

Proletarian Era

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Founder Editor-in-Chief : COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

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Budget of Deception and Price Rise

On 27th February '99 the BJP Finance Minister Mr Yashwant Sinha placed his budget for 1999-2000 — a budget characteristically full of promises and deception but wary of fulfillment. Above all, it reflects unprecedented severity of crisis in economy particularly in the era of globalization-liberalization. Even with the impost of nearly Rs.10,000 crore of new taxes, coupled with it administrated hike of foodgrain prices in Public Distribution System and of LPG totally estimated to fetch Rs. 3200 crore just before the budget, bears a projected revenue deficit of Rs.54,147 crore and a fiscal deficit of Rs.79,955 crore which are sure to soar much high. The fiscal deficit, according to the FM's calculation, will be 5.6% of GDP.

While declaring the new economic policy of open market, globalization of economy and privatization and accordingly placing the budget for 1991-'92, the then Union Finance Minister Mr Monmohan Singh of the Congress assured the countrymen, to cope with the shock, that benefit of that reform policy would be evident within two years. Since then seven budgets pursuing the same policy of liberalization have been placed successively by the Congress, the UF and the BJP governments and the people has got the bitter taste of it during these eight years ! Now at the very onset of his budget speech the Finance Minister has spelt out : "The decade of the nineties has witnessed extraordinary changes. It began with the collapse of centrally planned economies; it is ending with market economies facing a serious crisis." What is that crisis ? The FM referred simply to severe recession in economy, sagging

capital market and dearth of capital inflow, imbalance in export and import, sinking foreign direct investment (FDI) much cherished by them, fall in revenue income and rise in expenditure. All through in his budget speech the FM made the world economic crisis particularly the set back in South-East Asia the plea for all such above misfortunes in India. But the fact is that the Congress government in 1991 and thereafter the UF and the BJP government itself took the steps of decontrolling, privatisation of state sector, rampant computerization-automation at the cost of employment, bounty of tax concession to the owners, opening up the door for foreign capital and foreign goods in the interest of market economy and globalization to the glee of the Indian and foreign monopoly with much sugar-coating and now the concomitant evils are surfacing with the passage of time. Suffice it to say, these are the results of unbridled exploitation and profit making of the Indian and foreign monopoly houses and it is nothing but the crisis of capitalism itself which they pass on to the shoulder of the common masses posing them crises of the country as a whole.

'Export Oriented Growth' Exposed

Competition has all through been advanced as the gospel of market economy and globalization and they preached that privatisation will stimulate free competition, enhance efficiency in industry leading to increased growth and that would automatically create market, home and abroad. They theorized it as 'export-oriented growth' and

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Born : 5 May, 1818
Died : 14 March, 1883

...In all countries of Europe it has now become a truth demonstrable to every unprejudiced mind, and only denied by those whose interest it is to hedge other people in a fool's paradise, that no improvement of machinery, no appliance of science to production, no contrivances of communication, no new colonies, no emigration, no opening of markets, no free trade, nor all these things put together, will do away with the miseries of the industrious masses; but that, on the present false base, every fresh development of the productive powers of labour must tend to deepen social contrasts and point social antagonism...

... To conquer political powers has therefore become the great duty of the working class...

One element of success they possess numbers ; but numbers weigh only in the balance, if united by combination and led by knowledge... (Address and provisional rules of the Working Men's International Association — September 28, 1864).



AIMSS
procession at
Patna on 8th
March, 1999
(News inside)

SUCI Demands roll back of hike in telecom charges

Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI has issued the following statement on 9 March :

"We condemn the steep hike of the telephone rents and call rates.

"This is another attack of the BJP-led Central Government against the people.

"We demand immediate withdrawal of this anti-people decision."

KOSOVO CRISIS

NATO poses danger of devastating war

The imperialists' repeated threats of military reprisals by US-dominated NATO forces against Yugoslavia over the Kosovo problem, has triggered the danger of another devastating war in the Balkans. This brazen intervention of the imperialist powers into the internal affairs of Yugoslavia in the name of defense of national minorities constitutes a shocking attack on the national right and independence of Yugoslavian state, and is a threat to all the peace and freedom loving people everywhere. It is at the same time a further indication of the imperialists' gameplan to further dismember Yugoslavia.

The Problem

After the violent break up of former Yugoslavia, that left behind a rump Yugoslavia, reduced from 6 to 2 republics, namely Serbia and Montenegro, now it is the turn of Kosovo, a province of Serbia, that is in the grip of an armed secessionist struggle. Though Kosovo has been an integral part of Serbia for centuries, ethnic Albanians there constitute the overwhelming majority. For about a year the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) is fighting against alleged Serb oppression. Among the many factions into which the KLA is divided, a section is demanding full independence for Kosovo, while another wants autonomy under an international protectorate. And the latter is exactly the kind of agreement the US imperialists have been trying to achieve in the Rambouillet 'peace negotiations' in France, called and arranged by the 6-nation Contact Group, namely USA, France, Germany, Britain, Russia and Italy. To bring the Serbs, represented by the Serbian President Mr. Milan Milutinovic, and different representatives of the KLA to the negotiation table they used, on the one hand, the threat of military reprisals against Yugoslavia by the US-led NATO forces which have become deeply entrenched in the Balkan region, an area so far out of bounds for NATO. On the other hand, USA threatened to cut off all funds and supply routes to rebel KLA forces to make them amenable to participate in the talks in France. This indicates clearly two things. First, it is the US imperialists who are the dominant force behind the imperialist powers' united action and are clearly trying to enforce their terms and plans. What they hold forth as a 'solution' to the secessionist struggle in Kosovo, is a three-year period in which Serbia accords far ranging autonomy to Kosovo under military US-led NATO occupation of Kosovo with about 28,000 to 30,000 troops to monitor the agreement. The US imperialists clearly are using the issue to try to drive the Serbs or Yugoslavia, for that matter, into a corner where they have only two options: like Iraq to suffer wanton military attack, or else agree to the stationing of NATO forces inside the country.

The imperialists want to make out that such brazen intervention into the internal affairs of a sovereign country like Yugoslavia is necessary for the sake of protecting 'human dignity' as the French President Mr. Chirac put it at the beginning of the Rambouillet talks, or as they say, 'to protect civilians' and prevent the conflict from spreading. Thus the US President Mr. Bill

Clinton, in order to lobby support at home for sending US troops there, said: "Bosnia taught us a lesson: In this volatile region, violence we fail to oppose leads to even greater violence we will have to oppose later at greater cost." Such utter falsehood and deception is all the more sickening when looking at their actual deeds, especially that of the USA who purposively prolonged the Bosnian civil war in order to get an advantage over its European allies, not to speak of its black records in other parts of the world, like Latin America, Vietnam and Iraq, to mention but a few, where US misdeeds resulted in the massacre of innocent civilians; human misery and abuse on a gigantic scale. So clearly, imperialist propaganda is trying to confuse the issue and mislead the people. Instead we have to consider what are the stakes involved, what are the factors that are motivating the imperialists to intervene.

To get a better understanding of the Kosovo problem it is necessary to consider two aspects. One is the rich natural resources, developed industries and highly skilled labour force of former socialist countries, to bring which under their control is the aim of the imperialists. The other aspect is the strategic importance of the Balkans.

Stakes involved for the imperialists

It must be kept in mind that so far, unlike other countries, Yugoslavia has refused to completely open up its economy to the demands of IMF for savage liberalisation due to workers' resistance. Though Kosovo, the southern province of Serbia is relatively backward, it is an economically vital region. In particular it is rich in precious minerals like lead, manganese, cadmium and silver. The former Yugoslavian socialist state had developed a mining complex, encompassing the mines in the region which were rated to be third in the world on the basis of their extraction potentiality of lead and manganese. The immovable properties of this state-owned Triepka mining complex are valued about \$5 billion. Besides, there are huge coal deposits. Privatisation of this state-owned complex is one of the factors that is motivating the imperialists. Inhuman economic sanctions since 1991 are a means whereby the US imperialists, supported by EU imperialist powers, are trying to bring Yugoslavia on its knees to get it to open up its industries, causing untold hardship to the people. Already the government under the pressure of mounting crisis reportedly had a talk with a Greek financial Co. Regarding partial disposal of the Triepka mine.

Apart from this the Balkan region is of great strategic importance for the access it provides. It has been called the gateway to the Middle East and the Orient. Situated at the Adriatic Sea, its land route gives access to Southern Europe and hence to the Mediterranean Sea, to Turkey and thence to the oil rich Middle East. The main waterway of the Balkans - the Danube - leads into the Black Sea and gives access to the Caucasus and the oil rich Caspian Sea region, to Kazakhstan etc.

In the past the Balkans were a hotbed of European imperialists' intrigue and rivalry; for he who controls that region will dominate the oil

transport and safe access to natural resources in many countries, and hence be in an advantageous position vis-a-vis other rival imperialist powers. In their scramble for control the imperialist powers used to incite ethnic problems, and after the Balkan wars and the first world war imposed their peace treaties on these less developed Balkan countries with a view to securing their own interests and get a handle for future intervention and domination by keeping same grievances and discontent alive. And this is precisely the region, along with East Europe and Western and Southern parts of former USSR, towards which traditional German expansionism in particular has been directed. Twice Serbia, which lies not only at the Balkan land and water route, but in the route, i.e. right through which the route leads, was completely devastated by German imperialism in two world wars with a view to getting it out of the way, and twice it proved a hurdle for German imperialists' further advance. Hence to further divest Serbia, i.e. Yugoslavia, of Kosovo would greatly weaken the former and that is surely in the interest of German imperialism.

Serbia the traditional enemy of German imperialism

From the time of the First World War Germany looked on Serbia as a special nuisance because of its geographic position and its resistance to German expansionist design and hence singled it out with special hatred: 'Serbia must die' that was the motto of its world war propaganda. In the Second World War Yugoslavian people's rebellion against their Government's collaboration with Germany is another factor that has earned it German imperialism's deep hatred. For that rebellion drew forth the most ruthless Nazi retaliation, whose planned surprise attack on Soviet Russia thus got delayed. This was a contributing factor that the Nazi, unexpectedly faced with a most heroic Soviet people whose superior socialist base and ideals did not crumble before the onslaught of Nazi terror and initial gigantic military advantage, got bogged down unprepared in hostile Russian winter, which cost it dear.

While the Soviet people under the leadership of Stalin waged a heroic battle against Nazi Germany, the Yugoslavian League of Communists united people of different nationalities and ethnic groups in a resistance movement against Nazi occupation and partition of the country in the difficult condition of inflamed ethnic hatred, as in each area fascist militias ruled by pogroms and vicious attacks on ethnic minorities. Especially in the puppet state in part of present Croatia under the control of fascist Ustashe, more than 800 000 Serbs and tens of thousands of Jews and Gypsies were killed by the Ustashe. In those dark days this united war of resistance under the leadership of Tito stands out as a glorious chapter of working people's unity and led to the victory of socialist revolution in Yugoslavia. And the victory of socialism over the forces of fascism in the Balkans, in East Europe and the Soviet Union that became the citadel of people's hope and strength throughout the world, kept these

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US-German imperialists behind Kosovo crisis

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countries out of bounds of imperialist intervention and intrigues.

German and US gameplan in collusion and contantion

But as revisionism began soon to make inroads in Yugoslavia, nationalist tendencies grew, while economic disparity among different regions which should have lessened in a socialist society became accentuated. And with growth of revisionism in other socialist states, as they slowly became corroded from within, the onslaught of US and German imperialists, in collusion, became more and more aggressive and penetrant. And after the fall of Soviet Union, the imperialists have bared their fangs completely. On the one hand, from their own class interest they collude in trying to establish 'stability', from their point of view. That means they try to prevent at all costs that people organise themselves and unite against the most savage capitalist exploitation which brings nothing but death, suffering and all round decay. That is what the imperialists mean by 'stability': they need stability to safeguard their control over former socialist states, to safeguard their investments, their profit, their exploitation and to prevent the people from rising again in rebellion or revolution. And woe to the country that does not toe the line of the imperialists.

On the other hand, this doomed capitalist system is producing ever more acute rivalry among the imperialists in their struggle to exploit the raw materials, cheap and skilled labour force and control the markets, the manifestation of which we find today most explicitly on the question of break up of Yugoslavia and Kosovo secessionist struggle. Behind the confusing veil of mass media's gigantic misinformation campaign we find the two imperialist powers, USA and Germany locked in struggle over dominance of the Balkan region.

After the annexation of former GDR, Germany has emerged as a strong regional power playing a dominating part in the EU whose aspirations and plans have been owned up by no less a person than Ex Federal Chancellor Kohl who had officially announced in his governing declaration as far back as 30.1.1990: "Germany has finished with its history. It can in future openly own up its role as world power and should expand it." Former foreign Minister Kinkel added in FAZ: "Two tasks have to be mastered at the same time: in the interior we have to become again a whole nation and in the exterior something has to be attained in which we have twice failed." And when German imperialists emphasize the decisive importance of "maintenance of free world trade and of the unhindered access to the markets and raw materials of the whole world" in the defence political guideline of 26.11.'92,⁴ it is not difficult to understand what 'task' they still have to attain which they twice failed. But with a strong and united Yugoslavia its expansionist designs in the Balkans would never succeed. Hence it is not surprising that many fingers were pointed at Germany when Yugoslavia first began to break up, and reports of German financial, military and political support to secessionist movement in Slovenia and Croatia appeared. But the rise of a new rival, that was exactly what the

US imperialists had vowed they would never allow. Thus, in the Pentagon policy papers, extracts of which were published in 1992, they stressed among others: "...we must maintain the mechanism for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role." But though the USA is the world's sole military superpower on the economic front it is facing ever greater challenge not only from Japan but especially from Europe after the EU and now even more so after the emergence of a European currency, the euro. Thus it is with the help of NATO - that most aggressive force - at a time when they have lost all ground for even justifying its further existence after the debacle of socialism, that the USA wants to dominate Europe and from there the whole world. Hence in the Pentagon policy papers the US imperialists emphasized: "It is of fundamental importance to preserve NATO as the primary instrument of Western defense and security as well as the channel for US influence and participation in European security affairs."⁵ And it is on the question of the violent break up of Yugoslavia that the policies of these two imperialist powers have been and are being translated into action behind the deceptive cover of imperialist propaganda dished out by the major mass medias. This meant that while Croatian people constituting 19 per cent of the Yugoslavian population had the right to secede from Yugoslavia, the Serbs in Bosnia who constituted about 31 per cent of the population in Bosnia Herzegovina, had, according to the same imperialists no right to remain in Yugoslavia. And for their refusal to remain in a separate Bosnian state - where the Muslims constituted about 43 per cent of Bosnian population - under the extreme fundamentalist Muslim rule of Izetbegovic who had grabbed power with direct US support, the Serbs were convincingly painted in the mass media as Nazi fascists, engaged in ethnic cleansing and mass rape of Muslim women, in a most systematic, mindboggling perversion of truth, in order to get public support for US designs. The source of this perversion has been tracked down by the International Action Centre of USA to the Public Relation Firm Ruder Finn of USA, paid in millions of dollars for its services and whose version was endlessly repeated everywhere in papers and TV. Clearly in case of Bosnia the USA while trying to wrest control from German imperialists had implemented its NATO policy in Europe - and at what cost to the people! The Pentagon papers had clearly spelt out: "We must seek to prevent the emergence of European-only security arrangements which would undermine NATO."⁶ Thus the US imperialists openly sabotaged the EU brokered peace accord signed by all parties in Lisbon, Portugal, in March 1992 before the civil war began, and which, if allowed to be implemented could have avoided the bloodshed, horror and trauma of a prolonged civil war. Again the same happened in case of the Vance-Owen plan signed in May 1993, as British Foreign Secretary Lord David Owen publicly accused USA of doing. Hence the civil war dragged on till November 1995 when US imperialists virtually kidnapped the warring parties and enforced on them the Dayton Accord whose main difference with the Vance-Owen Accord was the fact that they were

to be implemented by the US-led NATO. Now there are more than 80 000 troops and latest arsenal of sophisticated weapons entrenched all around Yugoslavia, while the USA has in the process installed military bases in Albania and Hungary - the two of which provide a high vantage point in mountainous region and which they reportedly do not let their NATO partners share. And apart from Bosnia and Macedonia, not to speak of their old bases in Southern Europe, the USA has established military base in Croatia, a state where all the old Nazi Ustashe symbols and fascist rule are being revived, and where the US imperialists have also been further arming and training the Tudjman Government's army. It is in Croatia that the US imperialists helped the army to drive out the 200000 Serbian people in a matter of a few days, from Krajina, an area where they had lived for ages. No publicity was made about the large massacre of innocent and unarmed civilians as they were hounded out, while US military jammed Serb radars and helped in other ways, and which was the real ethnic cleansing that happened under US supervision and with its help! So when it comes to bringing about the disintegration of former Yugoslavia, and further weakening rump Yugoslavia with its Serbian core, the German and US imperialists are acting in collusion, each having its own axe to grind, but the contention, the fight arises over on the question of obtaining control over the split parts, over the region and to get which the imperialist powers do not hesitate to plunge whole peoples into war.

Though militarily the USA is in an advantageous position vis a vis Germany the latter's economic power and political influence have deeply and silently penetrated many parts of Europe. But they are not in the habit of openly advocating it unlike the USA. So Germany, for example, is not making any noise either about the canal they have built connecting the Danube and the Main, a canal twice the length of the Panama Canal, built clearly with a view to creating a continuous water route from the North Sea to the Black Sea and with their old expansionist designs in mind.

What is noteworthy is the reaction of the US ambassador in Macedonia at first towards the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). He called them 'terrorists' in February 98. But a few months later in July the US spokesman of foreign affairs repudiated that position, saying that certain acts had been committed by persons having certain relations with the KLA, but that the latter were not terrorists.⁸ The KLA want all the Albanese, also in Macedonia and Greece united, which would carry the secessionist struggle into US dominated areas. Leave alone question of close ties of Germany with former Soviet republics like Ukraine, Georgia etc. a tussle has been going on between USA and Germany over wooing Turkey that was accompanied with the gifting of huge amount of heavy military equipment by Bonn in 1991. And it was around that time that the then Turkish President Ozal talked of revival of the lost old glory during Ottoman empire, by activating the Muslim minorities in Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Greece, in a speech in Istanbul in Dec. 1991. After which he concluded military

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Staggering military expenditure and meagre allocation for education

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cited the examples of the so-called 'tiger economies' of the South-east Asia which have now turned out to be ailing cats. The concept of self-dependence even in bourgeois sense, i.e. strengthening national economy avoiding free import of capital, goods and technology was decried and stamped obsolete and their free imports as and when necessary was advocated in the age of globalization. Obviously, this necessity was the necessity of the Indian monopolists to fortify their capability with foreign capital and technology for entering into the markets of other countries in absence of home market. The proponents of liberalization would have the people believe that in spite of liberalizing imports, economy would face no difficulty as export would expand in more rapid pace. But the reality proved otherwise — import shoot up and export dwindled and economy is now in the doldrum, 'export oriented' growth rate of GDP has now tumbled from 7.8 % in 96-97 to 5.8 % in 1998-99. Now the government is using the world economic crisis and South-East Asian 'tigers' to hide their deception and falsehood — to hide the dangerous effect of globalization-liberalization.

Deceptions Galore

Not only the present Finance Minister Yaswant Sinha has resorted to such deceit in his budget for 1999-2000, his predecessors also presented rosy picture of economic progress and development with fabricated budget accounts and concocted pre-budget surveys and under the cover of baseless theory to hide the real face of the crisis only for the sake of bourgeois class interest. They want to project the service sector (i.e. banking, insurance, telecommunication, transport, etc.) at par within industry and agriculture. According to them, in spite of lower or zero growth in industry and agriculture, only the growth in service sector can effect real economic growth in the country. But without growth in industry and agriculture can service sector alone grow unhindered? This year's budget confession shows decline in goods-transport by rail due to recession in industry resulting in fall of railway revenue income. Moreover, while calculating growth in GDP much more higher weightage, 48%, has been cleverly given to service sector in comparison 28% to industry and 24 % to agriculture to show growth rate higher than the actual.

That the BJP government has taken recourse to accounting manipulation to hide the extent of budget deficit and recession in the country is now also being widely alleged and exposed by the bourgeois press as well. First, the finance ministry has changed base year for calculating GDP growth rate, from 1980-81 to 1993-94 and has shown the growth rate for '98-'99 at 5.8%. Otherwise, it would have been much lower. Last year, the actual fiscal deficit stood at Rs.103737 crore jumping from Rs.91,025 crore projected. This year it has been projected at Rs.79,955 crore said to be 5.6% of GDP. Next, for the first time and trampling universal accounting norms the government is including the collection through small savings in Post Offices to be repaid to the public with interest as income of the government

exchequer which is nothing but a liability to the government! Thus they are showing lower fiscal deficit which will shoot up to around 6.4% of the GDP. Over and above, is not the claim of the finance minister in this year's budget proposal of increasing revenue income by 20%, from last year's increase of 4.1%, without least accounting for such expected magical improvement, and thereby bringing down fiscal deficit to Rs.79,995 crore a mere bluff? It goes without saying, by such deliberate false promises the BJP government is trying to conceal the alarming danger of inflation in the coming days, for higher deficit means further growth in money supply in market. In last year's budget the projected increase of such money supply was 15% which stood in actual at the end of the year at about 20%. The worst victim of all these evils, like higher deficit and inflation, will be the common people and the poorer section.

Crisis of Capitalism Reflected Glaringly

In his budget speech the Finance Minister has told, "The East Asian financial crisis took a heavy toll of important economies in the region and spread to other countries." But the advocates of open market policy particularly of the Congress, BJP, UF, etc. although argued that they were cautious enough in this regard and India would not face any fall out of the above said crisis. They wanted to ignore, calling it obsolete in the era of 'technology revolution' and 'globalization', the scientific analysis of Marxism that capitalism is sure to face the crisis of over production and market. Now the crisis in reality has proved that it is the Marxian analysis which is correct. Within the country there is no market and this is the internal crisis of Indian capitalist class. On the other hand, owing to the crisis of world capitalism, foreign market is also rapidly shrinking. As a result of such market crisis, both internal and external, serious recession in industry has firmly set in and now the bourgeoisie also is admitting the crisis. But they refuse to admit that it is their unhindered exploitation which is the root cause of it. Due to recession industrial production has sharply fallen, as a result goods traffic in railways are hard hit and rail revenue shortage, equally collection of excise duty and customs duty from import and export fallen far short of target, financial deficit shoot up across the barrier of one lakh crore rupees.

'Second Generation Reform'

Had the Finance Minister sincerely and earnestly depicted the nature of the crisis, he would also try to find out some ways and means at least in the bourgeois sense, to come out of the impasse. But instead of doing so, what he tries by giving tax concession to housing and construction industry to revive cement and steel industry is sure to fail to solve deep recession in economy. Such steps has only vindicated the intensity of the crisis. Instead of getting at the root cause of the present crisis, treading further on the same path of market economy and globalization which has triggered off the crisis, the FM is now declaring to start 'second generation reform'. The main thrust of it is decontrolling export of agricultural

commodities, lowering fiscal deficit (i.e. by curtailment of welfare measure) and creating 'animal spirit' among the industrialists (for profit) by cutting interest rate. To detract people's attention from the concomitant evils of this 'second generation reform' the Finance Minister has declared some high sounding schemes like Annapurna, etc. Unabashedly bypassing the parliament just before the budget, the government hiked the prices of food grains in PDS by 30% and in the budget declared sops of giving 10 kg of foodgrains per month free of cost to a very limited category and number of aged rural poor under the Annapurna scheme. After rendering the whole PDS, step by step to a farce by hiking prices of food grains to out of poor men's reach, now comes the gimmick of giving a handful to an insignificant minority! And other hollow schemes of improving health care facilities and family planning, creating jobs in the rural areas but without or negligible allocation in the budget. The same hoodwinking tactics with old Congress tradition and under such smokescreen crippling the people with huge tax burden.

Tax Hike

With an attempt to minimise huge fiscal deficit this year also the BJP government has imposed an enormous tax burden of nearly ten thousand crore rupees anew. So long the exponents of liberalization advocated for lower taxes on the pet plea that it leads to higher industrial growth. With this 'theory' during Congress regime Mr Manmohan Singh allowed unprecedented tax concession, subsidies and subventions to the industrial and monopoly houses. The UF Finance Minister Mr P. Chidambaram, earlier a disciple of Mr Manmohan Singh in Congress ministry, did the same in his 'dream budget' but the last few years' experience shows, the sharks pocketed the benefits but economy drifted into recession. Now, in the face of uncontrollable deficit this year, the BJP government finds no other way out than to impose taxes to the tune of nearly ten thousand crore rupees to meet mainly the expenditure of their top-heavy administration, and of the ministers and MPs. Notable also is that major portion of this nearly Rs.10,000 crore taxes is indirect tax to be ultimately extracted from the common men and consumers. The impost of extra indirect taxes climbs by Rs.6434 crore whereas the extra direct tax is only Rs.3001 crore and middle class and lower middle class people will also have to pay it.

Benefit to the Owners

The bourgeoisie has realised that it is not possible for the government to allow that huge amount of tax concession they got earlier years and that is why they are not so much vocal against the government after the budget. However, what they have got is not also so little. The government has already declared that the 10% surcharge on corporate tax is temporary. Besides, the capital gain tax has been reduced from 20% to 10%. Demerged companies will no longer have to pay capital gain tax on assets of the original company. The MRTP Act which was once promulgated to

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Criminal Activities by PWG in Orissa under the Garb of Revolutionary Activity

Malkangiri is one of the most underdeveloped districts of Orissa, where majority of the people are tribals. More than a decade back, SUCI activities started there. Since then many mass movements on the burning issues like supply of food grains to the poor, construction of roads, bridges and culverts, expansion and establishment of schools, hospitals and industries and provision of irrigation facilities have been organised there by the party. Thousands of people of Padia, Kalimela, Korkunda, Mathili, Chitrakonda block did take and are taking active part in such movements. Many demonstrations, dharmas, gheraos and other programmes have been organised at block and district levels. Due to the pressure of those movements government authorities at different levels have had to take up some developmental programmes. Yet that district is still in a most backward condition. But the SUCI organisation is steadily growing among all sections of exploited people there.

This has created a panic among the vested interests, power hungry political leaders and the so called revolutionary party like the CPI(ML)-People's War Group (PWG). This PWG claims itself to be a revolutionary party but it has no political programme. It organises criminals, and gives them training in use of arms to attack innocent people and grab their property, money etc. In that part of the district which is close to the borders of the three states Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, it becomes convenient for them to run away to another state after committing a crime in a particular area. Another feature of the PWG is that it functions through groups of gangsters whom they call members of 'Sangham Dal'. Their activities is confined to looting, killing and other criminal pursuit. They have no programme of people's struggle against the ruling class. Rather, being isolated from the people and living in hideouts they are engaged in criminal activities which have nothing to do with revolutionary movement and Marxism-Leninism.

As the strength of the SUCI started growing

rapidly in the district and thousands of people rallied round the party, and the more the people heaved sigh of relief as they found their own party to stand for their legitimate cause, the criminal groups led by the PWG started armed attacks on SUCI activists in different pockets and even attempted to kill them.

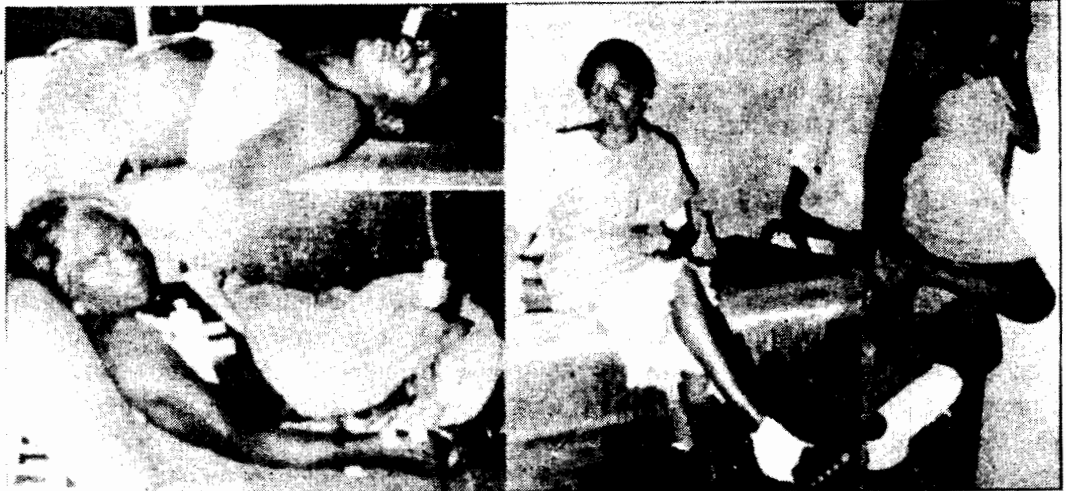
On 22nd October, 1998 thousands of people organised a demonstration in Padia Block demanding Padia-Gorakhpalli and Padia-Motu Road, Bridge on Potteru river and a stop to the corruption by Padia Block authorities in the different developmental works. On November 2, 1998 another massive demonstration was organised in Kalimela Block demanding Kalimela-Poplur and Gompakonda-Kalimela road, special facilities for Poplur ghat region, eradication of malaria, etc. Just one day before this demonstration, i.e. on Nov. 1st night, the PWG and its wing the 'Sangham Dal' attacked the SUCI office at Tatiguda village and brutally beat up Comrade Bhupes Karmakar and 7 other comrades and asked them to stop the demonstration of 2nd Nov.

In spite of this brutal attack, more than 2000 people participated in the demonstration. Then this PWG and its armed forces started attacks on Comrade Biswanath Madhi (Pentha), a leading

party comrade of Malkangiri district. He is a popular tribal leader in the MV-79 region and also in Padia and Kalimeda block. They have attempted to kill him several times. On 7 Feb. 99 early morning, an armed contingent of PWG led by their local leaders reached the house of Comrade Madhi and attacked him and his family members with bullets. Comrade Madhi received severe bullet injury on his left leg and his wife, daughter and son received bullet injuries on the chest.

Before this incident, at the night of 4th Feb. '99, 4 SUCI activists of village No 15 under Kalimela block were also attacked by PWG hoodlums. Recently the PWG has issued a leaflet from Chhatrapur, district headquarter of Ganjam. This leaflet speaks for itself. They have openly threatened the SUCI leaders and cadres in Malkangiri area with dire consequences. They have clearly said in the leaflet that they have fixed bullet on Comrade Madhi and his family members and have beaten up others of the SUCI.

Under the circumstances we urge all democratic-minded, well meaning people to protest against such vandalism and criminal activities of PWG and Sangham Dal in the name of revolutionary activity and to stand by the side of the distressed people of Malkangiri.



SUCI activists injured with bullets by PWG on 7.2.99. Rama Madhi (left above) Moti Madhi (left below) Rajen Madhi and Biswanath Madhi (right)

First Bellary District Mine workers Conference

On 21.2.99 the Samyuktha Gani Karmikara Sangha had organised the First District Mine Workers Conference.

The conference was inaugurated by hoisting Red Flag by Comrade. A Jalalluddin, Vice-President, UTUC(LS) All India Committee.

Comrade Simhadri, Karnataka State Secretary, UTUC(LS) was the main speaker. Comrade K Somasekhar, President, S.G.K.S. presided over the conference.

The main resolution was moved by Comrade Somasekhar opposing the privatisation of Insurance Sector, Narasimham Committee Recommendations and supported the strike called by Bank employees for the implementation of the Bi-partite settlement. The meeting unanimously adopted the resolution. Comrade H. V. Ganapathy, General Secretary, S.G.K.S. addressed the workers.

The Delegate session was held in the afternoon at Gandhi Bhavan. Before starting the session, rich tributes were paid to the departed leader of the UTUC(LS) All India Committee

Comrade Pritish Chanda by observing a minute's silence by the whole house.

Comrade K. Radhakrishna, UTUC(LS) Karnataka State President inaugurated the delegate session and expressed his heartfelt greetings to the workers and leaders of the first district mine workers conference. Comrade A Jalalluddin, congratulated the workers.

At the end of the session organisational report and many resolutions were passed and were unanimously supported by one and all. And also urgent need for the establishment of the Sub-Regional P.F. Office at Bellary was adopted.

And a powerful

body was formed in the Conference with Comrade K. Somasekhar and Comrade H. V. Ganapathy, President and General Secretary respectively



Mine Workers' procession on 21.2.99

Revival of Share Market only aim of this budget

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keep monopoly business under control for the aggregate interest of Indian capitalism was being gradually relaxed with the liberalization and globalization of the economy and now, in the budget, it has been declared to be totally abolished to the glee of the monopoly houses to loot freely henceforth. Within two days of placing the budget the rate of bank interest and CRR (Cash Reserve Ratio, i.e., the minimum percentage of bank deposit to be kept apart with the Reserve Bank of India) has been cut and the extra Rs.2,500 crore will now be available to the business houses at lower rate of interest.

Budget for the interest of Share Market

The BJP government has, this year, prepared its budget, keeping an eye on the share market in the country which obviously reflects the intensity of crisis of Indian capitalism. In the pre-budget survey, the government has admitted severe recession in the share market particularly in the equity market. According to them the industrialists are facing shortage of capital for want of investment in the equity market. To their rescue the BJP government has adopted twin policy — on the one hand lowering the interest rate on bank deposit the government is depriving the small and ordinary investors and supplying money to the industrialists-business houses at lower rate of interest and, on the other, indirectly pushing the retail investors or depositors to investment in shares through Mutual Funds, including that of UTI, making it tax free in this budget and indulging them in speculative activities. By such heinous devices the BJP government is trying to rejuvenate sagging share market shifting the burden of recession on to the common investing public who will lose the minimum security in investment.

The Finance Minister is holding out the plea of restricting government expenditure and higher revenue collection. Well, but actually aiming at whose interest — the owning class or the common people? Increase in railway fare and freight, imposition of indirect tax of Rs. 6436 crore, surcharge on income tax on middle and lower middle class tax-payers, cess @ Re.1 per liter on diesel, hike in postal charges and thus collecting thousands of crore of rupees — all these burdens have been thrust upon the common and the poor people of the country. Previously as a part of the reform measure and privatisation government was selling shares of PSUs in ordinary way which has proved inadequate to mobilise expected return and now the BJP government has declared to sell block shares in PSUs which means handing over the share with controlling power of the PSUs to the private corporate houses. Being a diehard representative party of the bourgeoisie, the BJP also, like the Congress or the UF could find no other alternative than to resorting to these measures to collect revenue or fund shifting the buck of recession and deficit on to the shoulders of the common people. Otherwise they could take effective measures to unearth the unfathomable amount of black money running a parallel economy in the country and recover the bad debts in the public sector banks and financial institutions totally estimated to be Rs. 50,000 crore comprising each individual debts not less than one crore rupees. Neither the Congress

government nor the UF government did it. And the 'value based' BJP does not want to take the above most urgent and principled path for all are the birds of the same feather — they are all subservient to the interest of the owning class, the black-marketeers, hoarders who are known financiers of these parties or partner parties of different ruling combines. Similarly, since the rural bourgeoisie i.e. the kulaks are most important source of fund for all these ruling parties, they never tried to bring agricultural income under the income tax net. Agriculture contributes 30% to the national production and in Indian agriculture not only individual capital is invested in large extent but banking capital is also an important player now. This year investment from banks in agriculture is expected to rise from last year's Rs.31,000 crore to Rs. 50,000 crore. This huge amount of money is working not simply in agricultural production but is being indirectly invested in hoarding of and unscrupulous trading in foodgrains and every body knows how deeply the BJP is associated with this trading community. That is the reason why the BJP avoided taxing agricultural income as an income under I. T purview. This is another aspect of the anti-people character of this year's budget.

Now, what is the attitude of the BJP towards budget allocation and expenditure cut? During budget speech and budget discussion on TV the Finance Minister affirmed that expenditure cut was impossible without 'down-sizing, ... and reducing the role and administrative structure of the government'. Although the BJP government tried to put up a stunt by abolishing four secretary posts, everybody knows that in reality downsizing government administration means reducing the number of government employees and stopping new recruitment. In a country where crores of unemployed languish this is nothing but a cruelty per excellence. In 1991 the number of central government employees was 40,81,852. Now it is 30,94,797. That is, in last eight years the central government has cut down the staff strength by about 10 lakh. Moreover, besides retrenching workers of the PSUs running in loss, the BJP government this time has announced to do the same in case of enterprises earning only marginal profit, even as the number of ministers and their expenditure as also of the MPs is ever soaring. For this there is no dearth of money. Last year a staggering amount of Rs. 58 crore 69 lakh was spent for the central government ministers. This apart, about Rs.1100 crore was spent to provide security to the VIPs!

The monthly remuneration and perks for MPs have risen from Rs. 4,000 to Rs. 40,000. Parliament session costs Rs.12 lakh per hour. But how hesitant they are to spend another Rs. 8,800 crore following the 5th Pay Commission recommendations which will benefit 39 lakh employees including the military forces! Again and again it is harped that the government coffer is being emptied to pay for the increased wages. But the 5th Pay Commission report asserted that it was nothing impossible for the government to pay this money. But, in the present budget industries, including export oriented amusement industry has been granted tax holiday for 10 to 15 years. This year military budget has been increased by Rs.4494 crore, the entire amount being Rs.45,694 crore. Over and above this

amount the Finance Minister has said, 'during the financial year, as and when necessary, more money will be provided'. So, allotment for military spending is unlimited, money is available according to the 'need'. While pleading for nuclear weapons the central government argued that this would entail less expenditure under the head of conventional weapons. In reality not only direct military expenditure has inflated, indirect military budget is also increasing. For instance, by 32 per cent increase in nuclear power research Rs.1165 crore have reached a staggering Rs.1562 crore, in science and technology by 20% increase the budget allotment is Rs.10,240 crore. Most of such researches are researches for military purpose in a different name. These are proofs of more pronounced militarisation of economy to boost the sagging capitalist economy, what the Indian state started long ago. But, regarding questions of universalisation of education they give excuse of lack of money. According to the Tapas Majumder Committee report Rs.1,36,872 crore should be allotted in 10 years to provide primary education to every child, i.e. at least Rs.14,000 crore to be allotted every year. But this time only Rs.3,034 crore is allotted after a meagre addition of only Rs. 300 crore. With just a little increase in primary, secondary and higher education, the total allotment for education is only 2.77% of the budget. People's long-standing demand is to allot at least 10% for education. Even Kothari Commission suggested a minimum 6% allotment. Instead of allotting at least half of it the BJP government has declared to start 1 lakh 80 thousand new schools. But there is no allotment for it. The government has said that Panchayats will look for school buildings, collect resources from people to run them and will employ teachers for a temporary period. People do not know what is the whole thing — mockery or hypocrisy.

In the name of reducing government expenditure they are depriving the rural sector. In agriculture, last year's Rs.3,864 crore allotment has been reduced to Rs.3,736 crore, in rural development Rs.8,182 crore came down to Rs.7,843 crore, in irrigation Rs.374 crore came down to Rs.348 crore.

A substantial part of government expenditure is interest on loan. Last year Rs.75,000 crore was paid as interest, this year another Rs.10,000 crore will add to it. Bourgeois government and bourgeois press always raise a hue and cry on question of subsidy in food and fertilizer. But they are unperturbed while allowing tax holiday to the industrialists for 10 to 15 years. What is it other than subsidy to the rich? No one can guess how much it will amount to.

This year subsidy for food and fertilizer is Rs.22,400 crore. That means for 98 crore people subsidy is just half of the military budget. Besides, almost the entire subsidy in fertilizer is usurped by the kulaks. The ruling parties always strive to cut these subsidies hurting the poor and lower middle class strata, while they do practically nothing to minimise government loan and burden of interest payment. This demonstrates to which class the present central government belong. In the name of withdrawing subsidy they are hiking prices of rice, wheat, sugar in PDS, while shouting slogans of 'swadeshi' reducing prices of foreign liquor which

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KOSOVO CRISIS

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accords in Bulgaria and Macedonia. A month after he went to Albania where he called Tirana the capital of Kosovo, we already find the US imperialists in Albania to negotiate NATO rights. And a few months after the death of OZAL, in early 1993 the first US troops are already stationed in Macedonia.⁹ Hence not only is the tussle between the imperialists going on constantly but that Germany may instigate the Kosovo Albanians to create instability in the region and to further weaken Yugoslavia, or Serbia, its old enemy, is quite plausible. The US imperialists imperialists on their part, have grabbed the opportunity to carry out their heinous designs, but are opposed to complete independence of Kosovo, because it would provoke unrest in the neighbouring countries with their Albanian ethnic minorities.

The KLA is a force clearly funded, fostered and armed by the imperialists themselves. Its two headquarters are outside Kosovo: one is in Geneva, Switzerland, with the self-proclaimed government of Kosova. That is reportedly funded by the CIA, according to May 26 *Washington Post*. The other headquarter is in Germany, where we find the bureau of Albanese Kosovar Government in Exile, in Frankfurt and Stuttgart. The 6 June *New York Times* 1998 reported that KLA forcere entering Kosovo through Albania and that most of them come from Germany where they were born and that most speak German not Albanian.¹¹ Journalists of *New York Times* and *Solidaire* (Belgium) who had traveled with KLA and closely observed things, commented on the abundance of latest electronic equipment and sophisticated weapons among them. Some of the latter were German makes not available in the open market but only through official channels.¹² What is even more striking for a Liberation Army as the KLA calls itself, is the absence of any definitive ideology, the absence even of a political manifesto, which are indispensable for a true liberation army. Equally strange is it that a liberation army should call on the imperialists to militarily intervene and occupy their country.

All of this clearly demonstrates that not only the USA but Germany is at the root or at least deeply involved in the Kosovo problem. For each

wants to still further weaken Yugoslavia. In the October 'peace' agreement into which US envoy Holbrooke, under threat of NATO military attacks on Yugoslavia had pressurized the Yugoslavian President, Slobodan Milosevic, the latter conceded autonomy to Kosovo and recalled Serbian troops to their barracks while USA got its first entry into Yugoslavia itself, through a 2000 strong international monitoring force, headed by an American whose role seems to be as notorious as that of Richard Butler in case of UNSCOM inspection team in Iraq. Hence the US imperialists had created the ground for further interference. Now what they have demanded at the Rambouillet peace talks is nothing less than military occupation of Yugoslavia of about 30000 troops.

But whichever imperialist power supports what is less important than the fact that imperialist brazen intervention under threats of NATO reprisals, and the huge military build up in the area constitutes a grave threat not only to Yugoslavian people but the entire region. It is an attack on people's right. And the appetite of the imperialists is insatiable. The Balkan military occupation by NATO is only the beginning. If not successfully resisted by all the freedom loving people unitedly of all nationalities and ethnic groups, much worse is in store. Whatever genuine grievances the different nationalities living in a given territory have, they must fight unitedly with working people to resolve their problems on the basis of proletarian internationalism and fight against imperialist intervention. Today capitalism cannot solve any people's problem, rather it will plunge it deeper and deeper into it. Everywhere the anti-imperialist forces should unite and fight the heinous designs of imperialism.

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Convention against atrocities on minorities

The Bangalore District Committees of AIDS, AIMSS and AIDYO jointly organised a convention against growing atrocities on minorities on 27.2.99 at Mithik Society, Bangalore. Hundreds of students, women, youth participated in the convention. Different speakers at the 'Convention against atrocities on minorities' organised today came down heavily on the central BJP government and the Sangh Parivar for their vituperative campaign and violent attacks on religious minorities.

Dr. Hemalatha Mahishi, renowned advocate and writer, expressed deep agony that the days of Nazism were coming back again. She emphasized that a civilised society should never accept it.

Sri Russel Chandra, President, Christian Union of India, underlined the strong pluralistic nature of India where virtues of tolerance and communal harmony reigned supreme.

Sri Ramzan Darga, Assistant Editor of Kannada weekly 'Sudha', emphasized that in

every communal holocaust it was women who were worst victims. He also remarked that caste oppression all through pushed people from Hindu religion to other religions.

Dr. G. Ramakrishna renowned leader of teachers movement decried the inferiority complex among the members of Sangh Parivar which gets expression through violent acts. He drew the attention of the audience to the slanderous campaign of Sangh Parivar and exposed their false claims of patriotism.

Dr B R Manjunath, State President of AIDYO declared that though the necessity to fight BJP was urgent and paramount, one should never be under the illusion that replacing BJP by another government will end communalism. Only people's united movement on burning issues is the antidote to communalism.

A resolution condemning attacks on journalists by BJP in Shimoga was unanimously adopted.

Comrade Stalin Memorial Meeting in Calcutta

In Calcutta a large meeting to commemorate the 46th death anniversary of great Comrade Stalin was held at the University Institute Hall under the auspices of the WB State Committee of the party. It was presided over by Comrade. Manik Mukherjee, member of the State Secretariat and addressed by Comrade. Provas Ghosh, CC member and Secretary of WB State Committee of the party.

In his long illuminating speech Comrade Provas Ghosh dwelt at length on different aspects of Stalin's life to fight out the motivated campaign against the great leader by the reactionary forces of the world in order to denigrate the nobility of Marxism-Leninism and teachings of Comrade Stalin. He reminded how on 5th of March 1953, thousands of people took to the streets of Calcutta spontaneously on the news of the death of the great leader, to make it a largest ever procession in the city. He observed how Comrade Stalin, after the demise of Lenin, staved off all kinds of conspiracies against socialism, the first socialist state and the Communist Party, hatched by Zinoviev, Kamenov and Trotsky, isolated them and defeated them through an intense ideological struggle involving the masses. He recalled the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh that failure of applying the teachings of Lenin in their life was the reason behind the downfall of the personalities like Trotsky, Zinoviev and others.

On the issue of 'great purge' Comrade Provas Ghosh observed that it should be viewed on the historical background. When Germany was preparing for the war a conspiracy of dismembering the USSR and murdering Stalin was afoot. Later on when the Soviet Union under the leadership of Stalin defeated fascist Germany, many in the world among whom the majority were opposed to Marxism and socialism, had to admit that without that 'great purge' it would not have been possible for the USSR to crush the deadly military might of Germany and to save the world from fascist menace, though in the Eighteenth Party Congress he admitted serious mistakes committed during 'purging' which, according to him, were much higher than it was expected.

Comrade Provas Ghosh observed with great respect that Stalin had no individual life. One of his biographers admitted that he failed to trace anything personal in the life of Stalin. Referring to the report of the 19th Party Congress of the CPSU Comrade Ghosh opined how Stalin was gearing up for a rectification and elevation programme for the party which was neglected during the war and which he could not accomplish due to his demise within a short period after the Congress. Consequence of this is now clear to us.

Comrade Manik Mukherjee in his Presidential address also underlined different aspects of the great personality.

The meeting started with the *Internationale* presented by DYO music squad.

School of Politics organised by AIKKMS

Deep seated emotion and fighting tenacity marked the School of Politics organised by the AIKKMS (WB) on the ground of Mehanati Sangha (Labour Club) at Bakultala in the district of South 24 Parganas from 15th to 17th February. In respect to its departed Secretary of WB State Committee the camp area was named Martyr Comrade Amir Ali Halder Nagar.

The AIKKMS formed under the direct guidance of the great leader of the proletariat, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, is the first genuine organisation of the agricultural labourers. In numerous districts this organisation conducted militant movements for the cause of the poor peasants and agricultural labourers, demanding higher wage, proper share of the crop, seizure of benam land, etc. It has a glorious record of participation in countless democratic movements. So they mustered strong in the school of politics, 1572 representatives of poor peasants and agricultural labourers from 16 districts.

The programme started with the song on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. In the inaugural speech, Comrade Pratiba Mukherjee, the President of the organisation, dwelt on various aspects of the

struggling life of Martyr Comrade Amir Ali Halder. The programme was attended by the vice-presidents comrades Yakub Pailan, Debaprasad Sarkar and other leaders of the organisation like Comrades Sk. Khoda Box, Renupada Halder, Madan Tanti, Prabodh Purkait. A few State Committee members of the SUCI like Comrades Soumen Basu, Sadananda Bagal, Bidhan Chatterjee and Prasanta Ghatak were also present.

The three-day school was conducted by Comrade Provash Ghosh, member of Central Committee and Secretary of the State Committee of the SUCI. He discussed on Dialectical Materialism, the history of the movements of the Santals and the tribes, role of religion, politics of the major parties in Indian scenario and finally organisational questions. In the evening on 17th February the school came to a close with the *Internationale*.

"I have never heard so lively and penetrating a political discussion during my 35 year life in joint CPI and CPI(M)" — commented a participant, Debendranath Barman, ex-member Rajya Sabha and ex-MLA from Coochbehar. He joined the SUCI only in 1997.

Budget of Deception and Price Rise

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nakedly shows the BJP's class character and also their closeness with decadent western culture.

Panchayati Raj

To show this budget as pro-people and democratic the BJP government, like the previous governments, has taken some so-called programmes on food, health, education and employment. It was the Congress who raised the slogan of Panchayati Raj. In the present budget panchayats are given responsibilities of a good number of programmes and the Finance Minister has named this year (1999-2000) "year of the Gramsabha". By this, corruption will pervade the people at grassroots level and panchayats, as part of governmental bureaucratic administration, will nip in the bud all potential mass movement in the interest of exploiting class which has been best vindicated in West Bengal during the last twenty years. Now the BJP is acting on the lesson throughout the country. It is a grave danger for mass movement.

Budget of Price Rise

This budget will cause severe price rise. Whatever arithmetical jugglery they have committed to show reduced deficit, in reality deficit will go up continuously, government loan and interest liability will increase, administrative expenditure will rise leading to further flow of money in market, prices will rise. Also, there is the indication in the budget of further devaluation of money to avoid recession in export business. Above it, there is tax burden, diesel price hike, railway freight increase which will cause further price rise, further burdening the already overburdened people. Also, due to second phase liberalisation causing gradual abolition of government control over export of agricultural products, more foodgrains will be exported, prices of foodgrains will further soar, Food crisis will become acute.

On the whole, it is to be understood that politics behind this budget is the politics of market economy and globalisation-liberalisation in the interest of Indian monopoly and the ruling bourgeoisie and the people are not only to take guard against this anti-people budget but must come forward to wage protracted battle against the new economic policy as a whole.

Women demonstrates before Raj Bhavan at Patna Violating Prohibitory Order

On the august occasion of the International day for women, the Bihar State unit of AIMSS took out a well decorated procession on 8th March last from Gandhi Maidan and reached the Gate of the old secretariat violating 144 Cr. P.C. to submit a memorandum to the Governor. The processionists demanded among others abolition of dowry system, effective measures to stop female foeticide, spread of education among women, equal pay for equal job, stringent measures for the guilty of the massacre of dalit people particularly women and children in Jehanabad, etc.

As the procession marched forward violating the prohibitory order, the police and administration seemed to be at a loss what to do. However, within a short period, a huge contingent of police and Rapid Action Force (RAF) reached there along with their rifles, tear gas, gum and water cannons and began to push back the demonstrators. Naturally a scuffle ensued. But the women were not ready to retreat an inch. Under the leadership of comrades Sarala Mahato, Sadhana Kumari, Bibha Singh and Lily Das they gheraoed the police. Police was of opinion that the demonstrators must at first go back to R. Block crossing, i.e. outside the prohibited area and then only then they would talk about deputation. But the demonstrators sat on the road blocking the vehicles on one of the busiest routes and held a meeting there. Comrades Sarala Mahato, Bibha Singh, Sadhana Kumari, Lily Das, Kanchan, Baby Das, Alpana, Nilam, Nirmla Sharma addressed the rally.

Viewing this resolute attitude of the

demonstrators, police at last had to bow down. They brought a first class Magistrate there on the road to accept the memorandum as the Governor was at his residence.

The battle was won. Comrade Sarala Mahato, President, AIMSS Bihar State Unit congratulated all for their valiant resistance and Comrade Sadhana Kumari, Secretary read out the written message of the AIMSS General Secretary Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee who for her sudden illness could not attend the rally. In her message she appealed to the women to be united and build up a mighty movement against the exploitation of the present capitalist system and the male-dominated society as a part of the greater movement for the people's emancipation.



Leaders of the Bihar unit of AIKKMS talking to Police personnel

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : NIHAR MUKHERJEE