



## For Favour of Publication

### Conference on Karl Marx - Day-1

**Patna, June 16.** Delivering the Paul M Sweezy Memorial Lecture on the inaugural day of the five day international conference on 'Karl Marx- Life, Ideas, Influence : a Critical Examination on the Bicentenary' under the aegis of the Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI) in Patna on Saturday, Professor Dipankar Gupta highlighted the irony of the formation of political parties by communists. "Marx in his Communist Manifesto did not favour the formation of political parties by communists, neither did he approve the formation of their own sectarian principles. This would disqualify all Communist parties," he said.

In answer to a question from the audience, Professor Gupta said that neither Marx nor Friedrich Engels ever propounded the concept of violence for social change. Marx, in fact, particularly propounded the vanguard role of women in social revolution. He lamented the misinterpretation of Marx's ideas over time. Attributing this tendency of scholars to their spontaneous association of Marxism with Communist dictatorships like those of Stalin, Mao, Ceausescu and others, Professor Gupta pointed that popular critiques by Hanna Ardent, Max Weber and Milton Friedman were scathing in their criticism of Marxism even though much of it was based on weak grounds.

The conference is being held in the memory of Pijushendu Gupta and Radha Krishna Choudhary, who were the chief organisers of the national seminar on the sesquicentennial of Karl Marx convened in Begusarai in 1967. The inauguration of the conference was marked by the presentation of shawls to Dr Ushasi Gupta, the daughter in-law of Pijushendu Gupta, and Mr Pranav Kr Choudhary, son of Radha Krishna Choudhary. ADRI Treasurer Dr Sunita Lall read the citation and later presented mementoes to the eminent speakers on this occasion.

Delivering the keynote address Lord Meghnad Desai said Marx's theories hold great lessons for the contemporary world, mainly the role of capitalism in the context of globalisation. He said Marxism has gained a new lease of life since the financial crisis of 2008.

Interestingly, analysts have pointed out that greater economic freedom and the rise of a dominant middle class would ultimately lead to situation where greater political freedom would be demanded, culminating in the flowering of democracy in China. Lord Desai pointed out that such an outcome had already been visualised by Marx in his writings.

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In the inaugural session, Dr Shaibal Gupta, Member-Secretary, ADRI, said in his welcome address that in the conference “we are not only remembering Marx, but have dedicated 38 memorial lectures to philosophers, economists, academics and political figures who had either influenced him or were influenced by him”.

Prof P P Ghosh, Director ADRI, said the reason why Marx’s ideas still draw scholars from diverse fields is that there are several elements in Marxian methodology that lend it an analytical strength that was not there prior to Marx.

The inaugural session was presided over by Prof Anjan Mukherji, Chairman, ADRI.

Delivering the Karl Marx Memorial Lecture, Deepak Nayyar, Professor Emeritus (JNU) and former VC, Delhi University, spoke about the historical evolution of globalization. He pointed out that globalization was a multidimensional phenomenon which was not only limited to the flow of trade in goods and services and capital but also about the exchange of ideas, technology and information. Historically, globalization has been a fragile process that has witnessed periodic ups and downs.

Globalization requires a hegemon who can ensure the security and stability of the world order. Currently, this role is being played by the United States of America. Since the global financial crisis of 2008, globalization has seen a major backlash in European countries and also America which has seen the rise of Donald Trump.

Among the other prominent speakers on Day-one of the five day international conference, Professor Seongjin Jeong from Gyeongsang National University, Republic of Korea, presented the Marxian view over the capitalist development in South Korea from 1970 - 2014 . He delivered the Rajani Palme Dutt Memorial Lecture.

Professor Satish Jain, former JNU professor, delivered the Adam Smith Memorial Lecture. He spoke on the ‘Normative Elements of Marxism’.

Dr. Shannon Brincat, Senior Lecturer, University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia, highlighted aspects of ‘Ancient Indian Dialectics and Marx’ while delivering the Shapurji Saklatvala Memorial Lecture.

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