global Political Economy: A Critique of Contemporary Capitalism* edited by V. Upadhyay and P. Singh. Delhi: Aakar, 353-375.

Singh, P. (2021f). '*Punjab de sehaj bodh ton tudian*' (translation: 'Losing touch with the common sense of Punjab'). *Punjabi Tribune*, November 2.

Singh, P. (2021g). 'A Global Peasants' Movement for Sustainable Healthcare', *The Wire*, April 17.

Singh, P. (2021h). 'Amarinder Singh's Fall to Political Irrelevance Will Go Down in History'. *The Wire*, November 5.

Singh, P. (2022 forthcoming). 'Green Reforms and Individual Interventions in the Green New Deal Transition to Ecosocialism' in *Routledge Handbook of Ecosocialism* edited by Leigh Brownhill, Salvatore Engel-Di Mauro, Terran Giacomini, Ana Isla, Michael Lowy, and Terisa Turner.

Singh, P. & Bhogal, S. (2021a). 'Misunderstanding the MSP: A properly thought-out resolution requires the untangling of many aspects of farm laws'. *The Indian Express*, January 8 (<https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/farm-laws-protests-farmers-govt-talks-msp-apmc-mandi-7137463/>).

Singh, P. & Bhogal, S. (2021 forthcoming). 'Interrogating the MSP Regime, Farm Laws and Agrarian Future in India'. *Millennial Asia*, Vol 12, No 3, December.

Singh, P. & Bhusal, L. (2014). 'Austerity, Welfare State and Eco-Socialism: With Special Reference to the United Kingdom'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol XLIX, No 39, September 27, pp. 111-118.

Singh, P. & Singh, Nadia (2019a). 'Political economy of bioenergy transitions in developing countries: a case study of Punjab, India'. *World Development* (124), August.

Singh, P. & Singh, Nadia (2019b). 'The Ecological and Social Teachings of Guru Nanak'. *Sikh Review*, December, pp. 1-3.

Singh, S. and Bhogal, S. (2021b). 'MSP in a changing agricultural policy environment'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 56(3):12-18.

Singh, Sukhpal, Shinder S. Thandi, Harpreet K Narang and Pritam Singh (2020). 'Did Indian Federalism Fail Punjab?' *Journal of Sikh and Punjab Studies*, 27(1): 157-179.

Singh, Tanya, Pritam Singh and Meena Dhanda (2021). 'Resisting a 'Digital Green Revolution': Agri-logistics, India's New Farm Laws and the Regional Politics of Protest'. *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, Volume 32(2), June:1-21. (DOI:10.1080/10455752.2021.1936917), (<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10455752.2021.1936917>).

Sova, Chase (2018). 'Why the founding fathers wanted Americans to be farmers'. *Quartz*, March 20 (<https://qz.com/1233436/why-the-founding-fathers-wanted-americans-to-be-farmers/>).