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## **Lumpen Patriarchal Sponsored Gender based Violence in the Communities of eThekweni Municipality: Roots and Remedies in Building Safer Communities: A Marxist-Leninist Understanding**

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### **Abstract:**

South Africa in general and eThekweni Municipality in particular has been one of the worst sufferers of gender based violence on women. Imprisonment and counseling can be a capitalistic and temporary solution but not a permanent one. The understanding of the roots of this problem by historical materialistic way will lead to lumpen patriarchy. This menace can be solved only by historical materialistic solution of analyzing and understanding the preliminary stage of gender system and the male power that is reaffirmed by the capitalistic system of the present day world. Quantitative and qualitative interviews done by us among the men, women and theoreticians on this issue show well that the root cause is neither imported nor native. But the comprehensive mutual support between the tribal patriarchy and imported capitalism help each other for its long standing prevalence. A socio economical and psychological gender war should be unleashed to curb this menace from eThekweni Municipality in particular and South Africa in general.

**Keywords: Gender, violence, Capitalism, Lumpen Patriarchy and eThekweni.**

### **Background:**

South Africa in general and eThekweni Municipality in particular has been one of the worst sufferers of gender based violence on women. According to the South African Police Services' Crime Research and Statistics, the total sexual crimes committed from April 2012 to March 2013 in Durban central are 576 and in Durban North are 30. "Although recent crime statistics released by the South African Police Service show a downward trend, especially in murder rates, the Figures are still unacceptably high" says the National Development Plan (P 386). Pali Lehohla, Statistician-General in his fore word to "Gender Statistics in South Africa, 2011" published by Statistics South Africa says, "there are some issues – such as gender-based violence – on which collecting reliable data remains a challenge." One of the newspaper reports says "The South African Police Service (SAPS) does not collect statistics that allow for an accurate picture of Gender Based Violence in South Africa... the problem is larger than reported because of underreporting. Research by the SA Medical Research Council (MRC), for example, suggests that 1 in 25 rapes are reported. Consider then the real number of altered lives and victimized mothers, daughters and citizens behind the SAPS figure of more than 55,000 reported rapes in 2009/10." The increasing violence on women in eThekweni alarmingly proclaiming the measures to stop of the menace are the failures.

At the same time, an opposite view to the statistics is making rounds in the minds of progressive and society concerned people i.e. the white dominated media. The white dominated

Medias have been really successful in creating the fear of gender based violence in the psyche of all the people even including the foreigners who never visited the eThekweni municipality or South Africa. Especially post apartheid era has been witnessing the successful propaganda of the negative campaign of the white dominated Medias portraying the black people as the main reasonable group behind all crimes in South Africa in general and EThekweni Municipality in particular. Already I, as a man new to this Durban city, have been warned by many of friends to be careful whenever I visit the black dominated areas. Especially pro apartheid-whites have been running sort of vocal propaganda against the blacks as they are thieves, murderers and rapists. Too many stories are being told and spread among the communities as part of this Xenophobia. The reports from the various Medias and even South African Police Service substantiated these claims that only blacks are behind these crimes especially the gender based violence. Not only white dominated South African Medias but also the Medias those who are really concerned about the pathetic situations of the South African women have been saying that South Africa is one of the worst sufferers of gender based violence.

In the article written by Sheri Hamilton titled Two Sides of the Same bloody Coin published in IZWI LABASEBENZI (Aug-Oct 2013), she says, "Among the many studies cited, statistics that stand out is that South Africa bears notoriety for not only being the world's rape capital as claimed by Interpol which says that a woman is more likely to get raped". Whoever looks at the reports of these Medias never try to have the understanding that the criminals are from different communities like Whites, Indians, Coloured, Blacks and Chinese. The South African criminals are narrowed as African criminals and black criminals. Even the advertisements of security agencies like Xpanda promise the South Africans that they will keep the criminals behind the bars-with the photograph of black man behind the bar. Same time the researchers cum progressive activists like us do not have any problem in accepting the fact that the South Africa is not the comfortable country for the women-YES, WE CANT PUT INTO THE SHOES OF THE WOMEN AND WALK A MILE-as the message of an NGO goes. The reports of the white Medias-though they are white dominated and their main intention to create Xenophobia against blacks-carry a bit of weight. Yes, most of the gender based violence is committed out by the black here. No shame or harm in accepting the reality though we do not understand the socio-political and cultural difference between the racial name callings- WHITES STEAL LANDS- IT WILL BE CALLED AS PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATIONS AND THEY ARE CALLED AS FARMERS, BLACKS STEAL A SLICE OF BREAD- IT WILL BE CALLED AS THEFT AND THEY ARE CALLED AS THEIVES.

### **Research Methodology:**

Common to structuralist social science research strategy was adopted. The theoretical and empirical derived investigations done by me are co related through the extended informal interviews conducted among various people from the various social strata. The informants are individuals and from communities, civil society activists, bureaucrats and state leaders. I ensure that both the qualitative and quantity methods of researching have been used. The participants who were interviewed are from various strata of the society in race, gender and class wise. They are from different communities such as blacks, coloured, Indians and whites and from different classes that are prevailing in the communities of eThekweni as the research here intends to probe the gender based violence prevailing in various communities of this municipality. The newspaper evidences are taken into consideration though the observations are not made out of the just

outlook from what newspapers say. The feminists and scholars on these areas were interviewed to better the resolutions and recommendations that I try to give in the end.

The informal interviews conducted were trying to seek answers for the following questions.

- Who was affected by the gender based violence? (geography of conflict, social and political dynamics, structural factors)
- Who commits the gender based crimes? (demographical and racial dynamics)
- What were the reasons for the gender based crimes? (geography of conflict, social and political dynamics, structural factors)
- What could be the solutions for these problems? (socio, political, economical and legal points of views were discussed)

Not restricted with these questions, various sub questions were asked to seek the answers for the research questions. The field research was conducted from June to till the paper was written as it is ongoing project and everyday new dimensions of the problems are revealed out. The conducted field research and the results out of those field researches were discussed with various human right activists, think tanks of the state and political gender activists. The investigation has taken the snowballing technique into consideration, but has not relied on it completely as the issue has various socio, political, economical and racial dimensions. The sampling area consists of all the corners of eThekweni municipality. The random people were selected from all the areas of eThekweni and informal interviews conducted with them in order to relax them from the sort of interview method. Higher concentration was given for interviewing the women who have been the worst sufferers of this gender based violence. To talk about the sampling size, more than hundred people in whom more than three fourth are women were interviewed.

To analyze the output of the problem and also the inference, historical materialist approach was followed as it is the guiding principle for analyzing the problem scientifically. More than anything, this approach enables the researchers to be apolitical, non racial and classless person to understand the roots of the problem and give out the solution that is the logically and scientifically understandable and truthful.

### **Restrictions:**

Though direct and indirect violence against women are higher in family than outside, I would like to restrict my research on the violence against women that happened outside-in the streets of the communities. At the same time, I shall try to make a bird's view on the violence on women in families also. This limitation is much needed here as the violence against women in family needs better and multi facet understanding. As the researcher hails from India, it may influence in the investigations. The interviews were not recorded due to the often sensitive nature of the discussion and the issue discussed. To ease the informants from the interview mode the informal interviews were conducted. The investigation did not mainly rely on the participant's observation and also the researcher's previous knowledge and the familiarity with this area. But the participants' observation obviously taken into consideration to the certain limit and researcher's strong Marxist-Leninist background was contained to the level that might not over influence the natural inference of the investigations.

**Introduction:**

The problem of gender based violence and the failed means of states to curb them are not only here but even the so called developed states like USA are no exceptions. The mushroomed feminist movements and bundles of papers spent on so called feminist writings are so far just one more stepping stone towards the failure. The universal legal system in order to curb the menace of gender based violence on women, has been implementing strict laws but the results are contrary. The so called capitalistic feminist freedom or democracy could not give the real freedom to women, nay could not reach out to the roots of the problem. Breathing down the necks of those who have been doing these crimes have so far worsened the situation. Even the socio economic and psychological understanding of the problem could not give the solution to this age old disease which has been in the world since pre communal society. The women are easy targets for everyone. The police services are requested to stringent their laws to punish the criminals, but still Imprisonment and counseling can be a capitalistic and temporary solution, not a permanent one. The nongovernmental efforts like counseling and the socio economic solutions also could not solve this everlasting menace.

All the participants who participated in the interviews could not reach out to the root of this problem. Most of the people point their fingers at the black people as most of crimes are committed by blacks that's what the data and also xenophobia say. Very few could connect the problem with socio economic conditions of the people. Those who are really concerned about the problems say that unemployment go hand in hand with the gender based violence especially street violence. The unemployment status of women made them inferior to men and vulnerable to gender based violence and unemployment status of men made them prone to crimes. StatSA's Gender Index confirms this lack of progress for the majority of women and shows that men of all races in South Africa still get paid more than women. Employment is the lowest among black women at 30.8% compared to 42% amongst black men while 72.6% of white males and 56.1% of white men are employed. The socio economic status of eThekweni municipality from its website shows that 506 111 21 are unemployed. The racial data would be more interesting as to know surely more number unemployed are from black community. Though one of the core values of the city is economically successful city, the number of people who are not economically active is 822 288 34. So the responses of the participants in the interviews conducted sound truthful and scientific. But the truth speaks contrary. The world Health Organization estimates that globally 1 in 5 women will be a victim of rape or attempted rape in her life time. In the US, for example, feminist writer, Gloria Steinman estimates that more American women have been killed by their husbands or boyfriends since 2001(leave alone the gender based violence happening in the streets of the Uncle Sam) than all the US citizens killed in the 9/11 World Trade Centre attacks and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars put together. So the unemployment cannot be the reason for the gender based violence. The interviews conducted and investigations based on that could not reach to the problem of eThekweni Municipality and South Africa in particular and world in general.

**Lumpen Patriarchy:**

The understanding of the roots of this problem in the communities of eThekweni municipality in particular and South Africa in general by historical materialistic way will lead to lumpen patriarchy. "Lumpen patriarchy" is the new word in the dictionary of communist vocabulary gifted by Comrade Jeremy Cronin. This word can be found in one of the party

documents of South African Communist Party titled “The South African Road to Socialism”. The diagnosis of the root of the disease named gender violence in South African context will force all the researchers to believe in this new word “lumpen patriarchy”. The lumpen patriarchy is the perfect combination of both feudalism and capitalism which is the prevailing situation of South African society. Though the mode of production in South Africa is capitalistic mode of production, the remnants of feudalism is easily found in all the post colonial or neo colonial states. The situation is not only found in South Africa but in all the post colonial countries of the world. The capitalism has conveniently lost its progressive role after its famous and sarcastic fall in Paris commune. The white regime in South Africa did not like to throw away the feudal system that was prevailing in South Africa in the form of tribal system in South African communities. The mutual pact between the white rule and the tribal kings in South Africa is the very good example of the perfect combination of both capitalism and feudalism. So though the mode of production in South Africa is apparently capitalistic mode of production, the remnants of feudalism is deliberately maintained. Lambert, when he says about the convenient compromise between the white rule and local traditional leaders, he says:

For the early colonial settlers, in the 1800s, colonial Natal was one of the areas where there was a need for a delicate balance between accommodating the chiefs and providing for white settlement in the area. Originally, Natal was under the control of Sir Harry Smith who explicitly wished to give magistrates increasing power over local governance in the region and reduce the chiefs to salaried officials by the 1840s. In reality this began to happen only in 1856 when Theophilus Shepstone became the Secretary for Native Affairs after the annexing of Natal to the Cape Colony. Although he, like Smith, used the system of chiefs for the administration of the region this had not been his original intention. Initially he had planned a system of British local government. However, when the treasury in London refused to finance these local structures there was no option but to make use of existing structures of chiefs. In spite of their reliance on the system of chiefs, colonial governors had a vested interest in reducing their power base because of their influence on local communities. Thus, although colonial rule offered chiefs the opportunity to increase their power through the accumulation of livestock and land, as the colony became more firmly entrenched and the British gained greater power in the region there were increasing attempts to reduce the authority that the chiefs had (Lambert, 1995).

The capitalism was not progressive as it was in few of the European countries. The local chiefs who have been the representative of feudal relationships were used by the white colonialists because of the support the chiefs enjoyed among their people and their ability to control unrest. With the introduction of, for example, hut taxes, the chiefs' popularity and support base began to be eroded making them increasingly less useful for the administration of the region (Ibid). The relationship between the lumpenism sponsored by colonialism of special type and traditional patriarchy that has been in communities of eThekweni municipality has been the fertile ground for the violence on women. Of course the patriarchy as a result of class society and lumpenism as a result of heightened capitalism in the specific situations of eThekweni smile with their bloody claws as the reasons behind the gender based violence on women in communities.

## Lumpen:

Lumpen is a group of people who were given little attention by the most of the theoreticians in the world. Even the great teachers of Marxism did not give much attention to them. Most of the opinions opined them are of negative and few like the Chairman Mao-Tse Tung gave bit of positive opinion of lumpen elements. Especially in the post cold war era where the conventional socialist revolutions failed and the anarchist and pop corn types of protests are mushrooming, the progressive role of lumpen elements are undeniable and deserve serious attention and study. Before looking at the lumpen theoretically with reference to South Africa in general and eThekweni municipality in particular, let us look at the understanding of Marxist teachers on the subjects lumpen. When Karl Marx and Frederic Engels talk about the lumpen, they literally warn everyone of this threat of lumpen. They say in their monumental work, "The Communist Manifesto" that the lumpen elements are "the dangerous class, the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society," and claim that although it "may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution, its conditions of life prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue." (*Selected Works*, I, 44). In *The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850*, Marx says that the lumpen proletariat "in all big towns forms a mass sharply differentiated from the industrial proletariat," and analyzes it as "a recruiting ground for thieves and criminals of all kinds, living on the crumbs of society, people without a definite trade, vagabonds, gens sans feu et sans aveu, varying according to the degree of civilization of the nation to which they belong, but never renouncing their lazzaroni character." (*Selected Works*, I, 155).

One can feel of sense of rejection in the statement of Engels on lumpen. When he talks about the nature of lumpen proletariat in his selected works I, he says:

"The lumpen proletariat, this scum of the depraved elements of all classes, which established headquarters in the big cities, is the worst of all possible allies. This rabble is absolutely venal and absolutely brazen. If the French workers, in every revolution, inscribed on the houses: Mort aux voleurs! Death to thieves! and even shot some, they did it, not out of enthusiasm for property, but because they rightly considered it necessary above all to keep that gang at a distance., Every leader of the workers who uses these scoundrels as guards or relies on them for support proves himself by this action alone a traitor to the movement (646).

As Bruce Franklin in his Red papers says, Marx and Engels says that the lumpen came from the lowest strata of the society, but later "Yet in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*, Marx is quite explicit in stating that the lumpen proletariat comes from all classes:

Alongside decayed rouses with dubious means of subsistence and of dubious origin, alongside ruined and adventurous offshoots of the bourgeoisie, were vagabonds, discharged soldiers, discharged jailbirds, escaped galley slaves, swindlers, mountebanks, lazzaroni, pickpockets, tricksters, gamblers, maquereaus (pimps), brothel keepers, porters, literati, organ-grinders, rag-pickers, knife grinders, tinkers, beggars – in short, the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass, thrown hither and thither, which the French term la bohème; from this kindred element Bonaparte formed the core of the Society of December 10. A "benevolent society" – in so far as, like Bonaparte, all its members felt the need of benefiting themselves at the expense of the labouring nation. This Bonaparte,

who constitutes himself chief of the lumpen proletariat,... here alone rediscovers in mass form the interests which he personally pursues, ... recognizes in this scum, offal, refuse of all classes the only class upon which he can base himself unconditionally . . . (Selected Works, I, 295).

Though I do not personally support the points of Franklin that “Marx and Engels, perceiving the existence of an important but ill-defined social class and angered by the treacherous role often played by that class, tended to make an ethical judgment rather than a Marxist analysis of its role in capitalist society and revolutionary struggle”, I support his views on the origin of lumpen that they are of from all classes. This fact is very much applicable and understandable to the South African society. As George Thomson puts it in his book “Marx to Mao”, the lumpen are “composed of declassed and demoralized elements, not regularly engaged in production, unorganized and largely incapable of organization” (47).

More of supporting this point that the lumpen elements can emerge from any classes of societies say many notable Marxist philosophers. The more number of lumpen elements can be seen among the people here or the lumpen qualities can be seen among the people of all communities. Especially the black people- the worst sufferers-the world has ever never seen are prone to the lumpen qualities-credit goes to the exploitation of white colonists. The black people’s livelihood and lands were stolen by the white colonialists systematically and the innocent blacks were declassed into lumpen elements as they have nothing of their own and they need to something and everything to win their bread and butter. Many dispossessed poor Xhosa people who could not be employed on white settlers’ farms were pushed into infertile pieces of land, and it were those Xhosas who occasionally ‘stole’ or perhaps to be more correct, they ‘repossessed’ ‘stolen’ livestock or crops from ‘white farmers’ (Geldenhuys, 1991). The statement of Geldenhuys is the perfect example to understand the situation of black lumpen in this country.

### **Patriarchy:**

As Lindsey German in her article titled “Theories of Patriarchy” put it, “Perhaps the most persistent and widespread theory around the Women’s Movement today is that of patriarchy. It takes many different forms but the ideas behind it-that male domination or sexism is something which exists not just as a product of capitalism but as something quite separate from the capitalist mode of production and which will endure beyond capitalism”. Juliet Mitchell says, “We are dealing with two autonomous areas, the economic mode of capitalism and the ideological mode of patriarchy”. Thus the understanding of patriarchy in general and also in particular with reference to South Africa is much needed to understand, analyze the gender based violence in South Africa. The patriarchy will lead anyone to the understanding of origin of family, private property and state. Frederick Engels in his book “The Origin of Family, Private Property and State” says on that “The over throw of mother right was the world historical defeat of the female sex”. (31) The patriarchy-the domination of men-sexism stands firmly on the single theme i.e. private property. The reactionary traditions that have been kept as the core values of feudalism in this country and carefully preserved by the white domination as one of the means to dominate the black people support the capitalist mode of production for its own survival. Both the patriarchy and capitalism contribute and complement each other for their own survival. Patriarchal values make the men as the superior to women and here a patriarchal man considers women as just “mere instrument of production” (Communist Manifesto).

## **Lumpen Patriarchy & Gender Based Violence:**

“The ‘dangerous class,’ the social scum” with the remnants of the feudal values i.e. patriarchal values certainly think that women are nothing but the sex tools and these dangerous classes never be threatened by the police and legal system as “this rabble is absolutely venal and absolutely brazen”. The capitalist consumer culture has been successful in making the women as sexual product. For example, for AXE perfumes, more than three girls are after a man. To contain this particular class, the steps taken by the present system are really funny. Most of the respondents in interviews conducted are funny. They say that the police must be strengthened to contain and control these lumpen forces. Unfortunately police forces are the extreme form of patriarchal system. In order to protect the class interests and patriarchal values these police forces were formed. In few countries, the police have the highest record of rapes and murders. No women would be willing to enter the police stations all alone. The only difference between the police and lumpen is the police are organized but the lumpen are disorganized, but as far as the patriarchal values are concerned, there are no much difference between these groups of people. The poverty and employments are one of the reasons for the lumpen patriarchy sponsored gender based violence, not the only reason. The reason is private property.

## **Kill the Boerism:**

The problem of the lumpen Patriarchy is just the symptom, the disease is private property. This problem is not only in eThekweni Municipality but it is in the whole South Africa. The agrarian revolution must be implemented here as a step towards the new democratic revolution. The 87% percentage of the land that is still with the white people should be nationalized and the community level land distribution must be carried out. Every step towards the abolition of private property will take the struggle against gender based violence forward. The African countries especially South Africa deserve the Cultural Revolution. The Agrarian revolution can kill the boerism in the base or materially and the Cultural Revolution can kill the boerism in the superstructure of the superstructure of the mode of production or socio, political and culturally. The simultaneous revolutions that go hand in hand lone ensure the women walk peacefully in this society.

## **Conclusions & Solutions:**

No other means or ideologies but the Marxist-Leninist understanding of the problem alone can give the remedies to this disease. The lumpen patriarchy is just symptom, but the disease is the class society and capitalism and its consumer culture. This menace can be solved only by historical materialistic solution of analyzing and understanding the preliminary stage of gender system and the male power that is reaffirmed by the capitalistic system of the present day world. Quantitative and qualitative interviews done among the men, women and theoreticians on this issue show well that the root cause is neither imported nor native. But the comprehensive mutual support between the tribal patriarchy prevailing in eThekweni and imported and imposed capitalism sponsored lumpenism via CST help each other for its long standing prevalence. A socio economical and psychological gender war under the banner of Marxism-Leninism in the light of historical materialism should be unleashed to curb this menace from the communities of eThekweni Municipality in particular and South Africa in general.

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