

Proletarian Era

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Save Country Strengthen People's Struggle for Survival SUCI's Appeal on 13th Lok Sabha Poll

The 13th Lok Sabha election involving a minimum expenditure of Rs. 1000 crores has been thrust on the people — not due to any fight over principle but to shameless scramble for pelf and power by the unscrupulous bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and social-democratic parties, when the common people are battling to survive from an unbearable and all pervading crisis. Deep recession, skyrocketing prices, widespread layoff, lockout and closure of thousands of industries, massive retrenchment, colossal unemployment, pauperisation of peasantry are drastically pushing people's living standard below even subsistence level.

Indian capitalist economy, as an inseparable part of moribund world capitalist system going through its third intense general crisis, had since independence been followed by a constant shadow of crisis and despite all capitalist 'planning' since Nehru's days emerged from one crisis only to be swallowed by a greater one. Today this crisis has become daily and hourly, repeatedly throwing the whole society into utter chaos through successive regimes of the Congress, the Janata Party, the UF and the BJP. Where they have thrown the country and the people in their bid to serve this capitalist system!

By opening wide the economy to greater penetration of foreign capital through its policy of liberalisation-privatisation-globalisation in 1990, the Narashimha Rao government executed the design of Indian big monopoly houses of securing for themselves a share of the global market by collaborating with foreign MNCs as their junior partners and also with imperialist global

institutions like the IMF, World Bank, WTO etc. The Congress described it as a 'miracle' for economic recovery, but it has only aggravated the crises instead.

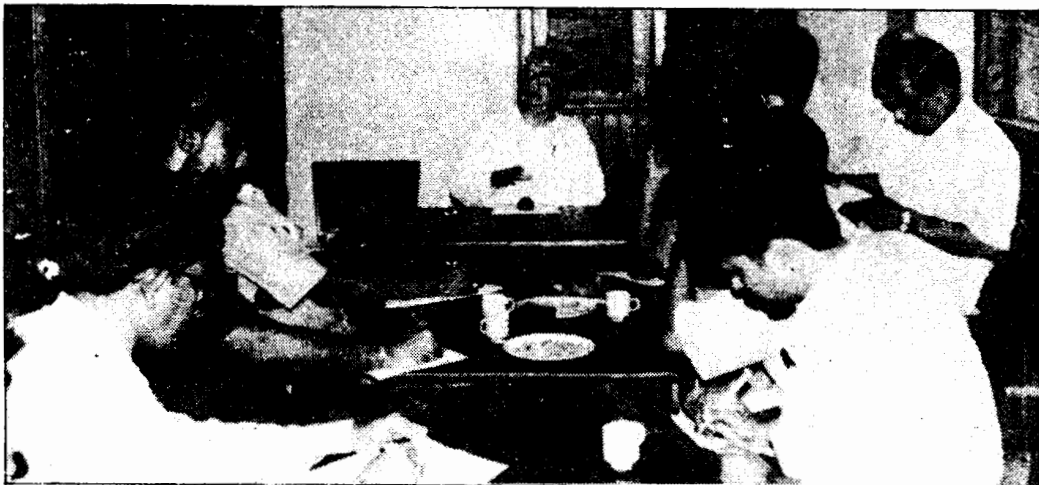
But the 'swadeshi' BJP, continuing this Congress scheme, followed also by the UF government subsequently, has outdone both in offering to the 'videshi' MNCs not only liberal concessions but also entry into newer industrial and service sectors. In only 13 months' rule, it has

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50th Anniversary of the Great Revolution of China

The New Democratic Revolution in China occupies a distinct position in the history next to the great November Revolution of Russia. This year is the 50th anniversary of the Chinese revolution. A fortnight long programme from 3rd to 18th October '99 has been taken to observe this occasion in a most befitting manner.

9th September is the memorial day of Comrade Mao Zedong, which is to be observed solemnly by hoisting of Red Flag and garlanding his portraits in the party offices, wearing 'Mao Zedong Badges' and collective reading of his celebrated speech on 'Democratic Centralism'.



Comrade Nihar Mukherjee at the press conference in Calcutta on 19th August last, where he issued a party policy statement on next Lok Sabha poll and the party's list of candidates

List of SUCI Candidates

LOK SABHA

Assam

Dhubri : Minhar Ali Mandal
Mangaldai : Bhupendra Nath Kakati
Silchar : Kantimoy Deb
Karimgunj(sc) : Radhakanta Tanti

Uttar Pradesh

Machhlisahar : Jagannath Verma

Tamilnadu

Chennai Central : Anavaradhan

Haryana

Rohtak : Anup Singh
Sonpath : Hariprakash

Karnataka

Bangalore South : B.R. Manjunath

Andhra

Secundrabad : Ramesh Patnaik

Orissa

Mayurbhanj : Sankar Majhi

West Bengal

Joy nagar (sc) : Renupada Halder
Mathurapur(sc) : Pralhad Purkait
Barasat(North) : Sankar Ghosh
Krishnanagar : Sk. Khoda Box
Murshidabad : Khadeja Bano
Jangipur : Dvarika Nath Das
Jalpaiguri : Shankar Ganguli
Coochbehar(sc) : Nripen Karji
Alipurduar(st) : Rampratap Baraik
Birbhum (sc) : Brajamohan Das
Purulia : Pranati Bhattacharjee
Bankura : Joydeb Pal
Midnapur : Akshoy Khan
Tamluk : Srikesh Pramanik
Jadavpur : Tapan Roychoudhury

Bihar

Vaishali : Yogendra Ram
Muzaffarpur : Md. Idrish
Jamshedpur : Sitaram Tudu

Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram : V.K. Rajagopal
Kollam (Quilon) : Shyla K. John
Alappuzha(Aleppy) : Mini K. Philip

ASSEMBLY

Karnataka

Malleswaram : H. G. Jayalakshmi
Bellary : K. Somasekhar

Andhra

Khairatabad : Gobindarajulu

West Bengal

Patharpratima : Phani Guchhait
Raghunathpur : Kushadhaj Mondal
Asokenagar : Gopal Biswas

BJP's 'bifocal vision' reveals grave danger before country

(Contd from page 1)

acted more speedily than did the previous governments in implementing this common policy: opening up power sector to big US MNCs like Enron, handing over profit-making PSUs in the coal and copper mines, promising lucrative insurance and other service sectors to foreign corporate giants. Inroad of foreign MNCs has reached such an extent that Japanese MNC Suzuki's ultimatum to have its chosen man in the director's chair in the joint collaboration, Maruti Udyog, was promptly conceded by the BJP government. The BJP thus efficiently carried out the Indian monopolists' scheme of closer collaboration with foreign monopoly capital, by speeding up greater penetration of foreign capital into Indian economy. And as it helped foreign capital into vital sectors, so it aided Indian corporate sector to invade the huge medium and small sectors. And in both, rapid transition from labour-intensive to capital-intensive production has fabulously enriched the monopolists, foreign and Indian, while throwing millions out of job into starvation, beggary and suicide. On the other hand, it has indebted the country by an astounding 95.2 billion US dollar.

In its brief tenure, its old design of inciting communal hatred, conflict and onslaught on minorities also took more ghastly character. Organised attack and indignity on Muslims, rape of Christian nuns and gruesome murder of Christian missionary Steins are its examples. More so, after coming to power in the centre and also in the states where it was already in government, it has systematically communalised entire syllabi and system of education on lines of its sinister doctrine of Hindutva. This design of inciting countrywide rabid Hindu religious fanaticism and bringing about fascisation of culture has gone further, no doubt, in serving the extremely crisis-ridden Indian capitalist system. Although the BJP was constrained to drop its Rammandir, Article 370 and common civil code issues as per the 'minimum programme' of its earlier government and now by the 'national agenda' of NDA, it would be an utter mistake to believe that it has abandoned them. The BJP general secretary K. N. Govindacharya recently made absolutely clear that "We work with a bifocal vision. With the BJP yet to attain the steering position in Indian politics, we decided that in this period of transition we should commit ourselves to the national agenda ... of the NDA." This admission reveals glaringly the grave danger with which the BJP threatens the country and civilisation.

Together with this, severe economic crisis, abnormal price rise, thriving corruption at all levels of government and complete administrative failure on all fronts made people's life most unbearable even within the short span of the BJP rule. This was compounded by endless internal feuds among the constituents which further discredited the BJP government. For all these reasons people's resentment and discontent against it went to such an extent that the BJP was almost routed in the Assembly by-elections in the states including even Delhi, and its continuance in power became uncertain. At this juncture, the opposition attempt spearheaded by the CPI(M)'s sheer opportunistic manoeuvre for toppling the BJP government with the help of the Congress, coupled with Jayalalitha's withdrawal of support, brought down the BJP government. Instead of dying its natural death, the

BJP found a convenient excuse to pose as 'martyr'. But as a new government could not be formed the BJP again assumed power as 'caretaker' government. The 'caretaker' BJP government, in complete violation of constitutional guidelines, at once started taking major decisions in all spheres like a 'regular' government and carried out sweeping administrative reshuffle to unfairly ensure its electoral fortune.

In this background, the BJP used the Kargil developments most nakedly in its favour. Irresponsibly avoiding to explain to the country the incredible failure to detect Pakistani intrusion for such a long time, it whipped up a countrywide war psychosis by blowing up the issue, firstly, to divert people's attention from its failure on all fronts and secondly, to derive maximum electoral advantage from it. This heinous motive became evident in so vulgar manner that the Election Commission had to prohibit utilising Kargil issue in the election campaign. Further, the BJP fanned up a dangerous army-cult by bringing military top-brass to the political forefront and by triggering a strident campaign for sharply increasing defence expenditure in order to modernise the army and the armaments. The grave consequence of this increased 'militarisation of economy' for artificially stimulating the sagging economy and enriching the defence-related corporate industry is that it will further push up the arms race and war tension in this subcontinent, already triggered by the nuclear tests in Pokhran by the Vajpayee government and in Chaghai by the Nawaj Sharif government. And such a costly 'modernisation' of the military and its weaponry when millions and millions of countrymen lack even the irreducible minimum subsistence for living!

At the same time, by soliciting US help in Kargil affair, the BJP has fully opened the door for further US imperialist intervention into the internal affairs of India including Kashmir as well as an opportunity to influence Indian position regarding CTBT in its favour. This BJP's role of inviting US imperialism further into India's internal affair does not contradict but fully conform to Indian monopolists' design for closer collaboration with USA in the present global perspective. In trumpeting its 'diplomatic victory', the BJP has in fact deceived the Indian people by hiding from them this secret deal between the US and Indian monopoly capital. The BJP has thus proved itself as a reliable agent of the Indian capitalist class, a friend of US imperialism and hence a deadly enemy of the people of the country.

During its 29 years' continuous rule since independence, the Congress consolidated Indian capitalism on a rockbottom foundation in every possible way. Gradual erosion of democratic values and practices and increasing reliance upon bureaucracy and police, continuous increase in defence budget, growing militarisation of economy, spread of corruption into all layers of society and steady rise in communal hatred and animosity all grew and flourished during this long period. The scheme of economic liberalisation to allow greater inroad of foreign capital was also first mooted by Rajiv Gandhi. Although the Congress is presently discredited, out of power and ridden with factional squabbles, still it remains very much a trusted party of the Indian capitalist class which is frantically trying to regain power from the BJP, its main rival in parliamentary politics. So it is projecting itself as the 'secular' alternative against the BJP, mainly

for grabbing the big Muslim vote-bank. But the fact is that the Congress, waxing eloquent against the BJP's communalism today, had been covertly instigating and encouraging this very communalism throughout its long rule. Did not the Congress mastermind the communal carnage in Nelli of Assam? Did not Rajiv Gandhi's unlocking of Babri Masjid give the first spark with which the BJP fanned up the communal wildfire? Was not the Congress sitting in Central government when the historic Babri Masjid was demolished? The CPI (M)'s recent discovery of the Congress's 'secular' character is a poor pretext for justifying its shameless alliance with the Congress. It has allied itself with the Congress because it knows that the Congress still remains the biggest contender against the BJP enjoying patronage of the ruling bourgeoisie.

In the context of the acute political instability and uncertainty at present, the ruling class is propping up both the BJP and the Congress so that each can serve it alternately. But a faction-ridden and leaderless Congress cannot serve the capitalist class competently. For this reason Sonia Gandhi was promptly made into the Congress President from an ordinary housewife having the only qualification of belonging to the Nehru-Gandhi family. But instead of invigorating, it has ultimately more demoralised and divided the party with the Pawar-Sangma-Tariq faction further splitting the Congress by forming the NCP. It shows that neither the BJP nor the Congress nor any other bourgeois parliamentary party can be certain of its own stability—let alone forming a 'stable government'. Thus the BJP's slogan of 'stable government' became a mockery last time. The tussle surfacing already within the NDA partners also indicates that even if it succeeds in forming the government, its stability may not be certain. So both the BJP and the Congress are claiming to form a stable government, yet none are daring to rule out another hung parliament. This uncertainty and instability together with the impossibility of forming a single party government are the factors behind the current trend of coalition politics and coalition government. This reveals not strength, but weakness, of the present capitalist system. The BJP and the Congress both defend this moribund capitalist system and pursue the same capitalist policies, each in its own way. However, attempts are going on to build up a third front with the sole aim of reaping maximum benefit in case of both the BJP and the Congress failing to secure absolute majority, resulting in a hung parliament.

Regional bourgeois parties like DMK, Telegu Desham, RJD, AGP, BSP, SP reflect the interests and aspirations of the regional capitalists. Regional capital is playing increasingly important role in country's economy through both competition and collaboration with monopoly capital. Hence the increasing importance of regional parties in coalition politics and coalition government, which sometimes become a determining factor even. But these are the most sectarian and parochial forces of regionalism, communalism, casteism etc. They incite and instigate these sentiments for creating their own vote-banks on this basis. Thus they keep the toiling masses blind and bogged down in caste-bias and caste-exclusiveness and whenever necessary, even set one caste against another in bloody strifes to serve their own petty parliamentary interests. All these parties championing the

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Pro-capitalist and anti-people designs of BJP, Congress and their allies must be foiled

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cause of the backward sections, lower castes, dalits etc., therefore, ultimately serve the ruling capitalist class by destroying the unity and solidarity of the oppressed and exploited people. They are no less reactionary than the Congress or the BJP, and not lesser enemies of the people.

Therefore, foiling and frustrating the blatantly pro-capitalist and anti-people designs of the BJP, Congress and the parties in league with them is the crying need of the hour. This cannot be done by practising bourgeois parliamentary politics. This demands building up a truly left and democratic powerful alternative in order to organise country-wide mighty united democratic mass movements to resist all attacks of the vested interests on people's fundamental rights and legitimate demands. This being the case, it is shocking to find the CPI(M) and the CPI frantically trying to align themselves with the Congress by abandoning the path of democratic mass movement, leaving the people in the lurch. Their futile attempt to hide this naked opportunism by painting the Congress as 'secular' will deceive no one.

This is not the first instance of the CPI(M)'s hankering and haggling for gains in election while carefully avoiding the path of democratic mass movement. It refused to join the historic JP movement in the '70s on the plea that rightist forces were also in it; but when these very rightist forces—including the BJP, then named as Jana Sangha—won the '77 election and formed the Janata government, this very same the CPI(M) made a sharp about turn and supported the Janata bandwagon. Again, pleading its preoccupation with its 'anti-communal convention', CPI (M) scrupulously avoided getting involved in the opposition initiative led by VP Singh to organise a countrywide mass movement against Rajiv Government's scandalous corruption in the notorious Bofors-Fairfax-German submarine deals. But again, when the wind began to blow strongly in favour of the opposition combination led by VP Singh before the elections, the CPI(M) made a prompt volte-face, cried hoarse against the 'authoritarian' Rajiv Government and joined the opposition which, once again, included the 'communal' BJP. Senior CPI (M) politburo member and West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu found no problem then in standing hand in hand with V P Singh and with Vajpayee on the same dais at a meeting at Calcutta Brigade Parade Ground, because – it was election alliance ! Similarly, since the CPI(M) has found it convenient to align with the Congress in this election, therefore it discovered that Indira-Rajiv 'authoritarian' Congress has turned 'secular' under Sonia! It is not Marxism-Leninism, nor even 'leftism', but sheer opportunism for remaining in the corridor of power and enjoying its pelf and privilege in return for slavishly serving the bourgeoisie. In the states where the CPI (M) and the CPI rule, they serve Indian and foreign big capital and brutally trample underfoot all democratic mass movements, far more efficiently and cunningly than the branded bourgeois parties. Therefore, in ignoring our party's repeated appeals to them for building up an united and powerful genuine left and democratic alternative and choosing to tie up themselves with the arch reactionary Congress, the CPI (M)

leadership has been doubtlessly consistent in their opportunism.

Still, to those honest and sincere rank and file members of the CPI (M) who once drew inspiration from the noble ideology of Marxism-Leninism and not from considerations of petty personal gain, we appeal once again to deeply pause, ponder and reflect : towards which path their leadership is pulling them? We appeal to them to either bring strong pressure upon their leadership compelling it to change course, or leave this opportunist leadership behind and plunge into the vortex of democratic mass movement.

We make this appeal to the honest rank of the CPI, RSP, FB and the different left groups and factions also. We fervently hope that they will realise the gravity of the situation and respond to this call of history.

Change of governments through election during last 52 years have brought no change in people's plight. It is so because there exists no difference whatever between the actual political practice of either branded bourgeois parties like the Congress and the BJP or pseudo-leftists like the CPI(M) and the CPI or regional, casteist and parochial parties of all varieties. All are wedded to this utterly reactionary and corrupt capitalist system. So, they cannot help inevitably becoming reactionary, anti-people and corrupt themselves. As a result, bourgeois parliamentary politics today thrives in rank opportunism, rampant corruption, brazenly unscrupulous and even openly criminal activities. 'Free and fair' election has become a farce today. It can not be anything else when these parties freely resort to bribing, intimidating, holding voters hostage at gun-point, en masse false voting, large-scale booth capturing and even bloodletting of people for winning elections. Moreover, the entire election process is nowadays influenced by centralised administrative rigging, conducted behind people's back by a small coterie of industrial-bureaucratic-military complex to bring its chosen parties to power.

Consequently, bourgeois parties and their governments, Central or state, feel least care for minimum public safety and security even and treat precious human life with callous unconcern and indifference. Not only in Gaisal or NJP bomb blast – country's people die in thousands each day without drinking water, without food despite bumper harvest, without bare medical aid in face of diseases and epidemics, without any security from criminal and anti-social activities and in almost daily incidents of explosion, occurring presently all over the country.

But the most lethal attack on the people is the well thought out capitalist design of wrecking the healthy cultural-ethical traditions and breaking the moral backbone of the people and particularly of the youth for fear that they may rise up unitedly to thwart these capitalist onslaughts. So the poison of sex, violence and addiction is deliberately injected. The youth are systematically encouraged into adopting unethical means of livelihood and into acting as hired goons in election times. Dignity and even security of women are being put under grave risk everyday. Moral and cultural fabric of entire society stands the dire risk of getting slowly but surely torn apart and the people dehumanised. Against this our party always laid stress on higher

culture and moral values. This is precisely where the SUCI stands distinctly apart from all the others. Since its inception it has been organising the masses and mass movements on the edifice of a higher culture and led these struggles with a view to not only achieving their legitimate demands but moreover for raising the moral, cultural and ethical standard of the people in the process.

From its beginning, our party has been ceaselessly building up mass movements against high prices of essential commodities, tram and bus fare hikes, rail fare and freight hikes, against obscenity on women and dowry deaths and it has always rushed to organise relief for victims of flood, drought, famine, earthquake. Our struggles have proved that under a correct leadership, organised mighty mass movements can compel the anti-people governments to concede their legitimate demands. Such was the Central government's conceding of the important rail-cum-road bridge over the Brahmaputra near Bangaigaon in Assam in 1982 ; the granting by Chandrababu Naidu's government of the Rs. 10 crore project of a huge water reservoir in Andhra Pradesh in 1997 and the historic victory in West Bengal of the statewide protracted mighty mass movement led by our party which forced CPI (M)-led Left Front government this year to finally withdraw its anti-people language and education policy. Movements against the UF and the BJP governments' conspiracy for closure of a number of copper mines in Bihar, against closure of 64 coalmines employing 72,000 workers as also against the scheme of reducing country's 1.3 million Bank employees to mere thirty thousand are still going on. Many more such movements led by our party are going on in different parts of the country. These are uniting, organising and educating the toiling people to assert their legitimate rights against the organised might of the capitalist class and its parties and governments. This calls for formation of country-wide people's struggle committees and enrolment of millions in the volunteer corps for spearheading the democratic movements from grassroot level upwards, which will in its wake give birth to people's own alternative political power. Today, this alone can save the country and civilisation.

So, the only way-out is awakening and arousing the masses by helping them organise legitimate struggles on their burning issues one after another, thereby unleashing a countrywide mighty democratic mass movement on the edifice of a higher culture and moral values. In continuation of these struggles our party contests election as 'incidental' and only from the outlook and interest of democratic mass movement.

In order to further strengthen this process, the Central Committee of our party appeals to the people to send to the parliament only those candidates who are tested and tried in the democratic mass movements. Only thus the voice of extra-parliamentary democratic movement can be reflected and all anti-people designs and attacks of the vested classes can be resisted inside the legislature. Therefore, the Central Committee urges upon the people to vote for the SUCI candidates to uphold people's cause and the noble banner of progress and higher culture defeating all reactionary, corrupt and degraded bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and social democratic parties.

5th August

Memorial day observed in different states

5th August is the memorial day of Frederick Engels, the outstanding Marxist philosopher and the great leader of the proletariat, the co-founder along with Marx of scientific socialism, as well as of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our leader, teacher and guide and one of the great Marxist philosophers of the present era. The Central Committee of the party directed the State Committees to observe the memorial day of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and Frederick Engels on 5th August and 12 August respectively. Accordingly the memorial day was observed in different states and the reports, so far received, are given, in brief, below.

Orissa

The Orissa State Committee held the memorial meeting at the Saheed Bhavan, Cuttack on 5th August. The meeting was preceded by a large well-decorated procession. Comrade Shambhu Nayak, a member of the State Committee of the party, presided over the meeting and Comrade Tapas Dutta, the State Secretary and a member of the Central Committee delivered his speech as the main speaker. Comrade Dutta observed: Comrade Ghosh joined in the anti-British movement at a very early age and involved himself in the uncompromising revolutionary trend of the Indian freedom movement. During the period of the August movement in 1942, he had a long imprisonment, when he came in contact with the thoughts of Marxism-Leninism. After that he realised the need of founding a genuine party of the working class in our soil for the emancipation of the people. With this realisation Comrade Ghosh, daring all adverse situations, gave birth to SUCI as a genuine revolutionary party and concretised and elaborated Marxism-Leninism on Indian soil.

Dwelling on the present national situation Comrade Dutta vehemently criticised the role of the BJP led Central government for its ultra nationalist ideas, rabid communal politics and instigation of arms race in the region through inciting war psychosis.

Haryana

At Rohtak of Haryana, the memorial meeting of the great leader was held on 5th August. Comrade Ashutosh Banerjee, a member of the Central Committee of the party, in his speech as the main speaker, severely criticised the naked communal politics pursued by the BJP. He observed that the BJP led National Democratic Alliance was a sheer opportunist combine hankering after power. He mentioned the anti-people steps taken by the BJP led governments of 13 days and 13 months and highlighted the incidents of telecom scam, ousting of elected state governments by using Art. 356 of the Constitution, and violation of election norms laid down by the Election Commission.

Criticising the opportunist politics of the Congress he compared the episode of making Mrs Sonia Gandhi the President of the Congress party with the dynastical rule practiced in the middle ages. He also criticised the Congress's role of making alliance with the corrupt leaders like Jayalalitha and Lalu Prasad Yadav.

West Bengal

The West Bengal State Committee observed the memorial day on 5th August at Subodh Mullick

Square, Calcutta. Comrade Yakub Pailan, a member of the State Secretariat of the party presided over the huge meeting. Comrade Provash Ghosh, member of the Central Committee and Secretary of the State Committee of the party was the main speaker. Comrade Provash Ghosh asked whether the cause behind the Kargil episode was simply an intelligence failure or something more. Did not the government tacitly intend that such a war-like situation could develop which would boost militarisation of economy, help divert people's attention from the crises in their lives, create war psychosis and religion oriented national jingoism in the country and help the BJP in the coming elections? India has claimed victory over Kargil, so has Pakistan because it succeeded in internationalising the Kashmir issue. But in reality, Comrade Ghosh said, it is the US imperialists who are victorious because they have got the long sought scope to intervene in the garb of peace maker. Referring to the elections, he pointed out that the bourgeoisie is raising the slogan of stable government in their own interest which has nothing to do with people's interest. What people need is stable mass movement against the onslaughts of the governments and the ruling class.

Assam

Addressing a mammoth memorial meeting in Guwahati at Bishnu Nirmala Bhawan hall on 5th August Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, member of the Central Committee of the party, explained elaborately, as the main speaker, the historical role played by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era, and observed that his revolutionary thought is today the only beacon light which alone will help the world proletariat, the working class all over the world to defeat the modern revisionists and to firmly uphold the noble ideology of Marxism-Leninism with renewed vigour. Dealing with the Kargil issue vis-a-vis the Kashmir problem, Comrade Bhattacharyya severely criticised the army cult that is being assiduously built up by the ruling bourgeois class. Comrade Bhattacharyya observed that the country's sovereignty and geographical integrity could be defended, foreign aggression could be defeated only by the united will of the patriotic minded people of the country. He also appealed to the people of Kashmir to join the oppressed people of India in their struggle against the onslaught and attack of the capitalist government.

Presiding over the meeting Comrade Siddheswar Sharma, an eminent trade union leader and a member of the State Committee of the party paid homage to the great departed leader, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and recalled the great love and concern he had for the people of Assam.

Comrade Kalyan Chowdhury, Secretary of the Assam State Committee of the party paid tribute to the great leader of the proletariat, great communist teacher Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and pledged to spread his teachings throughout the length and breadth of Assam.

Karnataka

The Karnataka State Committee of the party observed the memorial day by organising a large meeting at Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs

Hall, Bangalore. The meeting was chaired by Comrade K Radhakrishna, the State Secretary of the party and was addressed by Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, member, Central Committee as the main speaker. Comrade Chakraborty dwelt at length on the gloomy situation prevailing in the country. He said: Indian capitalism is in deep crisis and this is reflected in politics too. The Congress government which has ruled the country for over four decades has faithfully served the crisis ridden capitalism. BJP, too, has followed the same foot steps and has become a menacing fascist force posing a great danger before the country. The so-called left parties like the CPI and the CPI(M), true to their petty bourgeois character, have also come forward to support Congress.

Maharashtra Nagpur

The memorial day of the great leaders of the proletariat, Frederick Engels and Comrade Shibdas Ghosh was observed on 5th August 99 at Vidarbha Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti Hall, Nagpur. This program was organized by Nagpur unit of SUCI. Advocate Namadeo Gavhale was presiding over the meeting. Comrade Ranjit Dhar, member of West Bengal State Secretariat, SUCI, addressed the meeting as main speaker. He analysed the present political situation and task before the working class. Comrade Devasish Roy, the leader of AIDS O and Comrade Madhov Bhonde, organizer of SUCI Nagpur Unit, also addressed the meeting. Comrade Ravindra Sakhare conducted the programme. Comrade Ashok Pawar also spoke.

Mumbai

Memorial Day of Comrade Frederick Engels and Comrade Shibdas Ghosh was observed at Dhuru Hall, Dadar (West) Mumbai on 9th August by Mumbai Unit of the party. The meeting was presided over by Comrade Anil Tyagi and the main speaker was Comrade Ranjit Dhar, member West Bengal State Secretariat, SUCI. Comrade Ranjit Dhar, dwelt on the national and international situation. Comrade Kulshreshtha - Y. K., Mumbai SUCI Unit also spoke.

Tripura

A memorial meeting was held on 5th August at Colonel Choumuhony, Agartala under the auspices of the Agartala District Organising Committee of the party. After the inaugural speech by Comrade Shibani Das, Comrade Pratiba Mukherjee, Central Staff of the party and former Minister of United Front Government of West Bengal delivered her speech as the main speaker.

Bihar Ghatshila

Memorial day was observed on 5th August with deep reverence and solemnity at the Study Centre of Marxism-Leninism and Shibdas Ghosh Thought in Ghatshila, Singhbhum District. The mass meeting held there and attended by people from all walks of life, was presided over by Comrade Ranjit Modak, the Singhbhum District Secretary. Comrade Amriteswar Chakraborty, the

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All India Bank Employees' Meeting in Calcutta

The all-India bank employees' meeting was held in Calcutta at Anglo-Gujarati Hall at the initiative of Bank Employees' Unity Forum, National Co-ordination Committee. Though primarily it was a gathering of bank employees of almost all banks in the state, representatives who are leaders and organisers in other states like UP, Punjab, Delhi, Maharashtra, Chennai, Orissa, Tripura etc. were present. Comrade Amar Roy (West Bengal) conducted the meeting as a member of the presidium. The hall was jam-packed. Comrade Jagannath Roy Mandal, the Convener moved the resolution. In the resolution the treachery of the leadership of the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU) led by AIBEA was thoroughly exposed. It was shown that these leaderships surrendered to the implementation of the notorious recommendations of the Narasingham Committee, the action plans of globalisation-liberalisation-privatisation in the banking sector. They kept their organisations immobilised while closures of branch offices, further introduction of sophisticated automatic devices, retrenchment through VRS, rationalisation in the name of development, restructuring etc. went unabated. They watered down the original demand of wage increase by about 56% on the basis of Central Government employees' charter to a paltry 12.25%. Even the apportionment formula agreed to between cost of wage increase and cost of superannuation benefits will further reduce the quantum of wage increase. These leaders did not move the organisations when the IBA (Indian Bankers Association) showed insolence to declare 10 lakh out of total 13 lakh bank employees to be under VRS (AIBEA leadership) particularly is holding the brief of the IBA that no arrears payment of wage increase is possible by the weak banks (UCO, UBI, Indian Bank) when the issue of payment of arrears to all bank employees was settled long back in the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding). Similarly no movement or agitation was organised to pressurise the IBA-Government combine to realise the huge amount of NPA (Non-Performing Assets) amounting to Rs 46,000 crores from corporate sector under the grip and control of monopoly houses. A particular reference was made about the 'Dirty Deal' made by the leadership of SBI Staff Federation on April 12, 1998 which seeks to negate the rights and service conditions gained through hard struggles. It also quoted the circular of AIBEA of 17.8.99 where it was openly stated that these leaderships do not stand for any movement of the employees against the various onslaughts but for 'negotiation' and express their 'happiness' over 'consensus'.

The resolution, therefore, gave the clarion call to the bank employees to unite from grassroots level through struggle committees in every branch office so as to prepare themselves for an effective resistance movement in defense of job security and service conditions under a new leadership which will be the only organisation of bank employees when all the existing ones have reduced themselves to instruments at the hands of the management and propagator of management's interests.

Speakers supporting this resolution were Comrades Bijoy Pal Singh (UP), Balkar Singh

(Punjab), Kumaresh (Chennai) Purna Behra (Orissa), Rajinder Singh (Delhi), Pradip Sarkar, SBI Co-ordination Committee, Kishore Chakravorty (RBI Sangrami Karmachari Samity), Comrade Aurobinda Ghosh (Nagpur Co-ordination Committee) also spoke. Comrade Amar Roy gave a brief introductory speech.

On 22nd August, the National Co-ordination Committee met. Comrade Ashutosh Banerjee, President, All-India UTUC (Lenin Sarani) being invited was present and gave answer to many important questions. Comrade Amar Roy presided. The decision was in favour of a new leadership with new organisation and concrete preparation for that.

Memorial Day observed in states

(Contd from page 4)

Bihar State Secretary was the main speaker. Comrade B B Das, member of the District Committee and a veteran TU leader, also addressed the meeting.

Patna

The memorial day was observed in Patna on 5th August in the party office by the party District Committee. The meeting was presided over by Comrade Baidyanath Sharma, member of the party District Committee. Comrade Rabin Samajpati, member, Bihar State Committee, was the main speaker. Comrade Madhur Kr. Sinha, Comrade Shival Prasad, Comrade Raghunath Gandhi, and Comrade Indrader Roy also spoke.

Kerala

Comrade Shibdas Ghosh memorial day was observed on 5th August by a state level memorial meeting in Public Library Hall, Quilon. Comrade C.K. Lukose, Secretary, Kerala State Committee of our party was the main speaker. Comrade V. Venugopal, member, State Secretariat of the party, presided over the meeting. Comrade Lukose highlighted some teachings of Comrade Ghosh and called on the workers and supporters of our party to carry the proletarian revolutionary politics to the people in the ensuing election which should be viewed as a part of mass movement. Comrade V. Venugopal in his presidential address explained the analysis of our party about the present political situation and tasks ahead.

Punjab

Comrade Ghosh memorial day was observed on 15th August at Teachers Home Mansa. Comrade Narendra Sharma delivered his speech as a main speaker in a well attended meeting. The other speaker was Comrade Aminder Pal Singh.

Andhra Pradesh

On the occasion of the death anniversary of the two great leaders of the proletariat, Engels and Comrade Shibdas Ghosh the Anantapur District Organising Committee held a meeting on 7th August at DRDA Hall in Anantapur. The meeting was presided over by Comrade B S Amarith, the District Secretary and was addressed by Comrade K Sridhar, the Secretary of the State Organising Committee of the SUCI.

UP

Badlapur

Memorial day was observed on 8th August at Badlapur (Jaunpur). Comrade V N Singh, Secretary of UP State Committee of the party was the main speaker. The other leaders who spoke

were Comrade Dinesh Kant Dubey and Comrade Bechan Ali, members of the State Committee. Comrade Hiralal Maurya, a senior member of the State Committee presided.

Pointuapur

A memorial meeting was held at Pointuapur of Jaunpur district on 5th August, where Comrade Swapan Chatterji, General Secretary, AIDSO was the main speaker. Comrade Dinesh Kant Dubey, a member of the UP State Committee of the party presided over the meeting.

Allahabad

At Allahabad the memorial meeting was held on 8th August. Comrade Jagadish Chandra Asthana, member of the UP State Committee, delivered his speech as a main speaker.

Kanpur

The memorial meeting was held at Kanpur on 8th August. It was addressed by Comrade Swapan Chatterjee, the General Secretary of AIDSO and presided over by Comrade Rajboli, Secretary Kanpur District Committee of the party.

Moradabad

A memorial meeting was held on 5th August at Moradabad, which was chaired by Comrade Baliram Bhagat, member of the Moradabad District Committee. The meeting was addressed by Comrade Sheel Kumar, member of the District Committee and others.

MP

Jabalpur

Under the auspices of the MP State Organising Committee of the party, memorial day was observed on 5th August at Makhanlal Chaturvedi Subhabhaban, situated in the heart of the Jabalpur city. Comrade Ashok Ganguly, a veteran member of the State Organising Committee addressed the audience, that had gathered mainly from different corners of Jabalpur as also from Sagar and Bhopal. As the main speaker he spoke on the present national and international situation and highlighted the life struggle of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. Comrade U P Biswas, convenor of the Coordination Committee also addressed the meeting. Comrade B S Ghosh, also a member of the Coordination Committee and District Secretary of Jabalpur Organising Committee, SUCI, presided over the meeting.

Durg

Another memorial meeting was organised at Durg, MP on 8th August where the main speaker was Comrade Badsha Khan, a veteran SUCI leader.

False claim of containing inflation

BJP's sinister design

The claim of normality in prices and happiness of people by bourgeois and social democratic parties ruling whether in states or at the Centre is nothing new for our people. It no longer remains a joke, cruel at that, but an affront to minimum civilized code. The BJP has excelled over all its rivals. Simultaneously with diverting precious resources to military build-up, injecting along with it false sense of national pride and jingoism, it shamelessly claims to have achieved that the rate of inflation sinks to an all-time low in 20 years. All this before the elections to dupe the masses and manipulate votes with falsehood. We will examine this claim from published reports and articles to show whether a grain of truth is actually there in this propaganda of achievement, sought to be one of its major planks in the elections.

It has been claimed by the BJP government that contrary to the people's bare experiences the inflation rate fell to a two-decade low of 1.67 % for the week ended 17 July, despite a marginal rise in the wholesale price index. The prices of agricultural products are moving up at a much slower rate (!) than last year due to bumper production. In comparison to this year the prices of agricultural products were sky-rocketing around this time last year. The pertinent question must be what is the bearing between bumper production and market prices? Did production fall substantially last year to cause abnormal increase in the prices of agricultural products? How could then the figure of export of cereals rise last year? People are in the know of the fact that government's manipulation of price index figure cannot conceal the hard experience of ever-increasing prices of cereals, vegetables and other agricultural products in a moribund capitalist economy where speculative profits by the grain dealers, hoarders and blackmarketeers has become the practice over the decades, with impunity. There is also an admission, if it is called at all an admission, that slackness in demand for industrial products which accounts for 57 % of weightage in the index helped the inflation to go downward! (*The Statesman*, 2.8.99).

The government spokesmen must be complemented for their skill in hiding the truth that in a capitalist economy where the rule of monopoly works maximization of profit, i.e. fall in demand and therefore, of sale does not lead to fall in prices but just the reverse. At this stage of globalisation when there is more emphasis on export to overseas markets, goods are exported at cheaper rate to have a competitive edge in overseas market and in order to makeup domestic prices are raised. The higher domestic prices work as balancing factor for prices in foreign markets, kept low for the benefit of competition so that the rule of maximization of profit is maintained. Another important reason for rise in prices of products is to be carefully noted. In today's perspective of capital-intensive production method, due to severe competition as regards application of higher and still higher technological devices the cost of capital is being tremendously increased. And to meet the increased expenditure on capital as well as to reap maximum profit prices of goods are becoming higher and higher in

capitalist market economy squeezing the demand further.

The Statesman on the same date (August 2, 99) made a succinct comment: "What you see and what you get." It says: "...there's a better, in the sense of being more straightforward, explanation for the disjunction between low inflation as reported every week by the media and your personal experience that prices of most things you buy are not as low as shown to be the case given the trend of inflation" So what the people get from media of statistical measurement of inflation by price index figures supplied by the government has no bearing with their daily experience.

The fraud of wholesale price Index (WPI) that is used for weekly measurement of inflation is quite easy to see. Although it covers some 450 commodities which are supposed to be enough is not actually so. For in our modern life the essential expenditures which are increasing at a high rate such as house rent, the cost of transport service, cost on education service, cost of medical service, bank and credit card charges are excluded from WPI. So, a huge proportion from our family budget for everyday, week and month is not reflected in what the government says to be the rate of inflation.

Some more facts are to be noted in order to understand the height of falsehood in the claim of inflation rate at 20 year low. It is to be noted that the WPI was revised last in 1980. The usual norm for revision is 5 years. This is not only to assess the change of weightage to a particular item of consumption in the context of increased price level in the family budget on the basis of market survey with definite specification to ensure the quality of consumption articles but also to note new items not covered so far but are taking a considerable portion of family expenditure pattern. Concretely speaking WPI gives 33 % to food prices. Is it so now? And the cost of services mentioned is not also included. This is one aspect. There is another trick, that is showing inflation rate low comparing it to the week in the preceding year. One can well remember last year there was sky-rocketing of prices of food items, admitted even by the government. In an article captioned: "Prices: Are they really that low" published in the *Financial Times* the very foundation of the claim has been knocked down by citing that the prices of vegetables in the month of July this year was 38.41 percent lower according to WPI compared to the same period last year (1998). Last year witnessed abnormal rise in the prices of vegetables so much so that the defeat of BJP in the elections to the assemblies in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi was ascribed to the cause of peculiarly high price rise of onions. Therefore, does around 40% lowering of that abnormal price rise last year give back to the consumers the prices of vegetables before that abnormal rise? Can government manipulated statistics wipe out the pitiful experiences of the people about the prices prevailing in the market they meet daily? That is why the paper commented that inflation rate of 1.83 % this year, boasted so much is actually the prices being higher by 1.83 percent than last year's!

Then again the divergence between WPI and

CPI (Consumer Price Index) is to be noted. The latter measures prices at the retail level with which the people are daily acquainted. As against the inflation rate of 1.83 % in terms of WPI, CPI records the rate at 7 %. This too is related to an increase over the prices of last year.

A valid question is about the very utility of WPI which was revised last some 20 years back. A particular consumption article of a particular variety might have been taken in the consumption basket. If that particular variety goes out of the market, the index records a zero inflation in that item and the WPI falls! Is it not a joke and a bad joke at that?

The plain fact about the so-called claim of low rate of inflation — 20 year low — is that the rate of inflation in 1998 recorded by WPI was 8.15% and the rate recorded this year upto July is 1.83 % which is over the last years' rate. Some more facts are worth noting in this connection. Using the WPI to determine the rate of inflation is not normal international practice. There is another trick, that of changing the base year for the computation of price index which makes it more difficult to measure the actual rate of inflation. In determining the base year, usually, the high inflation infected year is chosen so that subsequent upward variations in figures may be shown less or called 'fall in rate of inflation'.

Some experts hold that a drop in inflation indicates that prices are rising but at a lower rate and that only when the inflation rate is negative prices do actually fall. Has it got any real meaning for the common people? A small percentage of them are fixed salaried people, having some sort of compensation by way of Dearness Allowance linked with the increase in price index. The majority are in informal or unorganized sector who are deprived of both minimum wages as also compensation of erosion in real wage by inflation by price index linked DA. Does either of them gain? Successive high rate of inflation may bring some monetary benefit to the salaried sector, though not full compensation. Even if the rate of inflation is low over the old rate not deemed adequate for compensation it causes erosion in real wages. For these the overwhelming majority, the rate of inflation has absolutely no meaning except accentuating the process of untimely death out of hunger.

So, the propagation of falsehood about inflation rate being 20 years low by the BJP before the elections has a deeper sinister design. The projection of Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee as a 'national hero' a superman, so to say, who, as the slogan coined suggests, is a leader to be trusted both in war and peace. In war he brings victory and in peace prosperity of the people — is a fascist device well-known in history. The common people comprising the electorates being poor are hit most by the rising prices of daily necessities. They are being fed with false claims and undiluted myths. They must beware of the sinister design behind projecting a bourgeois parliamentarian to be a messiah and a party evidently with communal overtone and objective loaded with disastrous consequences. The guiles of fascist methods must be defeated if the country and its polity is to be saved from the menace to civilization.

Convention against Commercialisation of Education

The Karnataka State Committee of AIDS0 organised a convention against commercialisation of education on 4th August, 1999 in Bangalore. A massive rally of one thousand five hundred delegate students from Bellary, Gulbarga, Raichur, Dharwad, Davanagere, Mysore, Bangalore rural, Bangalore urban, Tumkur, and other places marched in procession from Chikkalal Bagh and it culminated at the Varadachar Kalakshetra, the venue of the convention.

An effigy of the 'donation' menace was burnt amidst thunderous slogans in front of the hall before the convention started.

While inaugurating the convention noted educationist and poet. B. C. Ramachandra Sharma severely criticised the various governments for not providing education for all and demanded that the government should take up the responsibility of funding education in a poor country like India.

Comrade M. N. Sriram, the State Secretary of AIDS0, highlighted the glorious movements led by AIDS0 against donation system for the past 20 years, and stressed that such movements were the only way to end this menace.

Comrade K. Uma, the State President of AIDS0, in her presidential speech told, while the ministers have enough funds for their foreign travels, wasteful expenditure and pocketing money through corruption, when it comes to providing funds for education they shed crocodile tears. She said that only a powerful movement of students, teachers and parents could force the government to take more responsibility towards education.

A resolution strongly condemning the commercialisation of education was unanimously adopted in the convention.

AIDS0 launch movement at Ananthpur, AP

The AIDS0, Ananthpur District Organising Committee, has launched a movement against restructured degree courses which the Telugu Desham led state government is going to introduce in Andhra Pradesh. In the name of restructuring the existing courses for social and natural sciences, the state government's design is to introduce vocational or professional courses. Moreover, these courses would be self-financing ones, forcing the students to pay monthly tuition fees to the tune of 3000/- over and above other fees. Without delay the AIDS0 started movement demanding state funding for all stages of education, reintroduction of the courses for social and natural sciences and revocation of the policy of commercialisation of education. On 19th July, hundreds of students demonstrated in front of the administrative building of Srikrishnadevaraya University and a memorandum was submitted to the Vice-Chancellor. On 21st, students from Arts College and K.S.N. Women's Degree College organised a dharna before the Collector's Bungalow and a delegation of students led by Comrade Narasimhulu, President of the District Organising Committee met the Collector to submit a memorandum, which was immediately faxed to

the appropriate authority. On 26th the Principal, Arts College was gheraoed by the students for two and a half hour. He finally accepted some of the demands.

On 28th, the students tried to submit a memorandum to the state Chief Minister, Mr. Chandrababu Naidu while the latter was touring Ananthapur district for election campaign but failed due to resistance from the police and security men.

The movement has created a stir among the general students of the state.

Human Chain for Communal Harmony and Peace in Ahmedabad

On August 2, 1999 the city of Ahmedabad witnessed a spectacular Human Chain from east to west of Nehru Bridge joining the east and west of the city. Under the banner of Movement for Secular Democracy educationists, litterateurs, artists, media persons, activists of civil liberty, trade union activists, social workers, organisers of different NGOs, students, youths and citizens from all walks of life formed the Human Chain to express their desire for communal peace and harmony in the city recently shocked by communal riot instigated by the Sangh Parivar.

The participants of the Human Chain stood silently for more than one and a half hour with placards and banners with valuable messages for communal harmony, secularism and peace.

Thousands of passersby responded for the Human Chain with keen interest. Leading citizens like Sri Yashwantbhai Shukla, Chimanbhai Vaidya, Janakbhai Dave, Ilabin Pathak, Asoke Chatterjee, Harubhai Mehta, Sudarshan Iyenger, Dwarika Nath Rath, Fr. Cedrick Prakash, Prakash S and others joined the Human Chain.

Peasants and Workers' Movement in U.P.

Under the leadership of the SUCI and AIKKMS workers and peasants have launched movement in different parts of U.P. on burning problems of their lives and local demands. As a part of the movement protest march, dharna, deputation etc. were organised on 6th July in Sultanpur, Pratapgarh and Jaunpur with massive popular support.

Sultanpur : On 6th of July peasants and workers of Lambhua Tehsil, under the banner of SUCI and AIKKMS rallied before the Tehsil headquarters and handed over to the SDO a memorandum addressed to the Chief Minister. Before submitting the memorandum the peasant and workers' rally marched through the main roads of Lambhau starting from the Sarvodaya International College to the Tehsil headquarters where the procession turned into a large mass meeting. Comrades Jagannath Verma, District Secretary of SUCI, Sultanpur, AIDS0 in-charge Jaiprakash Maurya, student leader Asoke Misra and AIMSS in-charge Usha Singh addressed the rally.

Pratapgarh : Here the workers and peasants organised dharna before the Patti Tehsil office and

a mass meeting was held which was addressed by the AIDS0 State Convener Comrade Puspendra Viswakarma, the District Secretary of SUCI Comrade Bechan Ali and Com Muniraj. Here also a memorandum addressed to the Chief Minister was handed over to the SDO. A separate complaint was made by the delegation against the corrupt Katedar of Ibrahimpur village against whom the SDO promised to institute an enquiry.

Badalapur (Jaunpur) : A dharna was organised before the Badalapur Tehsil office under the leadership of Comrades Jagdish Chandra Asthana, District Secretary, SUCI. Arun Singh and Surendra Maurya, District Committee members of Jaunpur, Comrade Jagdish Ch. Asthana addressed a meeting before the Tehsil office. A memorandum was also submitted to the SDO.

Convention in Bellary

After organising a historic Bellary Bundh the citizens of Bellary gathered in a massive people's convention organised by Bellary Raste Horata Samithi (B.R.H.S.) at Gandhi Bhavan Stadium, Bellary on 30th July 1999. More than 45 localities of the city were represented at the convention to resolve and fight for the dire needs of civic amenities.

Sri Sathyavratha, leader of Sarvodaya movement and freedom fighter was the inaugurator of the convention. Dr. B Sheshadri, renowned economist and advisor of B. R. H. S. was the President and A Ramanjinappa, Karnataka State Secretary of AIDYO, R Pandu, advisor and Bar Council President, P V Mudugal, P Ramadevi, advocate and Cap. Dr. Amanulla Khan were all on the dais.

Lastly a resolution containing ten demands to be pursued by the Samithi was passed and a new executive body formed with seven advisors, namely: D R Mannar, renowned advocate, Dr. Prof. B Seshadri, renowned economist, R Pandu, President Bar Council, P V Mudugal, Dr. P Radhakrishna Rao, E.N.T. Specialist, Smt. Ramadevi, renowned advocate and Cap. (Rtd) Dr. Amanulla Khan. Comrade A Ramanjinappa, Karnataka State Secretary, AIDYO was elected the Convenor of the Samithi.

Make Orissa Bandh on September 1 a success

The Orissa State Committee of the party issued the following statement :

The brutal killing of a small trader belonging to minority community at Padiabeda in Mayurbhanj district, Orissa led by the noted criminal Dara Singh and Bajrang Dal is strongly condemned.

It is mysterious that when the Wadhwa Commission tried to protect the Bajrang Dal involved in the gruesome murder of Mr. Stein, the Christian missionary and his two minor sons, the state government has callously failed to arrest Dara Singh, the main accused. In the situation well meaning people of the state should come forward to register their protest against the state government and also against the BJP-led government at the Centre for its patronisation to the Bajrang Dal's heinous activities.

SUCI calls upon the people of Orissa to observe 12 hours' bandh on September 1, 1999 throughout the state.

Save Education Convention in Patna

Rampant corruption, negligence on the part of the state government, its apathetic attitude towards fulfilling its educational responsibilities have literally destroyed education in Bihar. Moreover privatisation, commercialisation and communalisation of education, indiscriminate fee hike, lack of essential amenities in laboratories and libraries and other problems have led the system of education in Bihar to the brink of collapse. Hence Bihar today ranks as low as 32rd in India so far education is concerned.

Deep in the heart of education lovers, students and guardians was the desire to improve the standard of education in the state. And so when AIDS0 announced the launching of a powerful statewide Save Education movement, all responded to the call with great vigour.

Noted intellectuals, educationists, physicians, lawyers, came forward. Students and guardians joined in the struggle. AIDS0 organised a state level Save Education convention in the state capital on 17th August. Though time was short comrades worked untiringly day and night to make the convention a success. The noted historian and former chairman of the ICHR Professor Ram Sharan Sharma inaugurated the convention. In his inaugural address Prof. Sharma severely criticised the role of the saffronites in communalising education. He said that though many ancient literatures were composed in Sanskrit, this language can hardly be called the foundation of Indian culture.

Speaking about English, Prof. Sharma remarked that those sections of the society which neglected English remained backward while those who took the initiative to learn this language, advanced. He placed statistics to drive home his points.

Many noted educationists, including Dr. H N Prasad, Prof. Santosh Kumar, Prof. Purnendu Mukherjee, Dr. N P Verma, Prof. S P Verma, Mr P N Mahato placed their views. They denounced the disastrous anti-people education policies of the government and called upon all sections of the society to resist such attacks on education.

Earlier, Comrade Dipak Kumar, Secretary, AIDS0, Bihar State Committee read out the main resolution. Besides an elaborate discussion on the AIDS0 policy on issues linked with education, the resolution also contained a 22 point charter of demands.

The secretary of the All India Save Education Committee, Comrade Dipankar Roy also placed his views. He spoke on the various aspects of building up a powerful save education movement in Bihar and called upon students, guardians and educationists to come forward and hold high the banner of struggle to save education and mankind.

Noteworthy was the building up of confidence among the intellectuals regarding the ultimate victory of the movement. They felt and even expressed that a movement which has been initiated by AIDS0 and SUCI is bound to be victorious. A quotation exhibition outside the hall with quotations of freedom fighters, educationists, scientists, and Marx, Lenin, Shibdas Ghosh was also put up. Participants were seen noting down quotations with eagerness.

Comrade Anil Sarkar Red Salute



It was at 10 am of 9th August 1999 when after an arduous struggle against the inevitability that the prolonged illness of cancer of stomach forced on him — Comrade Anil Sarkar, a member of SUCI Bihar State Committee and Bihar State Secretary of UTUC-Lenin Sarani, left for ever his life-long innumerable comrades and thousands of coal miners with whom he participated in many a struggle for the cause of the working people during last 50 years almost. He passed away at Digwadi, Jharia where he came from a village of the district of Burdwan, West Bengal to work in Tata Colliery. An ardent follower and admirer of uncompromising trend of Indian freedom struggle led by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Comrade Sarkar, in his early youth, devoted himself to cultural and social activities and founded club for the said cause. His desire to advance such activities brought him in early 50's in contact with Comrade Pritish Chanda, SUCI Central Committee member, who, at that time was in Jharia-Digwadi area with the assigned task of building up revolutionary party and trade union movement. Through this process, Comrade Anil Sarkar came to know Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat and the founder General Secretary of SUCI and his thoughts. Comrade Ghosh went there and held political class. He was deeply impressed by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and finally decided to devote himself to the process of building up SUCI and revolutionary working class movement in Bihar. As an employee of Digwadi unit of Tata Colliery, he, with the active guidance and assistance of Comrade Pritish Chanda, built up Tata Colliery Mazdoor Union and contributed a lot in giving shape to Bihar Coal Miners Union. Comrades Nihar Mukherjee, Sachin Banerjee, Hiren Sarkar and Subodh Banerjee also visited the area on various occasions to participate in different programmes and mass movements. In fact, Comrade Sarkar along with Comrade Hem Chakrabarty and others, was associated with SUCI and UTUC-Lenin Sarani from their formative days in Bihar. For his political and trade union activities he was twice arrested and put behind the bars. It is worth remembering that during the coal miners' historic militant movement that started from Tata Colliery and spread over the Jharia coal fields resulting in pay-boycott strike from 26th May to 7th June 1956 at the call of UTUC-LS unions on the demand of modification of All India Colliery Tribunal Award, Comrade Anil Sarkar played

Ultimately, the president of the convention Prof. S K Bose who is the former Pro-Vice Chancellor of Bihar University, announced the formation of a strong 51 member Save Education Committee under the chairmanship of Prof. Rama Sharan Sharma. The announcement was greeted amidst huge applause.

an important role and was in jail, along with Comrade Pritish Chanda, for more than a month. Not in the coal miners' struggle alone, he also participated and took leading role in the struggle of various section of toiling people in different regions of Bihar as well as in legitimate democratic mass movements led by our party in the state since early fifties to the last day of his life.

All these life struggle and his sincere love and emotion to the cause of revolution made him a popular leader of working people in the area. From the third conference of UTUC-LS held in April, 1958 in Calcutta to his death he was the member of All India Working Committee of UTUC-Lenin Sarani, besides holding the position of State Secretary of UTUC-Lenin Sarani, Bihar. He also served as a member of Standing Committee of Safety in Coal Mines, Government of India, for long as well as a member of Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) of BCCL till his last days. In this connection, it may be recalled that Comrade Sarkar once attended a conference in Moscow, as one of the members of UTUC-LS delegation in 1980's.

The end of such a life, full of activities and zig zag struggles, at the age of 74 on 9th August 1999, most unexpectedly shocked thousands and drew different cross-sections of people to his residence at Digwadi from where they joined his last journey towards the burning ghat on the bank of the Damodar via SUCI office where his body was kept for sometime. Among those who paid homage to the departed leader were Comrades Amriteswar Chakrabarty (SUCI, Bihar State Secretary), Hem Chakrabarty (SUCI Dhanbad District Secretary), Shankar Saha (Secretary, UTUC-LS, All India Committee), S. K. Baxi, D. S. Shukla, Pradip Sarkar, M. Sen, B. Singh (CITU), C. K. Baxi (CPI-M), Md. Akhtar, Rajeswar Ram (AITUC) and representatives of various UTUC-LS affiliated unions.

The Red Flag remained at half mast for 24 hours at UTUC-LS central headquarter in Calcutta as well as at party office and UTUC-LS office in the state of Bihar as a mark of reverence to the memory of the departed leader.

The convention concluded with the song 'We shall overcome'. It appeared as if the chorus reflected the confidence that the fight no matter how arduous, how difficult and how prolonged it might be, shall ultimately be won. The convention marks a milestone in the history of Save Education movement in Bihar.

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Socialist Unity Centre of India

CENTRAL COMMITTEE
48 LENIN SARANI, CALCUTTA 700013

Nihar Mukherjee urges upon Election Commission to maintain neutrality

Ref.....

Date..... 30th August, 1999

Dr. M. S. Gill
The Chief Election Commissioner
New Delhi

Ref : Press Conference by
Mr. G. V. G. Krishnamurthy at Jaipur

Dear Sir,

I like to draw your serious attention to a report in the Hindusthan Times, New Delhi edition dt. 28.8.99 of a Press Conference by Mr. G. V. G. Krishnamurthy at Jaipur on 27.8.99 where he said : "An yearly election is like an yearly pregnancy." This indecent remark is highly objectionable from a person enjoying high office of Election Commission. He further said : "It is the responsibility of all of us to assess all the political parties and candidates in the fray and vote for those who could take the country forward with stability".

You know that in the recent past no single party in our country has been able to form a stable government at the Centre. They are forming unprincipled, unscrupulous and opportunistic combinations. This combinations are itself unstable. The slogan of 'stability' raised by the parties and combination of parties are nothing but a vile attempt to hoodwink the voters. Such remarks/opinions on the part of your office will only help those parties. Such undesirable opinions, in fact, violates the norm and infringes the jurisdiction of the Election Commission.

Now-a-days, relatively free and fair elections has become a matter of bygone days and everything is being controlled by money, muscle and orchestrated media power backed by administrative rigging. Under such circumstances, the Election Commission should refrain from uttering anything that can jeopardise the fairness in the election process, if there is any.

Hope, you will take prompt remedial measures.

Expecting your reply.

Thanking you,

Yours truly,
Sd/- Nihar Mukherjee
General Secretary, Central Committee
S. U. C. I.

Report of horrifying situation in Punjab

An interim report by 'The Committee for Co-ordination on Disappearance in Punjab', entitled 'Enforced Disappearance, Arbitrary Executions and secret Cremations : Victim Testimony and India's Human Rights Obligations' published from Chandigarh recently reveals horrifying stories of police brutality in Punjab. The introductory note of the report states that : "This is an interim report on one of the unfinished tasks of the Committee for Co-ordination on Disappearance in Punjab (CCDP), a representative body of eighteen human rights organisations and other individuals which came into existence on 9th November, 1997."

It is an important document of how the state power and the police administration on silly pretexts suppresses the people and concoct stories only to befool the public.

It is incumbent on all democratic minded people of our country to study the report meticulously to have a correct appraisal of the situation in the state of Punjab.

We will publish excerpts from the document in the coming issues.

— Editor, Proletarian Era

31st August, 1999