

Game Played By India In Sri Lanka Elections

Proletarian Era

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Admst continuing state of Emergency rule since May, 1983 and curfew imposed in several parts of Sri Lanka, Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa of the ruling United National Party (UNP) has been elected President defeating his closest rival Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) by 2.8 lakh votes against a backdrop of unprecedented violence and intimidation by the Janata Vimukti Peramuna (JVP). Barring the highest turnout of 80 per cent in the plantation sector, turnout of voters touched a record low, compared to normal poll of voting in the Island state, in the southern, eastern and northern provinces. Not only in the traditional strongholds of SLFP, even in the ancestral home constituency of Bolangoda of Mrs. Bandaranaike Mr. Premadasa won by substantial margins. Surprisingly, the victorious President-elect Mr. Premadasa who came to the fore through his anti-India-Sri Lanka-Accord stance but significantly in March 1988 last mended fences with Rajiv Government during his month-long pilgrimage to India, had to promise in the election manifesto that he would "strive determinedly for the de-merger of the Northern and Eastern Provinces with the consent of the people of Eastern Province", and would seek "an immediate or phased withdrawal of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force", for obvious reason. Thanks to ghostly behaviour of voting fall-out he came out as top scorer in Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts in the Eastern province, where the Sinhalese constituting a third of the population, virtually boycotted the 'Council' election a month ago. Meanwhile, Mrs. Bandaranaike has come out in the open with grave allegations of large-scale rigging, and threatened to challenge the validity of the President-elect in the court of law.

For gauging the dimension of rigging operations perpetrated we need not have to wait for news to percolate in the news media. If we can have a look into the just concluded results of the North-Eastern Council election we can have readily a modicum of electoral process now in operation in the island state. As an outcome of this electoral process, Mr. Annamalai Vardaraja Perumal of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) has been seated as Chief Minister along with his four-member Council of Ministers in the newly-formed north-eastern Tamil provinces. EPRLF has "won" 41 seats in the 71-member North-Eastern Provincial Council. Press report goes on record as saying that in the entire northern province comprising the districts of Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya and Mannar, elections could not be held obviously because of the writ running large of the LTTE. Out of 41 seats, 23 was won by the

EPRLF by arrangement with the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) while 13 seats were "gifted" to Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front (ENDLF) as a result of last minute decision to back out from the "uncontested elections". Needless to say, the EPRLF, ENDLF and another faction led by TELO formed the axis of "three stars", propped up by the IPKF to hunt down the LTTE. In the eastern province, the elections were held in a manner conspicuously debarring the people to know whom they are to vote for. It has further come to light that efforts were on, long after closing date of filing nominations, the Research and Analytical Wing (RAW) persuaded Sri Lankan Tamil militant groups submit their nominations for the Provincial Council toeing the Indian line. Then again, in Trincomalee and Amparai districts where the Sinhalese constitute about a third of the population, the Sinhalese virtually boycotted the elections.

Even those few who filed their nominations in Trincomalee was rejected for no fault of theirs. Instances of gross manipulation by the IPKF-Administration combine are galore and we prefer not to consume any more space citing instances from the press to show the wanton role played by the IPKF to clinch the election results in favour of their propped up 'combine'. The role played by the IPKF in the outcome of the elections in the North-Eastern Council and the image of it in the eyes of the majority of the Tamil people can well be understood from the statement released by the LTTE. Not only it accused the IPKF of a disinformation campaign regarding the elections, but also described the EPRLF and the ENDLF as "agents and mercenaries of India and are appointed members of the North-Eastern Council can only be described as traitors..."

Furthermore, Presidential elections held under the state of Emergency rule is unprecedented in the history of bourgeois Parliamentary elections. Even in the theocratic state of Pakistan ruled by military junta, the just concluded elections were held after withdrawal of Emergency. Then again, the Opposition parties in Sri Lanka demanded holding of both the Presidential and Parliamentary elections under the aegis of a caretaker government after dissolving the Parliament. But none of the demands was conceded throwing to the winds whatever vestiges of bourgeois democratic norms and principles were there. What all these portend? Is it not amusing to see that Mr. Rajiv Gandhi the Chief Operator of the Indian State, claimed to be the biggest democracy and champion of it, under whose behest everything in Sri Lanka moves through the apron-string of Indo-Sri Lanka Accord, could not help

(Contd. on page 2)

Make S U C I Candidates Victorious In T. N. Elections

The Tamilnadu State Committee of the Socialist Unity Centre of India, in its emergency meeting on 18th December last issued the following statement to the press.

In order to divert the attention of the people from the sending of IPKF to Sri Lanka which, in reality, was a step to further the imperialist design of the ruling bourgeois class, the Congress(I) had planned and created pandemonium in the last Assembly to dislodge the democratically elected government and to take governmental power in its hands through and in the name of presidential rule in Tamil Nadu. At that time itself the State Committee had exposed and condemned the Congress(I)'s fascist design to cover up the Indian bourgeoisie's imperialist game in Sri Lanka and to take back, at any cost, the governmental power it had lost 20 years back.

Now using the rifts and differences among the different political parties in the State, and by misusing president's rule the Congress(I) is attempting to improve its position and make a comeback even, if need be, through the back door. Apprehending this earlier, we had appealed to all Left, democratic and opposition parties to unite on a common platform of movement against the fascist moves of the Congress(I) Central Government and also appealed to the common people to remain vigilant. The past one year's developments have only confirmed our study but we are constrained to note that no one has taken the initiative for such a move so far. It is, no doubt, late but not too late.

We appeal to all the Left, democratic and Op-

position parties and forces to unite on a common platform with a minimum common agreed programme and code of conduct to fight against the Congress(I) and its fascist designs and ensure its defeat in the coming Assembly elections in order to restore, preserve and extend the democratic rights of the people and develop democratic mass movements on all legitimate demands of all sections of toiling people.

The State Committee also in its two-day session held on 17th and 18th December, '88 decided to field candidates in four seats in the ensuing Assembly elections and urged upon the democratic and well-meaning people to make the SUCI candidates victorious.

The following is the names of constituencies and candidates:

Constituency	Candidate
1. Nilakottai (SC) of Anna District.	Com. V. Kanagaraj
2. Egmore (SC) of Madras city.	Com. S. Sambath
3. Pollachi of Coimbatore District.	Com. P. Muruganandam
4. Villupuram of South Arcot District.	Com. Anavarathan

Rigging and Terror Played Havoc in

(Contd. from page 1)

Mr. Jayewardene in reversal of these out and out undemocratic and autocratic acts and deeds of the President! Instead, he allowed butchery of parliamentary democracy there. The conclusion is pure and simple: to anyhow ensure victory of UNP candidate as President with its existing two-third majority in the Parliament not jeopardized in any way. Even then, that a greater number of voters out of confusion might have voted in favour of Mr. Premadasa, can be safely argued from the voting pattern. They might have mistaken that Mrs. Bandaranaike's victory was likely to run the risk of suffering from the peculiar neceties of Sri Lankan Parliamentary Rules and procedures resulting in further stalemate and crisis in the country. Yet there is not a slightest shade of doubt in the fact that the abnormal situation in which the elections were held largely influenced the poll result.

Now that the North-Eastern Council has been formed followed by Presidential election, has the so-called peace, as claimed by the IPKF, been restored or still elusive today? As we know, we were told, the main thrust of the IPKF was to establish peace in the Tamil dominated provinces and nothing else. We have earlier dwelt on the issue how the Indian Government exploiting the deep emotions of the Tamil population in particular and the people in general resulting from savage attacks on the Tamil minority people in Sri Lanka intervened in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka in the name of solving the ethnic problem of the Tamil people behind the cloak of restoration of enduring peace by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF). We were also made to believe that the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord was the outcome of this objective of the India Government.

The Tamil people, too, in their turn believed and expected that the India Government would genuinely stand by their side to translate their hopes and aspirations. Accordingly, India Government was so long providing all support, assistance and encouragement to the Tamil militants and even allowing them to use the Indian territory as their base. Wonder of wonders, after signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord, India now not only agrees to discontinue its support, but also comes to a joint naval defence in the Palk Strait to guard against terrorist infiltrations and activities. The Tamils also know well from the experience that MGR who gave them rupees four crore cash-help subsequently did not hesitate to seal their office and forfeit weapons at the bidding of the Rajiv Government to bring them to the knees. After signing of Accord the LTTE leadership was left in no shade of doubt as to foresee what the role of the IPKF vis-a-vis the 'Accord' would be in Sri Lanka and to what it professes to them. Through their day-to-day experience in life the bulk of the Tamil people have now realised the betrayal thrust upon them and gradually they all have begun opposing the Accord resulting in resistance to IPKF operation in the island state. So, after signing of the Accord, the task and responsibility of hunting and exterminating the so-called Tamil militants devolved on the IPKF. Mr. Jayewardene is surely thankful to Mr. Rajiv Gandhi for perpetrating his own design of destroying the bases of Tamil radicals unabated by the IPKF. Besides, he seized the opportunity to continue to extend the state of Emergency rule indefinitely citing the India Government's act as a plausible plea, not to speak of further encouragement to Sinhalese jingoism!

Now by the token of their claim, if the peace actually dawned on the Tamil dominated provinces why was it necessary to arrange the swearing-in ceremony in Colombo by the President himself instead of the Governor General Seneviratne. It is reported that the retired General - turned - Governor, known before the general Tamil people, as the "butcher of Tamils", agreed to take on pains the job of Governor on condition that he would reside in Colombo and not in Trincomalee, the capital of the 'Council'. This lone incident is enough to explode the myth of restoration of peace and tranquillity in the provinces dominated by the Tamils. Incidentally, it may not be out of place to mention that though the Provincial Council functions from Trincomalee, Colombo is obdurately refusing to declare it as capital of the Tamil province. Even the merger of the two eastern and northern provinces is yet to be officially declared. Because the Accord stipulates the two provinces have to be officially the 'Council' of the northern and eastern provinces and not that of the united North-Eastern Province.

So, none of the twin pleas of settling the Tamil ethnic problems and along with it ensuring durable peace, cited by the India Government in support of their intervention in Sri Lanka, is no more there in the lips of the ruling high-ups. Even the bourgeois parliamentary Opposition parties expressed their doubt on the floor of the Indian Parliament, the other day, about the very purpose for which the IPKF was stationed there. If that be so, why appeal to the LTTE to accept the democratic process had been made on behalf of the India Government or why the officials of RAW conducted negotiations with the LTTE, if it was a fact that peace after all had dawned as a result of iso-

lation of the LTTE militants from the masses of the Tamil people in general, once for all? Some of the MPs went so far as to say that destruction of the LTTE by the IPKF will remove the protective shield of the Tamil people in general. In the face of such a stark reality, the Politburo of the CPI(M) came out in bold relief of the Rajiv Government with a statement that the results of the recent polls in the North-Eastern Provincial Council, "have brought great victory to the EPRLF and the 80 per cent polling in non-Sinhalese areas shows that in spite of the hostility and call for boycott by the LTTE, the people have started asserting themselves and are in support of the Accord. They want peace. This desire has to be further strengthened", hinting obviously by indefinite stationing of IPKF there! What an unabashed treachery indeed!

From what has been stated hereinbefore, briefly though, the gross intervention of the IPKF in provincial elections of the north-eastern region, in each and every stage of the electoral process, all the more reveals the portentous hegemonistic design of the ruling Indian bourgeoisie. It is not for nothing that the Indian armed forces have switched to action in Sri Lanka a year before, surely not for the defence and maintenance of integrity and sovereignty of the Indian land mass, but for serving the hegemonistic aspirations of the ruling bourgeoisie as a 'Mini Super Power' behind the cloak of restoration of normalcy and peace in Sri Lanka. It is estimated, nearly a lakh of Indian troops are stationed there to play the role of butchers in the island state. This grand design of the ruling capitalist class is further strengthened by blitzkrieg-despatch of Indian military to Maldives in the recent past to rescue President Gay-

was threatened with ouster by some Lankan militants hired for the purpose. It may be pointed the operation being over, Indian military has not been completely withdrawn. Instead, nearly 500 Indian troops are stationed there surely for maintenance and overseeing the law and order situation in the tiny Maldives.

Though in case of despatch of Indian troops to Maldives, 'SOS' from President Gayoom to Indian Government provided a technical basis for intervention, but in the case of Sri Lanka it was attempted to be justified fully the otherway round. To resume the thread of perspective in which Indian military intervention to another sovereign national state in Sri Lanka occurred — since we covered the whole gamut of the situation underlying the motive and objective of the Indian Government in our previous issues comprehensively, we need not digress over it—before signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord President Jayewardene foretasted what would happen to his island state and to him as well if he opposed Indian military intervention. Already he had the experience of the blatant violation of Sri Lankan airspace by the Indian Air Force. The Rajiv Gandhi Government which tramples all civilized norms and code of conduct at home and fleeces the people with heavy taxation and ruthless oppression and foments and fosters separatism, communalism, casteism to divide the Indian people asunder suddenly sprang up with humanitarian considerations for helping the Tamil people of Sri Lanka and mouthing that plea blatantly violating all the International canons, air dropped a few tonnes of food material for some millions of Tamil people. With some vintage anti-aircraft guns of the

(Contd. on page 3)

Premadasa's Victory

(Contd. from page 2)

World War-II model at his disposal, President Jawewardene was not so naive as to ignore the warning it professes and promptly succumbed to Indian pressure. Following the incident travelling through some twists and turns Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement was signed whereby India Government clinched stationing of Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka.

It is apparent that the role of the Rajiv government is imperial. It is not for safety of the President of Maldives or for the President of Sri Lanka, not to speak of the hapless Tamils of Sri Lanka, that the Indian armed forces intervened in these countries. The sole aim of these interventions was to serve the geopolitical interest of the Indian aspirant bourgeoisie and in doing so the cloak of 'Pancha Sheel' donned by the Rajiv Government had to be thrown asunder. The Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement speaks volume about the determination to exclude other imperialist powers in the region, and Rajiv Gandhi, the other day, claimed in the Parliament that SAARC countries would sort out their differences among themselves without outside interference, hinting thereby determination to establish Indian sphere of influence in this part of the world.

Thus the Indian bourgeois state's desired 'regional security doctrine' in the framework of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord has been endorsed by both the super powers—USA and USSR, though from different angularities. By endorsing India's regional overlordship the US may be trying to lure India from the Soviet Union as far as possible. In turn, they expect similar accommodation by India of the US strategic interests around the Indian Ocean and with the Gulf. So it is quite appa-

rent that this US attitude towards India is a part of their wider strategy in Asia. The USSR, on the other hand, alarmed at the ambivalent attitude of India just acquiesced in Indian role. Still then, no one should harbour any illusion about the design of its interventionist role in the neighbouring countries. It may not always be found necessary for India to wait for an invitation to intervene in the internal affairs of its neighbours. Espousing its own security risk posed, not only by the direct attacks on its land mass, but by the threat to the stability of a friendly government in this part of the world, it will have no difficulty in meddling into the internal affairs of its neighbouring countries. And if this devilish logic is stretched a bit further, Indian intervention will be justified for dislodging an unfriendly government and installing a 'friendly' government in any part of this region where India is the mini super power.

In the context of the imperialist character and aspiration of the Indian bourgeoisie, it would be worth noting the role of the CPI, more particularly the CPI(M), who have found this foreign policy of the Rajiv Government progressive. Like its erstwhile social-democratic counterparts in Europe headed by Karl Kautsky, the CPI(M) highly praised the role of the IPKF in Sri Lanka. Besides hailing the 'Indo-Sri Lanka Accord', the Central Committee of the CPI(M) stated: "The agreement that was recently signed between the Governments of India and Sri Lanka, if properly accepted by all and implemented, should settle the Tamil issue and restore the friendly relations between the people of the two countries." With regard to the role of the IPKF the views of the CPI(M) found its glaring expression in an article of Mr. Prakash Karat, a Central Committee mem-

ber of the Party. It says: "They have supported the IPKF role in so much as it is essential for implementing important provisions of the Accord. The IPKF entry has effectively stopped the Sri Lankan Army atrocities against innocent Tamil civilians. Further, it has checked the process of imperialist penetration in the war effort against the Tamil armed militants through the Israelis, mercenaries, etc." (Developments in Sri Lanka: Standpoint of the CPI(M) in *The Marxist*—Vol. 6 (April-June 1988 p. 55).

Does anyone find any difference between the stand of the CPI(M) and the Rajiv Govt. who is terming it 'historic' concealing the real import of the provisions of the Accord from the people? Is it not a downright pathetic attempt to rubberstamp the expansionist foreign policy of the India Government with the tacit understanding of the US imperialism, the number one enemy of mankind? As we have shown earlier in the pages of this Organ as also with the passage of time, the world people have, by now, known that the Accord was the product of understanding between the Indian and US Governments. The doctrine of 'regional security', under the garb of which Rajiv Government has been pursuing its imperialist, expansionist and interventionist policy in the subcontinent, has been given the seal of approval by the US imperialism in particular and other Western imperialist countries in general. How this glaring events escape the notice of the CPI and the CPI(M) leadership? Do they think that they are duty-bound to extend full-throated support to the foreign policy of the India Government even if that means supporting the imperialist intervention in the internal affairs of the neighbouring countries? Even the bourgeois

is Opposition parties, though for different reason, are demanding early pullout of troops from Sri Lanka in the face of major contenders for the Presidential campaign in Sri Lanka disapproving staying of the IPKF on the island any more, the CPI(M) leadership took satisfaction with an askance: "The bourgeois Opposition parties have not spelt out who will defend the Tamil masses if the IPKF withdraws and the theatre shifts to Sri Lankan Army operations, particularly in the mixed areas of the eastern province." (Ibid—p. 55) Would any one still now expect any use of reminding these leadership of the CPI(M) that proletarian internationalism is the very soul of Marxian ideology and it demands unshakable stand against national chauvinism in defence of unity, solidarity and world wide united movement of the working people for their emancipation? By their national chauvinistic stand and posture, the CPI(M) are proving themselves to be the potential obstacles in the path of development of militant peace movement against imperialism in general and hegemonistic aspiration of the Indian bourgeoisie in particular. By showering profuse praise on the Rajiv Government they are disarming the working people of the country in building up countrywide mighty peace movement against the class design of the bourgeoisie in extending the spheres of influence. And on the accentuation of this struggle encompassing all sections of democratic, patriotic and peace loving peoples, rests the possibility of resisting the Indian state from pursuing its aspirant design and motive. Let the rank and file members, supporters of these parties rid themselves of their leadership's subservient role to the bourgeoisie. And the sooner they realise it the better for them.

In the backdrop of these ominous developments symptomatic of

intense overall crisis of moribund capitalism and of the rulers defending it in both the countries, the responsibility of well-meaning and democratic and peace loving forces increases manifold. For, it is they who will have to fight in sustaining democratic norms and principles and foil the mischievous motive and object of the rulers. They cannot therefore do anything that helps the chauvinist and anti-people forces in both the countries to make the situation deteriorate further.

The Tamil people in Sri Lanka especially those of Jaffna peninsula should realise that they could not sacrifice their just struggle for autonomy, merger of North-Eastern provinces, civil rights, etc. and allow themselves to be a pawn at the hands of Rajiv Government representing the expansionist state policy of the Indian bourgeoisie as also of the sectarian parliamentary politics of AIADMK and AIDMK. In the interest of a secular democratic current to gain in strength in Sri Lanka, they are to restrain themselves from ultra-democratic demands and cowardly terrorist acts and deeds on the common Sinhalese.

Indian people should not suffer from any illusion as to the real character of the so-called progressive foreign policy of the Indian bourgeois state, standing fully exposed in the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord. Also, they cannot allow themselves to fall prey to a false sense of pride. Real pride, they must have, which demands of them to fight shoulder to shoulder along with the truly democratic and patriotic forces of all communities of both the countries in defence of democracy against fascist dictatorship and the danger of imperialism and expansionism to pave the way for restoration of normal relations. Such is the call of the hour history devolves upon them.

Darjeeling Accord, Election And After

A tripartite agreement was signed between the West Bengal Government, the GNLFF leader Subash Ghisingh and the Central Government on 25th July last, which stipulated the constitution of an elected council, the 'Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council', under the jurisdiction of the West Bengal state administration and comprising 13 different mouzas inhabited by Nepali speaking people of Kurseong, Kalimpong and Darjeeling sub-divisions of Darjeeling district. It would enjoy administrative powers in all spheres excepting police, judiciary, power (electricity), tea gardens and reserved forests which means that it was allowed somewhat wider powers than enjoyed by the Zilla Parishads. The election to this 42-member (with 14 government nominated members) council had been over by 13th December resulting in the GNLFF having bagged 26 and the CPI(M) 2 out of a total 28 seats. Therefore, the GNLFF does now control the council.

Whatever the means and methods that might have been used to win the elections, the 'Left Front' Government, the GNLFF and the Centre—i.e. all the three concerned parties, are now happy over the Accord and the election being over expressed hope that peace would return to the hills now. But now fresh spate of violence have again surfaced in the hills and unrest and unease are again spreading.

Whether this election could really facilitate the return of peace in the Darjeeling hills, it is necessary to consider very calmly and dispassionately the main issues involved from a pro-people outlook, keeping in view the historical background of the Gorkhaland problem. We had shown earlier on several occasions that the problems and hardships tormenting the lives of poor people of the hills were very much real and genuine, and the realisation of the legitimate demands and their redressal had been overdue. No comprehensive and planned measure was taken up since independence to exploit the indigenous natural resources and especially the vast forestry of the hills of Darjeeling for setting up industries in this region. Unemployment today has become acute all over India as a result of the

inherent crisis of the capitalist system. And in the hilly regions it is felt even more as the scope of employment is naturally limited there. Scope of education also is very limited for the common Nepalese as admission into the few aristocratic schools in Darjeeling region is beyond their reach. And coupled with these is the question of Constitutional recognition of the Nepali language—a legitimate demand over which the Central Congress(I) Government had been following a dilatory tactics for long. Although the CPI(M) extended their support to this very demand, even after they came to power in 1977 they also took no initiative to meet these pressing demands of the people of the hills. As a result, deep resentment and grievances were accumulating in the minds of the Nepali-speaking common people.

Added to this, they had to suffer the deep pain and humiliation. The inhuman incident of expulsion of the Nepali speaking people from Assam and Meghalaya had left a traumatic effect on them like that of an injured and deprived nationality sentiment. As a matter of fact, many such nationalities in India could not completely merge with the mainstream of Indian national-

ism as a result of the inherent weakness of the very nation-building process of India since the reformist oppositional or compromising section of the national bourgeoisie were at the helm of the independence movement. The task of democratization of all walks of life remains unaccomplished even after the achievement of political freedom. Consequently, the mentality of looking down upon the backward or minor nationalities by the economically and culturally advanced and major nationalities remained a fact of national life, while economic domination was also in the hands of the dominant nationalities. This prevailing atmosphere of neglect and contempt not only in social life but also at the administrative levels gave rise to, as a reaction to it, a kind of counter-narrow nationality mental complex even among the Nepali-speaking people. This deprived and humiliated mental complex of different communities, compounded with economic and various other crises of their life burst forth at different times in different parts of the country. The Assam problems, the Naga and Mizo problems in eastern India are cases in point. And the prevailing atmosphere of acute economic crisis and uncertainty have further aggravated these suppressed nationality feelings and sentiments which have now assumed alarming proportions almost in every corner of India and have become a perpetual source of separatist and secessionist movements. And in this regard it is rather the ruling Congress(I), the most trusted agent of the Indian capitalist class, which is conniving with and directly aiding and abetting the narrow regional, communal and separatist forces everywhere in order to create cleavage in

the unity and solidarity of the toiling masses and thereby safeguarding the moribund capitalist system from the threat of proletarian revolution.

Naturally, the Central Congress(I) government lost no time in backing up the GNLFF for the same reasons. The Congress(I) scheme was to instigate the separatist tendencies among the people for its own ends and thereby create within West Bengal a favourable base which could provide them a very convenient handle in dealing with their main parliamentary contender, the 'Left Front' government led by the CPI(M), at the opportune moments. Therefore they decided to drag on the Gorkhaland issue indefinitely to use it in their parliamentary battle with the CPI(M) to settle their score in West Bengal.

It is a well-known fact that at the initial stage of the Gorkhaland agitation, all the different organisations of the Gorkha people did not support the demand for a separate Gorkhaland raised by Subash Ghisingh. The legitimate demands of the common people of the hills were backed by different organisations but they did not extend their unqualified support to Mr. Subash Ghisingh's demand for a separate Gorkhaland. But regrettably, at that time, when a political solution of the Gorkhaland problem was easy to achieve, the 'Left Front' government and the CPI(M) leadership, took to the path of widespread police repression. But the need of the hour at that stage was to adopt a sympathetic and humanitarian attitude towards the burning problems of their life and to pacify the oppressed nationality sentiments of the deprived poor hill people. It may be mentioned that concrete suggestions were placed by our party at that initial period in the all-party meetings. We also suggested taking up special development projects as far as possible for the hill areas to be primarily

started by the State government within its own capacity and to build up simultaneously a united movement of all the Left and democratic parties of the State to compel the Centre to undertake measures for a comprehensive development of the region; secondly, to build up united movement against the Centre on the demand of Constitutional recognition of Nepali language which had for long remained a sensitive issue for the Nepali speaking Indian people and thus to attempt for a political solution to the Gorkhaland problem. Beside taking these measures it was necessary to make the common people understand through a patient and painstaking process that the solution of their life's problems did not lie in a separate Gorkhaland, just as creation of the separate states of Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland could not solve the problems of these people. Raising the slogan of separate statehood only a group of power-seekers and careerists have usurped the seats of government who have no concern for the real problems of the people. In this way the 'Left Front' Government could considerably succeed in mitigating the injured and aggrieved feelings of the Nepali-speaking Indian people and at the same time also could isolate Subash Ghisingh from the general masses. The CPI(M) had that organisational potential in the hills for performing these tasks. But they did not tread that path. Neither the Chief Minister nor the 'Left Front' Government did pay any heed to our proposal repeatedly placed in several all-Party meetings. Instead, the CPI(M) leadership from the very beginning viewed the entire issue as a mere 'law and order' problem and tried to bring the situation under control by applying administrative measures and police repression. Along with threats being given by no less a personage than the Chief Minister that "I will not tolerate showing

(Contd. on page 5)

SOLUTION OF PROBLEMS LIES ELSEWHERE

(Contd. from page 4)

red eyes and brandishing kukris"—largescale police repression and indiscriminate arrests went on throughout the hills. Many lives were lost in police firing. Naturally all sections of the hill people came out unitedly to protest against these repressive measures of the CPI(M) and this in fact, turned large numbers of the Gorkha people into the fold of Subash Ghisingh in support of a separate Gorkhaland.

In unleashing this reign of terror, the CPI (M) leadership used not only the police, but also their armed cadres. While carrying on this terror tactics in the hills, on the other, they frantically tried to appear as the true champions of the majority Bengali community of the state and rent the air with such slogans as "we are not letting Bengal to be partitioned", and "the Kanchenjunga stands witness to our sacrifice for the country", etc. By treading this dangerous course of wooing the Bengali voters of the plains by fanning up their 'Bengali' sentiments with these cheap slogans, the CPI(M) further alienated the Nepali-speaking populace from the people of the plains. On the other hand, the Congress (I)'s allout support to the separatist slogans and violent activities of the GNLFF made situations extremely complicated and dangerous. Mr. Subhas Ghisingh's regular contact with the central minister Mr. Buta Singh, his persistent refusal to negotiate with the West Bengal Government—all these glaringly exposed the clandestine relations of Mr. Ghisingh with the Congress(I). It was never Subash Ghisingh's aim to try to solve the problems of the people of the Darjeeling hills. Rather, his sole aim was to become a big shot, earn name and fame by capitalising on the grievances of the local people against exploitation and oppression.

It is painful to note that the price for this opportunist politics of Ghisingh had to be paid in terms of the lives and properties of so many CPI(M) workers and supporters! The exploited, oppressed, impoverished and neglected common people of the hills were only used as pawns in this brazen political game played between the Congress(I), the CPI(M) and Subhas Ghisingh. It was due to the wranglings between the two main parliamentary contenders viz. Congress(I) and CPI(M) and the role of Subash Ghisingh that the complicated situation in Darjeeling was prolonged for so long a period and it can be easily understood that mainly after these two major parties could strike a deal between themselves that the Darjeeling Accord could at last be concluded for good.

Before the Darjeeling Accord was signed, some interesting developments had taken place in the Indian political scenario. These were the scandals linked with Bofors and German Submarine deals and the Fairfax, etc., exposures of which had pushed the corrupt Rajiv Government pretty close to a perilous situation. A powerful wave of public indignation at this high-level corruption swept the country, and indeed there was a possibility of the Opposition parties building up a powerful united movement on this issue. Right at that moment, when the Left parties should have exerted all energies to forge a broadbased unity of all Opposition parties, when the prospects and also moves for it were very much there the CPI (M) leaders aborted this move by declaring that there is no alternative to Rajiv and they will have "no truck with the BJP". Although, as we have shown earlier, that it did not prevent them from reaching an understanding with the BJP when it suited them, as in the Haryana Assembly elec-

tions or as on the question of retaining their hold over the Calcutta Municipal Corporation. It was indeed this dubious role of the CPI(M) which virtually saved the corrupt Rajiv government.

The peculiar feature of parliamentary politics is that it is a politics of both collusion and contention between the contending parties depending on the exigency of the situation. The mutual relationship between the CPI(M) and the Congress(I) being of this nature, the above-mentioned incidents brought them even closer. Now the Central Government brought down pressure upon Subash Ghisingh to accept the terms and conditions of the proposed Darjeeling Accord. It was very difficult for Ghisingh to accept anything short of a separate Gorkhaland, after the strong hopes and aspirations he had himself roused in the minds of the common people of the hills, and yet it was no longer possible for him to carry on his fight against the 'Left Front' Government singlehanded, if deprived of the Central Congress (I)'s favour. Ultimately, therefore, the Central Government's pressure worked—and the Darjeeling Accord was signed. It is worth mentioning here that this Accord let alone achieving any demand of the Nepali-speaking people, the demand of (Constitutional) recognition of the Nepali language — which could be met without much difficulty—has not found any place in it. It is also to be noted in this connection that Subash Ghisingh never paid due importance to the most legitimate demand for recognition of the Nepali language. His earlier position was that recognition of the language would come automatically once the state of Gorkhaland was achieved; later he started talking of a separate Gokhali language and in sum, complicated the real issue of the Con-

stitutional recognition of the Nepali language.

Indeed, even before the Accord was finally signed, Subash Ghisingh's stand landed him in a difficult position. For, taking advantage of the political inexperience of the poor people of the hills and fully exploiting their deep-rooted grievances caused by the genuine problems of their life and the legitimate demands for their redressal, Subash Ghisingh misled them with the extremist slogan of a separate Gorkhaland. But these very people could now see after so much bloodshed and loss of life that GNLFF leadership was ready to compromise themselves just for an institution like the Hill Council. Naturally, anti-Ghisingh factions raising the old militant slogans reared their head and infighting and armed clashes between different groups followed. The situation came to such a pass at one time that Subash Ghisingh had to keep himself out of Darjeeling and his popularity among the hill people was on the wane. In this situation, when the Hill Council election was just round the corner, Ghisingh all of a sudden again raised the demand for a separate Gorkhaland in order to bring the hill people back to his fold. Even then, Ghisingh could not be sure of victory in the Hill Council elections. It is not that he thought his position could be shaken by the Congress(I) or the CPI(M) — because, the Congress(I) did not mean any contest and only put up a show by fielding some candidates to maintain its separate identity while by withdrawing their candidate against Subash Ghisingh, the CPI(M) also made it clear that they were not in for a real fight with the GNLFF. They would be content if they got the two seats they were contesting from their stronghold in Bijanbari.

Mr. Ghisingh's real problems were the intense

factional squabbles within his own party, and added to this was other political forces in the hills who were making things difficult for him by agitating against his compromising stand. To secure an absolute majority against these odds Subash Ghisingh let loose a reign of terror even before the electoral process had begun. Through physically terrorising their opponents and rigging the elections, the GNLFF ultimately came out victorious in an one-sided election. Of course, the Chief Minister Mr. Jyoti Basu and the Information Minister, Mr. Buddhadev Bhattacharjee claimed that the elections were peaceful and normal, thereby trying to prove that the Darjeeling Accord had been a success and that they had succeeded in bringing peace and harmony back to the hills. But immediately after the elections were over, the different anti-Ghisingh factions as well as the local Congress (I) leadership have complained of GNLFF terror and the CPI(M) district leader, Mr. B. Rai, too, has reported of wholesale rigging in many booths. It is true that outward clashes were comparatively less on the election day because in the prevailing atmosphere of terror, it almost became a game played by one side, but that is precisely the reason why free and fair exercise of franchise by the people could not take place in such a situation.

And even after election to the Hill Council have been over, armed clashes and deaths are occurring everyday. Because, as Subhas Ghisingh wants to maintain his hold over the masses while adopting a compromising stance by changing his earlier tactics of inciting extremist feelings and sentiments, he has got at the same time to use violence for keeping his rival groups at bay and maintain an apparent show of militancy. This is the reason why he is sometimes also raising demands which are far beyond the purview of the Accord.

(Contd. on page 8)

KAIGA NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Hegemonistic Design Behind Government Move

Since the time the Government of India planned to set up a nuclear power plant at Kaiga near Karwar in Karnataka, a controversy is raging over the issue with both the protagonists and antagonists taking diametrically opposite stands. The protagonists, mostly Governmental spokesmen, claim that nuclear power is the only source of power as other sources are inadequate, that there is no risk involved and India has the capability to run the reactors guaranteeing total safety, that there is no danger to the natural environs of Western Ghats as compensatory afforestation will be taken up and that this plant is very essential to get over the perpetual power crisis that is affecting industrialisation and hence employment potential.

The antagonists, though differing in stands, nevertheless, are one in raising the question of inevitable disastrous consequences to humanity and life as such on account of accidents against which no safety is a guarantee. They also raise the question of radiation hazards that would arise during operation of the reactors, release of coolant into water, waste disposal or during decommissioning of the plant. While a section of these are opposed to utilisation of nuclear power itself, yet others are opposed to the Kaiga plant in particular as it would affect the dense tropical rain forests of Karnataka.

We call upon all well meaning, progressive people in general and the scientists, journalists and those directly involved with the issue at hand in particular, to consider a few questions which we sincerely desire to bring to your attention connected with the Kaiga power plant. In view of the complicated nature of the problem it is our firm opinion that a dispassionate and unbiased study is very urgent to take stand from a pro-people approach. It is also our considered opinion that the Kaiga plant is not just a matter to be judged from technological aspects alone, rather deep going socio-economic - political factors are very much involved here which can be ignored only at the cost of a truly thorough going scientific analysis.

NUCLEAR POWER — AN INGENIOUS CREATION OF HUMAN CREATI- VITY

Before going into the merits or otherwise of both the extreme views, we like to firmly place that nuclear power is an ingenious creation of human intellect and civilisation. Nuclear power has conclusively established itself as an inexhaustible

source of power at a time when questions confronted humanity because of insufficiency of conventional sources like coal, oil, hydel and other energy sources. Man's ever-inexhaustible urge to command the forces of nature ultimately discovered this inexhaustible source of energy. There are no two opinions regarding this.

But the pertinent question raised is, how far this energy can be harnessed beneficially to mankind in view of the holocaust that would entail if ever accidents were to occur. History is replete with instances that man had to face these questions times without number with the march of progress of civilisation. Utility of electricity itself is a case in point. But again history reveals that ultimately it is man's will and determination that prevailed and man has emerged as the master of natural forces. Just as he had to resolve social demands time and again he also struggled to find solution to a safe working of newer and newer technological innovations. Therefore at this initial stage of harnessing nuclear power, we have no doubt that one day man would perfect himself in evolving such in-

novations that would give burial to all fears and apprehensions once for all. Any attempt to over-emphasise the ill consequences of accidents and underestimate man's indomitable courage and capability to prevent them for good, as the disastrous effect of generating anti-science fear psychosis that would ultimately affect the very progress of humanity and civilisation as such. We believe, all those who stand by science and progress to be one in abhorring this path that causes incalculable harm to the growth of scientific outlook itself.

HOW ESSENTIAL IS NUCLEAR POWER FOR PRESENT-DAY INDIA

However, one cannot but acknowledge the fact that many serious questions have cropped up in every well-meaning person regarding harnessing nuclear energy in present-day India which cannot be ignored. Is nuclear power indispensable for us? Have we exhausted all other sources or power generation? Is India presently having the technological expertise for safe operation of nuclear reactors? Whether the Indian administration is endowed with the pro-people culture to truly conduct the nuclear programme from a pro-people approach? If it is found on examination that nuclear power is not an indispensable necessity then what is the real motive behind the government's insistence for nuclear programme? What motive is there behind the Kaiga plant in particular?

Anyone well versed with the facts know full well that the Government exploited only 12 per cent out of a total potential of 75,000 MW of hydel power at 60 per cent load factor. This is besides 25 billion KWh of energy that would be produced annually through minor, minor-hydel, canal drops and other

possible low head developments. So far as harnessing thermal power—the other major source of power—is concerned, the enormous coal reserves to the tune of over 1,50,000 million tonnes would suffice to operate thermal power plants to meet the present and projected demand for over 4 centuries. It is clear that what to speak of exhausting the major sources of power, only a meagre portion of it has been exploited even in 4 decades after independence.

To top it all, even the existing power plants are not running to full capacity on account of faulty design or poor maintenance.

Secondly, the transmission and distribution losses are as high as 20 per cent in India—11 per cent over and above the world average of 9 per cent. Comparative figures for other countries are: Japan (6.4 per cent), USA (6.8 per cent), China (8.1 per cent) and Thailand (9.7 per cent). Could we not bring down this wastage which is one of the highest in the world?

If this be the situation for the country as a whole, what is the picture in Karnataka? As per S. G. Ramachandra Committee Recommendations, the projected power demand for Karnataka by 2000 A.D. is 8282 MW. Even though this has been criticised as exaggerated one by certain quarters, still taking it to be correct, can't this demand be met with conventional sources of power? Total hydel potential in Karnataka is 7750 MW. And there is only one single thermal power plant in Karnataka at Raichur. If the entire hydel potential is harnessed and few more thermal plants are set up, it can totally meet the demand.

It is quite clear therefore that neither for India as a whole nor for Karnataka, nuclear power is in-

dispensable. Rather, if any government that speaks of progress and welfare of people sincerely desires, then proper maintenance of existing power plants, drastic measures to bring down T & D losses and full utilisation of hydel and thermal potential can not only meet but exceed the quantum of nuclear power targeted for 10,000 MW by the turn of the century (This is only 10 per cent of the total projected demand by 2000 A.D.). Therefore we find no merit in the government's argument that nuclear power is meant for augmenting power shortage that is supposed to be the cause behind industrial sickness.

This brings us to the question, what is the government's real motive behind taking up the nuclear programme in general and Kaiga plant in particular? What is the cause behind industrial sickness?

INDIA HAS EMERGED AS A REGIONAL POWER

One cannot but note that Indian economy is engulfed in all-out crisis so much so that over 1 lakh 50,000 industries are closed. Innumerable others are either locked out or laying off workers. As a result, lakhs of workforce are thrown out of job. The crisis has resulted on account of ever-shrinking market—once again due to pauperisation of the masses as our system based as it is on profit motive, cannot but objectively help handful of masters of production and distribution to amass colossal wealth by exploiting the labour of toiling millions who get pauperised in the process. It is a vicious circle. This pauperisation entails shrinkage of market which in turn causes industrial sickness and aggravates market crisis. It is this profit-based capitalist productive system that is the cause of industrial sickness; and power shortage is only a plea meant to

(Contd. on page 7)

BARNALA'S HUMILIATION

Reflection of Religio-Political Malady

The way Mr. Surjit Singh Barnala, the ex-Chief Minister of Punjab, was forced to humiliate himself before the Akal Takht, accept all punishments meted out to him by the head priests, resign as the President of the Akali Dal (L), dissolve the Working Committee and the other cells of the party, insults the secular and democratic concepts. This incident shatters the view of some Opposition parties who once painted Mr Barnala as a secular and progressive leader of the state pointing towards his refusal to submit to the sermons of Darshan Singh Ragi & Co. when he was the Chief Minister. It was quite unthinkable to the democratic and secular minded people of the country who are fighting hard to segregate politics from religion that such an incident can occur in this late 20th Century.

The crux of the problem is underlying in the peculiar situation prevailing in Punjab. The striking feature of the state politics is that the Akali movement was born and bred on a religio-political basis and it wants to use religion for political ends. The Congress(I), on the other, in its bid to compete with it, used the same religious fanaticism through its agents among the Sikh community, sometimes with far more communal jingoism. These two parties have so far engaged themselves in a horse-race for whoever may indulge in more fanatic religio-political approaches in order to earn maximum electoral support for dominating in the state politics. The situation reached a climax when Bhindranwale was floated on surface by the Congress(I) with militant Sikh communal coating and was ultimately finished when he boomeranged on the Congress(I). In a process when Badal-Tohra combine settled down, colluded with Darshan Singh Ragi, the then acting Head Priest, it used the latter to mount pressure

on Mr Barnala to dissolve the Akali Dal (L) in its bid to dissolve all Akali factions and to form a new UAD. Mr. Barnala, in order to protect his government with the support of the Congress(I) and the other Opposition parties, refused to surrender to the Takht and the result was his excommunication. Since his excommunication, he had been suffering from political isolation and even faced the warning from his closest ally and the second man in his cabinet, Mr Balwant Singh, of ditching him and joining the rival faction, if he did not submit to the Takht praying for exoneration. When his political career was thus threatened to be ruined, the Badal-Tohra group which had already joined hands with Darshan Singh Ragi made the latter to use the highest position of the Sikh Panth to issue orders on Mr. Barnala to confess his 'guilt' before the Takht. Circumscribed by these incidents Mr Barnala had no alternative but to succumb to pressure and resort to self-abasement for getting a lease of fresh political life. Our previous stand that his earlier defiance to an Akal Takht directive was not actuated from his commitment to secular politics, but from his high ambitions for holding the centre-stage of power politics in the state, thus came true.

Punjab has thus been entangled with religio-political game engineered by both the Akali Dal and the Congress(I). When asked about the separation of politics from religion in an interview given during his period of punishment Mr Barnala said, "Who will do it? The Centre can't do it. They themselves start their own politics from religious places". Dwelling on the Congress (I)'s attempt to use one group of extremists against another he told, "If hear they are trying to appease another group of extremists, certainly not Rode" (*India Today*, Dec. 25-31, 1988). What-

ever may be these allegations and counter-allegations, quite understandably the action of Mr Barnala and the Akal Takht is the consequence of this heinous religio-political game. But the demands for which the Punjab movement had started like transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab-distribution of river waters and the solution of border problem have nothing to do with religion. They have been pushed into backstage and some extraneous issues have been entwined with the original demands; but these would not have polluted the main issue, if an earlier solution would have been found. But now the situation reached such a pass that until and unless the state is freed from these religio-political tentacles no political solution can be achieved.

Today the Congress (I) at the Centre is out to use the Punjab politics as a launching pad for state terrorism, and as their ultimate aim there may be three options like declaring emergency or avoiding election for letting its state unit to buy time for gaining strength or spreading a divisive tendency throughout the country. So the question now is whether the democratic minded people of the country will let this conspiratorial game continue. The question also is whether they should allow the unabated spread of fundamentalism, communalism and religious fanaticism in the country to continue. The responsibility of them is also to defeat the conspiracy of butchery of democracy hatched by the ruling party. We urge upon all democratic and Opposition forces to stand united and force the Central Congress(I) government to shun the path of narrow politics and to reach a political solution by fulfilling the just demands of the people belonging to the state. And this only can prevent the occurrence of any such black incident like that of Mr. Barnala in future.

NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

(Contd. from page 6)

deceive the populace to hide the truth from the people—lest they should side up for social justice against the ruling class.

It is also to be noted that though India is a backward country in relation to the advanced imperialist countries, yet it has already emerged as the biggest power among the backward countries—becoming the leader of NAM in general and in South Asia in particular. The Indian ruling class is using its advantageous position to bargain with the developed countries on the one hand and portraying itself as a saviour of the underdeveloped countries from neo-colonialist attacks of the imperialist powers to make inroad into their market, on the other. Rest of the countries among the NAM in general and South Asia in particular look to India also for help and aid. Therefore India's nuclear programme is a clear design of the Indian ruling class to establish itself as a nuclear power to impress and consolidate its position in the world so as to garb as much international market as possible to tide over the crisis it is enmeshed in.

We do not find any other motive behind India's nuclear programme. However, though Kaiga Plant is a part and parcel of this national policy, there appears to be some particular reasons, too. It is said that Kaiga plant is meant for supplying power to industries. But the industrial base of Karnataka being far off, would it not entail heavy T & D losses to supply power from Kaiga? Instead of establishing power plants near about the industrial base why Kaiga is chosen? The government cannot shirk off its responsibility to reply to people's genuine apprehensions that Kaiga plant is meant for power supply to the naval base coming up at Karwar. The 'SEABIRD' naval base, viewed by the Indian government as the major

military base in the west coast is only a part of its regional hegemonistic design. It is groomed to handle nuclear submarines. Is there any other reason to insist with the Kaiga Plant other than to meet the power needs of this major military base?

ON THE QUESTION OF CAPABILITY FOR SAFETY :

We now come to the major question concerning safety to humanity and life as such. The hazards that would result from any accident are pretty well known. The magnificent way in which the Soviet Union handled the Chernobyl accident is unique from not only the technological angularity but also from the pro-people approach of the administration. This had to be acknowledged by the world though initially much hue and cry was raised. As a result they could sweep away all speculations and brought down the magnitude of ill consequences to an unbelievable extent. In this background, what has been the performance of India even in case of other accidents? Thousands paid with their lives and still more suffered irreparable handicaps due to gas leak at Bhopal. This is only one glaring example. Examples are in plenty. Technological preparedness was found to be groping in the dark even in comparatively minor accident like train accident recently near Quilon in Kerala. It required over a week to remove the submerged bogies and dead bodies! Even if technological expertise is available, can an administration sunk deep in maladministration with neglect of duty and callous attitude pervading the entire setup from top to bottom, really take measures to help the victims of an accident?

If such is the gloomy picture of a social system rotting to the bone, its days being numbered, what safety can be expected from it in case of accidents? All facts

(Contd. on page 8)

DARJEELING ACCORD

(Contd. from page 5)

Although Subash Ghisingh has said that from now on development works will begin, the question remains how much can be done to alleviate the hardship of the hill people within the capacity of an institution like a municipality or district council? Such institutions of almost similar nature for the tribal people have been functioning in Tripura also, but to what effect? As it is beyond the powers of a hill council to introduce measures for economic development, industrialisation and expansion of educational opportunities in the hills, so also even with the creation of a separate Gorkha land it would have never been possible to solve the basic problems of the people. Because, it is the ruthless capitalist exploitation which is the root cause of all basic problems suffered not only by the people of the hills, but also by those of the plains. Only a united democratic movement of all the toiling people—of the hills as well as of the plains—in the present situation can bring some relief to them and in the course by establishing a real working class revolutionary leadership over the united movement they can finally proceed towards the real emancipation from all sorts of exploitation. It can be easily understood that of those candidates who have won in this election and are now members of the council, none has the clear political outlook and ideological conviction to build up a united democratic movement of the people. But let alone being a genuine fighter for people's cause, even whatever honest service one can render by utilising the limited powers of an autonomous institution cannot be rendered without this clear

political perspective and ideological commitment. This is the reason for the municipalities and panchayats throughout West Bengal having degenerated into veritable dens of corruption under the patronage of the ruling parties—either of the State or of the Centre. Indeed, what happened in Darjeeling tellingly proves how the parliamentary parties are deceiving the unorganised and politically less conscious masses of our country in their narrow political interest.

So, the moot question remains—what did the Nepali speaking common people ultimately achieve after three long years of bloodshed and militant struggles? It will have to be realised that if people fail to acquire the correct political outlook and find out the correct political leadership by applying reason critically, if they fail to build up, through trials and tribulations, the united struggles of wider sections of the toiling people, and if avoiding that difficult and painstaking struggle they choose the easier way and being carried away by spontaneous outbursts and fiery slogans of their sectarian leaders, they rally round a wrong political line, then despite colossal losses and tremendous sacrifice they will be deceived again and again in the tricky game of power-greedy politicians. So, now the hill council has come into existence out of Darjeeling Accord, it has, in fact, paved the way for absolute indifference and utter neglect to the real interests of the Nepali-speaking poor people of the hills.

NUCLEAR PLANT

(Contd. from page 7)

speak contrary to what the government spokesman wants the people to believe.

Regarding performance of the existing nuclear power plant, the less said the better. Whatever facts have trickled out of the stringently secret Atomic Energy Act, 1962, speak volumes for the poor performance—let alone the question as to why such secrecy at all when the government is very vocal in convincing the world that its nuclear programme is only for peace and peace alone.

Therefore not only regarding safety to life in all nuclear power installations in general but that of Kaiga in particular, the government's performance is quite dismal. In this background the apprehensions raised about grave danger posed to the densest tropical rain forests of Western Ghats in Karnataka whose other parts are perennially affected by drought are very much genuine.

So far as the cost factor is concerned, the government itself had to admit that the cost of nuclear power is much higher than that of hydel but less compared to thermal power. However the latter is disputed on the grounds that if proper pricing of heavy water, complete costing of spent fuel processing and correct allowance for decommissioning are taken into account, nuclear power cost would definitely supersede that of thermal even.

LESSONS AND TASKS BEFORE THE PEOPLE

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that nuclear power would one day help mankind as an

inexhaustible source of energy and hence all attempts to foster anti-science fear psychosis are to be given up in the interest of furthering people's cause and civilisation.

Presently in India, any nuclear programme is neither indispensable nor safe. It is a fraud on the people to go for nuclear power installations spending crores of people's money which is not only costlier but also carries great risks. If anything, the government's real motive is to establish itself as a mini-super power—economically, politically, militarily and technologically, only to serve the interests of a handful of the ruling class. The common people, the toiling millions of this land have nothing to do with it. Rather it goes against the interest of the suffering humanity—the crores who are suffering in dire poverty, destitution, unemployment, illiteracy, malnutrition and what not.

Can the people—particularly the enlightened ones, the scientists, journalists, students and youth, allow the government to proceed with its heinous design? Or will they raise their voice against this outrage? We appeal to each and everyone to take this write-up as an honest endeavour to contribute our mite to the ongoing debate among the people, to pave the path for building mighty tide of mass movement and to force the government to drop its nuclear programme in general and the Kaiga plant in particular.

—A Joint Appeal By AIDYO And AIDSO

(Circulated among the participants at the National Workshop on Nuclear Power Projects with Special reference to Kaiga held on December 10-11, 1988 at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore).

November Revolution

(We hereby publish the rest of the reports on the November Revolution Anniversary.)

CHANDIGARH

On the occasion of the 71st anniversary of the Great November Revolution the Chandigarh Local unit of the party organised a mass meeting on 13th November at Lajpat Rai Bhawan at Chandigarh. A book-stall having party literature and the classics was arranged at the venue of the meeting. The Bhawan was well-decorated with the quotations of the great leaders of the International Communist movement.

At the outset Komso-mol members presented the song on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. Comrade Jagadish Chander briefly reviewed the historical incidents which led to the success of the Great Revolution in Russia.

Comrade S. D. Gautam, in his main speech, elaborated the current political situation in the international arena in general and *glanost* and *perestroika* in particular. He said that how the revisionist leadership of the CPSU has again released massive campaign against Comrade Stalin under the guise of openness and reconstruction, hiding the historical role he played in the International Communist movement in general and the Soviet Russia in particular.

Com. Rattanlal presided over the meeting which concluded with the Internationale.

KERALA

The Kerala State Unit of SUCI observed the Great November Revolution in a befitting manner throughout the state with public meetings, collective readings, study programmes and literary campaign. Extensive walling and poster-ing were also done on this occasion.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF—COMRADE NIHAR MUKHERJEE

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