

DEFAMATION BILL—A Portent Of Grave Danger

A Government that has lost its credibility, being unable to dispel public suspicion and mistrust about the honesty and integrity of its principal operators in the highest echelon in the administration has come out with a counter measure—it has rushed through the Lok Sabha a Bill, "Defamation Bill, 1988" to intimidate the Press into silence. A plea is needed even for a criminal to offer a so-called justification of his crime. Here too, it has not been lacking. A Government that stands indicted of being run by swindlers of public money or protectors of such swindlers as revealed in the scandals published in the Press in the recent past, a Government that is mortally afraid of an independent enquiry or placing all the relevant records to the people, cannot fool the people by its show of concern for 'defamation'. There could be no "defamation" where no "famation" existed for the high-ups in the administration. People can well understand the underlying sinister motive of this Bill. It is to harass, brow-beat into submission and above all silence the voice of those who dissent.

In bourgeois democracy, the role of the Press was accorded an exalted position in the system of Check and Balance for its assigned role as the Sentinel of Public Conscience. It was thus regarded as the Fourth Estate. The Bill, when it enters the Statute Book, would tantamount to open attack on the freedom of the Press in particular and the fundamental democratic rights and values as a whole. It seeks to bring back the absolutist dictum of feudal rule: "The King can do no wrong". It is nothing but a fascist attack upon the people!

Before entering into the socio-politico-economic context, let us take into account the main thrust of this draconian Bill. It says, inter alia, "whoever by words, either spoken or intended to be read or by sign or visible representation, makes or publishes any imputation falsely alleging that any person has committed an offence, or has done or omitted to do any act which amounts to an offence, be punishable...etc." The only defence permissible under relevant section is: "...if it is established that the imputation made or published...is true and if it be for the public good that the imputation should be made or published and it is a question of fact as to whether it is for the public good." In this connection, one should not miss the legal implication of the word

'publication', which means any communication for a third person.

Mr. Chidambaram, the Union State Minister while piloting the Bill has stated, besides its comprehensive nature, the Bill has been framed so as to put in one piece the sections on defamation in the Indian Penal Code — 'almost' (emphasis added). One can hardly overlook that the word 'almost' covers up a drastic departure from the existing Indian Penal Code contrived to the detriment of the people. The departure is that an imputation which "exposes directly or indirectly, such person to hatred, contempt or ridicule or disparages or causes injury to such person in his trade, business, profession, ceiling or office" has also been made an offence. One shudders to think what a dangerous implication it connotes. Perhaps with a view to providing a relief character, one columnist commented sarcastically: "No more allegations against the Bachhan Brothers! Their business or profession would be affected!"

Now according to provision of the Bill, trials relating to defamation might be tried anywhere in India by a Session Judge. The Judge could try the case summarily but award the maximum punishment provided in it. Summary trials, it is worth mentioning, though traditionally held for petty offen-

ces only, could result, in terms of the Bill, in years of imprisonment thanks to Rajiv Government's 'enrichment' of legal terminology! The Session Judge could even hold the trial in camera and if any paper publishes "any matter in relation to any such trial", the accused could be jailed for two years and fined too. Worst of all, it puts the onus of proof that no defamation was caused upon the accused. This presumption that the Press and any printing materials at that, is always the defending party enhances the draconian character of this legislation. This also runs counter to the proviso of the Evidence Act in force in this land. In the eye of democratic process of law, an accused is considered innocent so long his guilt is not proved in the court of law. In case of the present Defamation Bill, this basic democratic process of law has been turned upside down. This means, the moment a trial appears against the alleged accused, he is deemed to be a guilty person. We have already witnessed in the ill-famed 'Disturbed Areas (Special Court) Act', similar change in the Evidence Act ostensibly made on the pretext of containing 'extremists' in Punjab. Our beloved General Secretary Comrade Nihar Mukherjee then drew pointed attention through letters to all the Left and democratic and Opposition parties to show its draconian character, which, he cautioned, if not resisted unitedly through country-wide democratic mass movements, in time would fraught with grave consequences in future. All our efforts then fell to their deaf ears.

Let us take an illustration, what the bill actually envisages. According to the Bill if an accused publisher fails to produce in self-defence "leading evidence" in support of what he published to be true and for the public good, he will be found guilty and con-

(Contd. on page 4)

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A step towards fascism —Comrade Nihar Mukherjee

Calcutta, 31st August '88 :

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI in the course of a statement in the press has said that :

The Defamation Bill is highly undemocratic and designed to cover up the misdeeds and corrupt activities of the ruling party and Rajiv Gandhi Government and aims at thwarting all voice of opposition. It is a serious blow on democracy, democratic movement and freedom of Press and a step further towards fascization of the country.

In another statement on 7.9.88 Comrade Nihar Mukherjee said, inter alia :

We call upon the Left, democratic and Opposition parties of the country and the people at large to come forward and build up united democratic mass movement against this draconian Bill.

'We express solidarity with and congratulate the journalists of our country for their bold stand of organising and making unprecedentedly successful the all-India newspaper's strike on 6th September '88 against the most draconian provisions of the Defamation Bill.'

GLORIOUS VICTORY BY SUKINDA MINERS

ARMED POLICE CRACKDOWN FOLLOWS

Braving all onslaughts, arrest, intimidation and conspiracy of the ruling Congress(I) and its State machinery, the miners of Sukinda valley came out victorious after their 60-day long arduous struggle with the support of the people of Sukinda Valley. The movement started when the management of Orissa Mining Corporation, a State Government undertakings tried to introduce modern machinery in mining threatening thousands of miners out of employment and stopping scope of further employment. The miners under the banner of Sukinda Upatyaka Mines Workers' Union, affiliated to the UTUC(Lenin Sarani), waged their just struggle against the mines authority and forced the management to come to the negotiating table resulting in the tripartite agreement signed on 5th September last. The management conceded that machines would not be introduced in the Kalarangi Mines and the closed mines would be opened shortly.

The movement which took a novel form of transport blockade of ores from the chrome zone, the largest in Asia, continued for two months uninterruptedly with the support of the broad masses in spite of heavy deployment of armed

police force, indiscriminate arrest of SUCI workers and trade union activists and institution of false cases against them.

The agreement was signed on 5th September but in Saruabil Misirlal Mines, where Sukinda (Contd. on page 8)

Indian Capitalist Economy Enmeshed in Internal and External Debt Trap

The Indian economy is now totally submerged in debts — both internal and external — from which there is very little chance of recovery and which can be described as the dangerous drift towards a total collapse. Even the bourgeois norms of fiscal balance has not only not been maintained, more or less, but violated to such an extent that it is bringing severe disaster on the very economic foundation of the country. The very large gap in balance of trade in international trade and commerce, unbridled foreign loan at a very high rate of interest, utter anti-people export-import policy to protect the interest of the monopolists—all these have a cumulative bearing on the income-expenditure balance-sheet of the Central Budget and the very economic structure itself.

In the fiscal year 1987-88 the net deficit in external trade ultimately stood at a record Rs. 8,616 crores and it instead of decreasing is increasing by leaps and bounds every year. The total amount of money imported in the form of commodity far exceeds the total amount of export and thereby creating a large imbalance for the country. Another factor adding to this imbalance is the direct accumulation of foreign currency and capital goods as loans through open commercial borrowings and 'suppliers-buyers credit' by the public and private banks, commercial and industrial organisations. As a result a greater portion of these are leading to deficit liability and thereby causing renewed thrust on the economy.

In the field of international trade the deficit jumped at the rate of 65 | 70 per cent in the past year and this year the condition of Indian economy in the post-Independence period has deteriorated most reflecting a very grave and sorry state of affairs of the national economy.

It is very difficult to know the Government's measure how to fill up this huge trade deficit because of the Government's reluctance to bring it to public notice. The Government also does not find it necessary to give a clear picture of the same and it has become a regular practice on its part. Whatever comes out of the official sources is the old accounts and thus it is difficult to make out the total amount in the absence of up to date account. So the problem remains the same. It appears that the 'invisible income' as a result of a portion of money earned by the Indian residents abroad deposited with the Government amounts

to the tune of Rs. 2500 crores to 3000 crores per year. Thus a sizeable portion of foreign currency is deposited in the Government exchequer. Apart from export earnings the total amount shown as deficit is in fact in the loan account. The Government has no other option than to take hard and soft loans from the international agencies to meet up this huge gap.

As a result of all this unprecedented slump and inflation the Indian economy is passing through a period of crisis and prices of every commodity are sky-rocketing from which there is no respite. In the context of the next Lok Sabha poll scheduled for '89 Central Congress(I) Government headed by Rajiv Gandhi is perturbed over the state of the economy after their defeat in a number of their traditional seats. Added to this factor is the consistent pressure from big business houses and industrialists who in order to survive the stiff inter-

national competition and earn maximum profit want the introduction of most modern and sophisticated technology. So raising the sly slogan of 'dynamic economy' and 'leap forward to the 21st century' the Rajiv Government has taken recourse to a liberal export and import policy and in receiving foreign loans to satisfy the demand of the capitalists as well as to survive the next election. The Government also in a bid to artificially control the price index has taken a liberal import policy. It is obvious that an unfavourable balance of trade because of much enhanced import means increase in foreign debt burden resulting thereby in further intensification of problems on the whole in spite of temporary ease.

In this connection it may be referred here that India is not the solitary example in respect of deficit financing. All the countries, big or small, developed or underdeveloped, are suffering this world wide shock of third intense general crisis of capitalism - imperialism. Not a single capitalist country is free from this inevitable malady — rather with the passage of time this is taking a worse turn. It all originated first in the highly developed Western capitalist countries. The preceding years of First and Second World Wars are the glaring example of this crisis. India as the part and parcel of crisis-ridden world capitalism is suffering a severe blow because of her weaker power of capital.

The powerful countries like the USA and the Britain are no exception. The US Federal Budget of last September and its deficit in international trade termed as 'Wall Street Crash' shook the whole capitalist world. Unlike other countries the highly in-

dustrialised countries like the USA and the Britain meet their huge trade gap by taking loans from their central banks in which many countries of the world deposit their money in order to take advantage of banking facilities of these Western countries. But this is nothing but a temporary solution with increased tendency of deficit financing. All these are factors behind the Trade Cycles in the capitalist world.

Of late a question is being repeatedly discussed in the Parliament whether the Indian economy is entangled in the 'debt trap' of foreign loans. Though the official explanation is the repetition of the conventional logic that the Government is quite aware of this and the 'debt service ratio' is quite satisfactory and under control and there is nothing to worry about it and though the central minister are asserting time and again that the country is on a firm stride towards self-reliance, the real picture is just the opposite of the tall claims of the Government. A deep probe into the matter will clearly reveal how the situation has reached a sorry pass.

The debt trap is putting a deadweight on the Indian economy from two sides. The Government takes loans from two sources the internal and external. Though the nature and character of the financial liability and political repercussion of these two are different, yet at the same time these two are closely inter-related. The Government borrows from the internal sources through floating of shares and bonds in the market in different nomenclature. It spends the money from the deposits in the LIC, Post Office, Nationalised Banks and other financial institutions controlled by the government. The Provi-

dent Fund is also not spared. The government spends much more than its income through loan. Apart from spending from its income and exchequer whatever the government spends is nothing but loan. Further more to meet the vast deficit the government is taking recourse to deficit financing by printing of currency notes amounting to thousands of crores of rupees and releasing these in the market in contravention of the norms of bourgeois economy. The government does it with a declaration to the Reserve Bank that it is taking the money as a short term loan to be paid before long. But it never repays and the Reserve Bank prints that amount of currency notes and fill up the gap and shows that the repayment has been done. Thus this becomes another deadweight on the government and it brings adverse reactions on the economy of the country.

Budget deficit is increasing by leaps and bounds every year. In the fiscal 1987-88 the deficit jumped to Rs. 8,497 crores from Rs. 7,776 crores in 1986-87 and in the current year it has reached to the tune of Rs. 9,842 crores. Apart from this the government has borrowed from the internal market a sum of Rs. 7000 crores as long term loans and from the RBI Rs. 7,484 crores as short term loan totalling 14,484 crores of rupees as internal loan in the current financial year. At the end of this year the total amount of old and new internal loans stands at Rs. 1,15000 crores. With this the total amount of interest is also increasing every year. Last year the government had to pay Rs. 10,650 crores and in the current year the amount reaches a figure of Rs. 14,100 crores over and above the external debt burden.

(Contd. on page 3)

DEBT TRAP

(Contd. from page 2)

The only redeeming feature in the internal debt is that the total amount the government repays as principal and as interest remains inside the country and the persons gained by this spend and reinvest and their increased income comes under the purview of various government taxes. The entire amount of foreign debt and its interest repayment goes outside the country leaving in its trail dangerous implications in international trade and commerce and various transaction. It also creates an uncertain political and economic situation where possible development plans suffer and the wealth of the country is reduced.

Loans abroad are received from the different foreign government sources and international financial institutions such as IMF, World Bank and its constituents, the International Development Association and Aid India Consortium etc., in general at a relatively low and soft interest rate.

These governments and organisations give loans imposing so many conditions which to a great extent cast its harmful influence on the fiscal policy of the debtor country. Though these are explicitly spelt out in the agreement, the people remain in the dark as the government never publishes it for public knowledge. It is also very much obvious that the powerful countries give loans with a view to dragging the debtor countries in favour of their foreign policy or international activities. As a result the debtor country is hard pressed both economically and politically by the foreign powers and it casts its reflection in its economic and political life in various ways.

Apart from the direct government debt there are different indus-

trial houses which take loan from abroad favoured by the government and these are never mentioned in the Budget. These industrial houses accumulate foreign capital under the 'Approval' or under the collaboration of the multinational, or foreign banks in the name of Suppliers and Buyers' Credit or Commercial Borrowings under the conditions that the debtor country has to buy the necessary machinery and spare parts from the particular multinational company or the country and even at an enhanced price at the then international exchange rate. The purchase of Japanese machineries by the Indian companies at a rate of two and a half times higher than the original price as a result of enhancement of value of yen in the last one and a half years is a glaring example.

It is very difficult rather next to impossible to assess the total amount of foreign loan not covered by the Budget. The total amount of loans incurred by the private industrial houses and banks are not mentioned separately. Similarly, it is also very difficult to account separately the total amount of money going abroad as loans and capital goods. The law of the land empowers the government to put curb and restriction on the import of foreign capital. But it has its snags and loopholes too. And taking advantage of it the private sector borrows from abroad and it has no account thereby creating a problem outside the purview of the Budget. So the government debt and the country's debt are of two different nature and creating different problems altogether. Though it is clearly spelt out in the Statute that if any public sector or private sector borrows from abroad outside the purview of the Budget, the entire responsibility to repay the loan lies with the debtor side solely, yet the burden of the debt

ultimately comes down heavily on the economy of the country. To maintain equilibrium in international trade the government ultimately spends from the public exchequer where income from export and 'invisible account' is deposited. Thus budget account of receipts and disbursements are repeatedly put into disorder. The money earmarked for developmental work is being diverted to other sectors and whatever little developmental programmes are undertaken are also drastically cut and ultimately the total impact of these debts are hitting hard the poor countrymen.

The finance department in its 1987-88 Annual Report made this admission that since the fiscal year 1980-81 the foreign debt are on the increase. The Economic Survey of 1987-88 revealed that the government had accumulated a loan of Rs. 1905 crores in 1984-85, Rs. 1700 crores in 1985-86, Rs. 1396 crores in 1986-87 and in the first 9 months of 1987-88 it ran into a foreign debt of Rs. 1354 crores which is higher by Rs. 814 crores in the corresponding period of the previous year. The Budget document on 31 March 1988 showed an up to date net foreign debt as Rs. 22,517.69 crores and proposed a debt figure of Rs. 25,539.34 crores in the fiscal year 1988-89. The Organisation of Economic Corporation and Development (OECD) revealed that the total foreign debt incurred by India till June 1987 stood at 8,330 billion dollars including 629 million dollars of Suppliers & Buyers Credit. Additional non-banking loan as a result of understanding between the private companies of the country and abroad stood at 1,829 billion dollars. The foreign trade borrowing reached a fabulous amount of 10,159 billion dollars. The total figure together goes up to a staggering 20,318 billion dollars worth Rs. 26,413 crores.

The Institute of International Finance, Washington, revealed the total foreign debt incurred by India up to March 1987 stood at 47 billion dollars valued at Rs. 61,100 crores. They also predicted that total foreign debt of India will be doubled in the next five years in the post-1987 period.

World Bank sources revealed a higher figure of India's foreign debts — 49,524 billion dollars at the end of 1986. Added to this is the long term loan of 4274 billion dollars, short term loan of 2303 billion dollars and unofficial loan of 3 billion dollars—all from the International Monetary Fund.

OECD sources revealed a loan of Rs. 475 million on bank and non-bank account upto 1986 and Economic Survey revealed a loan of Rs. 2750 crores as 'commercial borrowings' in 1987-88—these two reach two billions if counted in dollars. These figures if added to the loans from World Bank come up to 58,700 billion dollars or Rs. 76,300 crores. From the gradually increasing trends of loans in the first four months of 1987-88 and at the end of signing of various approvals and protocols it may be assumed that another 400 million dollars loan is imminent and if we add this figure to the extra loans sanctioned by the Aid India Consortium the total figure surpasses 66 billion mark by March 1988. The Economic Survey revealed that the total deposit (principal and interest) by the Non-Resident Indians stood at Rs. 4749.5 crores or 3.70 billion dollars. If we take these deposits by the Non-Resident Indians (NRI) and their withdrawal of interests in foreign currency at intervals, total amount of foreign debts approximately arrives at a figure of 70 billion dollars or Rs. 9100 crores.

We come to know from the accounts released by the World Bank how much of interest and

how many instalments are paid off every year by India. In the years 1988, 1989 and 1990 India have to repay 3,275, 3,461 and 3,755 billion dollars respectively. In the year under review as per official revelation our country will have to pay off as interest and principal by instalment a figure of Rs. 2641.31 crores. There is a serious anomaly between the figures shown by the World Bank and the Indian government which has shown a lesser amount of 1615.69 crores in Indian money. It is because of the fact that the way different loans from different foreign agencies specially the commercial borrowings have been received by this country, it is almost impossible to make out the real figure. The Budget account has not mentioned it. Hence this anomaly.

Apart from this the Saudi Fund for Development has pledged a loan of 769.2 million Saudi Riyal, Kuwaiti Fund 45.3 million Kuwaiti dollars and Abu Dhabi Fund Rs. 44 crores in different plans. West Germany and Japan have pledged to sanction Rs. 538 crores and 12 crores yen respectively. It is a fact that whenever our ministers come back from their foreign trip they come back with a bagful of 'debt pledge' and this going on unabated as if there is 'Debt Rush' for our ministers like the proverbial 'Gold Rush' on American soil.

The rate of foreign debt in 1980 was 1.6 per cent and it made a successful high jump to reach at 22.6 per cent in just 6 years i.e. in 1986-87 and it is on the jumping spree. And keeping pace with the trend of foreign debt the Debt Service Ratio is also increasing, i.e. the country has been increasingly paying off the foreign debt as a result of larger import liability in comparison to smaller export earnings. According to Government confession the ratio has crossed 24 per cent

(Contd. on page 7)

Defamation Bill—Clamping Undeclared Emergency

(Contd. from page 1)
 sequently will be jailed and fined or both. In case of committing first offence, minimum one month jail is sure to follow which may extend to one year and with fine which may extend to two thousand rupees; and in the case of a second or subsequent offence, with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than three months, which may extend upto two years but the fine may extend to five thousand rupees. The accused publisher will find himself innocent only when it will be proved that what he had published was true and purported for the public good! It goes without saying, the official view has come up with that hackneyed pretext that the Bill aimed at nullifying the scope of publication of any untruth or libel or defamation of any person and to ensure exemplary punishment to those found guilty of committing this offence. Does this contention have any legs to stand upon? What the Indian Penal Code has to say in this regard? It has made it abundantly clear in as much as whenever a person becomes aggrieved, he is at liberty to go to the Witness Box to prove his grievances and then submit to cross-examination by counsel for defence, and then and then only will the defendant be called upon to justify that what he said or wrote was done in good faith or for the public good. If the sense of "famation" prevailed upon the highups in the Government hierarchy as they made us to believe they have and to uphold which, they argue, the instant Bill, perforce, has been rushed through, why then in these bygone months of startling revelations about corruption in high places, a politician worth his salt kept mum instead and not even risked the law courts to defend his or their honour? So, it is not at all a fact that politicians or any individual for that matter, have no redress against character assassi-

nation in the existing IPC. Section 499-502 of the IPC defines libel and defamation in no uncertain terms and stands on a comprehensive footing. Why then another set of law in replacement of the existing one capable enough to deal with the official proclaimed objective squarely?

It is no denying the fact that every well-meaning, democratic minded person aspires newspapers to be run on the firm footing of unveiling truths and not pandering even for a while to any issues on frivolous grounds. Naturally, whatever may be officially claimed about the background of the measure, the people are convinced that this is a measure of desperation in the Government's latest response to the erosion of its credibility in the recent past. And if the Bill has been passed in hot haste by the Lok Sabha it has to be meant a political counterattack to stem the tide of disclosures! Let us now turn to another illustration. It is admitted that when a newspaper publishes a report of corruption in high places, surely it does so on the basis of prima facie proofs. After the bill enters the Statute Book, the newspapers will have to adduce direct documentary evidence in such cases in its defence. Over and above, as everyone knows the Official Secrets Act prohibits any access to newspapers for scrutiny of any Government papers. Then what are the means left before the newsmen to know the truth? Who does not know that the newspaper reports come out mostly on different sources and channels, which, at least, cannot be described as based on direct evidence. Say, for example, news items came up in a newspaper based on secret source or an unanimous clue that highups in the country are engaged in swindling away crores of rupees or that some influential persons in the Government hierarchy flouting the law of the land are taking away hundreds

of crores of rupees to have it deposited secretly in the Swiss Bank, for which, of course, there might be an indication in so many words as to who that influential official or group of persons placed in highups involved in such scandal might be. In such cases, it should be the duty of a democratic Government to probe the veracity or otherwise of the news with all earnestness and accordingly to keep informed the public at large whether the report so published was true or not. And if this was found to be untrue, even libel suits might be filed according to existing law of the land. Contrary to this, the instant Bill seeks to place the onus on the newspapers to prove beyond any doubt that its publication was true and for the public good too, which in reality, is impracticable, because the newspaper is not an institution legally competent to appoint an Inquiry Commission to unveil the truth. How is it possible for a non-governmental enquiry body to investigate into Government papers as to how many crores of rupees have been deposited with a Swiss Bank, say by a minister, politician or any friend-circle related to them? Yes, this can only be done by the Government itself. As any student of social science knows it very well that bourgeois ethics and jurisprudence had hold aloft the newspaper as a Fourth Estate, hailing it to be the strict vigilant of democracy in as much as it had the bounden duty and obligation to ascertain, through constant scrutiny and investigation, whether any act of trampling of democratic norms, values and rights are taking place and accordingly to make the people alert and conscious enough against any possible erosion of values, norms or of smothering of democracy in general. In the event any newspaper fails to discharge its due role it had been accorded with, again, it is incumbent on the Government to come

out in the open to justify its stand through production of documentary evidences. Contrary to this democratic norm and practice what did we see in cases of startling revelations in the highups made public in the recent past? Rather than investigate vigorously the instances of shady deals brought out in the Fairfax, HDW, Bofors and other scandals as revealed in the premier dailies the Government had first by branding the disclosures as the result of a "destabilisation" plot and then by launching a white wash of an enquiry by a parliamentary committee, strengthened the suspicion that there was a great deal for the Government to hide. The Government did not risk the law courts invoking the relevant law in force where whatever documentary evidence were there in possession of the Government could have been placed in their defence. But that won't be! Since that would have brought to the light the vindication of what had been published so long in the Press with regard to corruption in high places! Significantly, the Government organisations like the CBI or any Government body at that would not attract the strings of this Bill. That means if any imputation or defamatory statements against any one come up in any press release or public statements by these Government organisations, the aggrieved persons would have no avenues to challenge it. In a word, the absolute right to tell falsehoods and sublime nonsenses would vest in Government media. Thus the Press Information Bureau can get away with any defamatory allegations it chooses to make; so too Radio, TV and sundry others! Furthermore, henceforward, it would be defamatory to freely report the proceedings of allegations of corruptions, say, against the Central Government, off and on brought forth by different political parties and organisations. Since on the one hand the De-

famation Bill does allow a fair reporting of the proceedings of foreign legislatures, international organisations, even of local authority, a commission or tribunal, conspicuously makes an exception in case of a meeting or sitting "the admission to which is denied to representatives of newspapers and other members of the public" in general. It thus transpires that defamatory statements against opposition leaders would be okay while defamatory statements against the Government leaders would be an offence, punishable with fine and jail. Herein lies the portentous motive of the Bill which aims at throttling the voice of dissent. In other words, the basic democratic right for freedom of expression is sought to be snatched away through this Bill.

Now in vehement protest against this black Bill the distinguished journalists have said in a statement that their fight against the Bill does not aim at a struggle for the interest and of the interest of the newspapers' alone. On the contrary, it aims at protection of fundamental democratic rights and civil liberty. We fully endorse this view but must stress that this is not all. Time and again, we are urging upon all the Left, democratic and Opposition parties and forces, the democratic-minded, freedom-loving people including all sections of toiling people as a whole to read correctly the fast-changing political scene in the country. We have been urging them, as we do now also, to close their ranks and develop a mighty democratic mass movement to foil the sinister design of the ruling capitalist class, now in dire crisis, of bringing all out fascism in the country. It has to be understood that the attack that is coming on press freedom is not an isolated phenomenon. It is a part and parcel of the whole scheme of the crisis-ridden bourgeoisie who seek, as the last resort, all-out fascism, to give a lease of life to moribund capitalism before the in-

(Contd. on page 5)

Defamation Bill

(Contd. from page 4)

evitable doom. And in that bid, we have shown, again and again, how the ruling class is moving in that direction. In that scheme, concentration of economic, political and administrative powers in the hands of a small coterie at the top has been going on for many years in the country. To that end, practice of pre-budgetary and post-budgetary taxation and price rise of essential articles of consumption through administrative fiat has become a regular farce throwing to the winds all democratic norms and parliamentary practice. Side by side, concentration of power in the hands of the Executive bureaucracy and police, robbing of fundamental democratic rights and liberties of the people including their right to organise trade union and other democratic movements by enacting lawless laws, snatching the relative independence of the judiciary making it subservient, together with bidding good-bye to administrative neutrality, introduction of all-out centralised administrative rigging in the elections to bring to power the chosen alternative of the ruling class have become usual features keeping the facade of parliamentary democracy in tact. This small coterie at the top represents the industrialist - bureaucracy - military complex working for burial of democracy. And now comes this heinous attempt to muzzle the Press. People are sought to be trapped as dumb animals while the burden of exploitation mounts on their back. No doubt, the Bill aims at making the Press completely 'committed'. They are to be fully committed to the needs of the ruling class as also the needs of the parties defending this moribund capitalist system. Would it, therefore, be wrong to say that this Bill purports to choke all channels of public expression and dissent against the allout

capitalistic onslaughts be-devilling the people?

In this perspective, it becomes incumbent on all of us to realise that unless the widespread protest and indignations now sweeping the country against this Bill is directed in a manner so as to encompass in its fold all Opposition parties and forces together with every section of toiling masses in a vortex of sustained movements towards restoration, preservation and extension of democratic rights and civil liberty, unless we can realize that through each and every step of the Central Congress(I) Government the grave danger of installing allout fascism is becoming a real threat to our existence, and above all, unless we are able to integrate the struggle against this mischievous Bill with the allout struggle to forestall the impending danger of fascism then we would not be able to withstand the attack on fundamental democratic rights and civil liberty even that has come through this black Bill.

It is quite in the fitness of things that one should try to understand how the Government dared to bring in such a draconian measure to put the Press in the straight jackets. In fact, due to weakness of the Left parties resulting in absence of countrywide united democratic mass movements has emboldened the Government to come out with such a black piece of legislation. We could, at the same time, request our journalist brethren to pause and ponder over the fact whether the failure on their part to wage relentless fight to hold steadfast their 'freedom' from the dictates of the owner-Government combine has not acted as a catalyst in this mischievous act of the Government. This reading gets corroborated in as much as the present attack on the Press has not come in isolation. Rather, as we have shown earlier, it has come in

continuity of the series of draconian steps and measures adopted by the Central Congress(I) Government one after another with impunity which unmistakably portends a dark cloud of looming danger in the horizon. In such a situation none of us should forget the good adage: 'Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty'. This vigilance demands of all of us to carry the fight in our day to day conduct.

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, our beloved General Secretary, while expressing solidarity with and congratulating the journalists of our country for their splendid united stand of organising and making the all India newspaper strike on 6th September successful, has called upon all the Left, democratic and Opposition parties as well as all sections of toiling masses irrespective of caste, religion, colour and creed to come out in the open with an intensive united mass movement in order to force the Central Government to withdraw the Bill totally and unconditionally.

Already, the journalists, the editors, the news agency men all condemned in one voice the authoritarian attempt to enslave the Press. The members of the Central Administrative Tribunal Bar Association observed a Strike on September 12 alongwith the other lawyers of the Capital to express their resentment. The Calcutta High Court along with different other Bar Associations of State Capitals followed suit. Meanwhile, the National Coordination Committee of various organisations representing the Press has announced its plan for further intensification of their Struggle in the forms of signature campaign, dharnas, rallies, etc. throughout the state and observance of Protest Day on September 30, to get the "Defamation Bill" withdrawn unconditionally.

It is a light of hope, no doubt, in this darkness; a surge of spontaneous waves of mass movements erupting in different parts of the

country involving thousands and thousands of journalists, youth, intellectuals and different sections of working people, which are to be coordinated and guided properly in order to achieve the immediate demand of total and unconditional withdrawal of the Black Bill and in the process of organising a sustained movements against the authoritarian conspiracy of the Rajiv Government. Our Party alongwith its all mass organisations have plunged themselves into the vortex of movements to rouse the people in action.

After facing stiff opposition of the pressmen and common people alike the Government is dragging its feet by temporarily halting the Bill from its being rushed through the Rajya Sabha, at least, till the next session. Besides, a 7-member Ministerial Committee has been set up to hold consultations with the journalists and other interested parties, as if countrywide surge of waves of protests and condemnations now sweeping every nook and corner of the country is no reflection of people's mood and what they demand of the Government. It seems the Government is after another deceptive and sinister device of giving selective patronage to those dailies and journalists who would dance to the tunes of the so-called norms the Government loudly proclaims. The motive is quite clear—to divide the opposition of the Press.

It appears that Rajiv Government has failed to take any lessons from the dark period of Emergency Rule during her mother's regime. Following the footsteps of her mother, instead of directly foisting the Emergency Rule, he is bent upon bringing 'Emergency' through backdoor by enacting this black Bill which will give burial to whatever vestiges of bourgeois democracy are there in our body politic. In the annals of history, despotic rulers seldom take lessons from the past to mend their ways. By failing to take lessons

from the 'doom' of their despotic counterparts in the past, perhaps 'Mr. Clean' too is failing to read the 'writing on the wall'. He might conveniently try to forget the Emergency Rule when frontal attack in the form of pre-censorship was then imposed as a means to throttle the voice of dissent. But one can hardly forget how the simmering discontent among all sections of the people got concrete manifestation in 1977 General Election as an unmistakable sign of what the people desired. Behind the din and bustle, fanfare and publicity, this time also, the mood of the people cannot be otherwise. Rajiv Government sits on a volcano, which in all probability would erupt in the not too a distant future.

In the perspective of concrete facts and political reality, our party would urge the journalist brethren to draw appropriate lessons and realize that their struggle for freedom can be real and meaningful only when they integrate their fight against the authoritarian attacks of the Government with their fight to uphold journalistic ethics and norms. Their struggle cannot succeed, unless it is wedded to the democratic mass movements of all sections of the people on their legitimate demands. They have to come out in movement against each and every anti-people, anti-democratic policy, step and measure of the Government—be it at the Centre or in the States. Slavery of any sort — be it to the Government, owner, representing the same interest of this wornout capitalist system, cannot coexist with the slogan of 'freedom'.

Our party calls upon the people in general and journalist friends in particular: The fight is now on. Let all sections of the toiling people, all right thinking, well-meaning people from all walks of life plunge into it to save the country. Let not this historic task go by default! No time to lose, people must stand up!

5th AUGUST

(We could not publish all the news on 5th August for paucity of space in the previous issue. As per the announcement we are publishing the rest of the news in the current issue. —Ed. Proletarian Era)

U.P.

A public memorial meeting was held at Badlapur College Maidan, Jaunpur on 7th August. Com. Jagadish Chandra Asthana, Secretary, Jaunpur District Committee presided. Comrade Shankar Singh, Member, Central Committee of the SUCI was the main speaker. Comrade Singh dwelt on the national and international situation. He referred to rampant corruptions in high places and the way the Central Government trampled down all parliamentary norms and principles to hide up corruption. Continuing, he said these are the reflection of the deeper and deeper crisis within the bourgeois political setup and system and only a mighty mass movement with correct base political line can stop such despotism of the ruling class. Com. V. N. Singh, Secretary, U.P. State Committee also spoke.

Earlier, a large colourful procession drawn from diverse cross-sections of toiling people parading through the main thoroughfares of the town converged at the meeting place.

M.P.

A public memorial meeting was held at Press Bhawan Hall, Bhopal on 9th August where Comrade Shankar Singh, member, Central Committee of the SUCI was the main speaker. Comrade Ashoke Ganguly took the chair. The meeting started with placing of wreaths by Comrade Shankar Singh. Comrade Badshah Khan and Com. Poly Singh, an organiser of MSS and others at the portrait of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat.

Dwelling on the invaluable teachings of Comrade Ghosh, Com. Singh called upon all to

dedicate themselves more and more to carry out the behest of Com. Ghosh. Com. Aloke Pratap Singh, Local Secretary of the SUCI also spoke.

ORISSA

On 5th August a State level memorial meeting was held at Saheed Bhavan, Cuttack. Com. Jagabandhu Baral, Secretary, Cuttack District Committee, and member, State Secretariat presided and Comrade Tapas Datta, member, Central Committee as well as Orissa State Secretary of the SUCI addressed the gathering as the main speaker.

Touching on the different aspects of Com. Shibdas Ghosh's teachings, he said that the present impasse in the national and international spheres could be overcome by following the teachings of Comrade Ghosh. Referring to the reforms and so-called new thinking of the Gorbachev-led CPSU, Comrade Datta observed that it had nothing to do with Marxism - Leninism. If Khrushchov opened up the floodgate of revisionism in the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956, as shown by our departed leader, teacher and guide Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, Gorbachev leadership was paving the road to restoration of capitalism in the USSR. He hoped that the real communists in the USSR and the world would shed their blood and sweat to keep the revolutionary banner of Marxism-Leninism flying.

Com. Binapani Das, and Comrade Mayadhar Nayak, members, Orissa State Secretariat also spoke on the occasion.

A School of Politics was also conducted from 6-8 August by Comrade Tapas Datta at Cuttack

dealing with the important aspects of present national and international situation.

KARNATAKA

A public memorial meeting was held at NGO Hall, Bangalore, which was largely attended by party members, supporters, sympathisers and members of diverse sections of the toiling people.

Com. K. Radhakrishna, State Secretary, presided over the meeting. Comrade Krishna Crakraborty, member, Central Committee, was the main speaker. In his brilliant speech, he touched the main aspects of the present national and international situation in the light of the teachings of Com. Shibdas Ghosh and pointed out the task ahead of the party and the people at large. He called upon the people to fulfil the behest of Com. Ghosh.

In his presidential speech Comrade Radhakrishna analysed the prevailing situation in the State of Karnataka with special emphasis on the misrule of the Janata Government and the nefarious game of the Congress(I) to any how topple the Janata Government of the State. Urging the people to fight against the anti-people policies and measures of the Janata Government, Com. Radhakrishna alerted them to remain ever vigilant against any attempt of the Congress(I) of making a back-door entry into governmental power.

ANDHRA PRADESH

A public meeting was held on 5th August at the Press Club in Hyderabad. Com. Murahari, in-charge of the Hyderabad City Committee, was in the chair. Rising to speak as the main speaker, Com. Asit Bhattacharjee, member, Central Committee, observed that it was not possible to evaluate the life and teachings of a giant communist leader like Com. Shibdas Ghosh without understanding his lifelong arduous class-struggle covering all

aspects of life and society. He said that the pseudo-communist parties in the country, in the name of Marxism-Leninism, were actually deceiving the people and helping the moribund capitalist system to sustain. United democratic mass movements throughout the country, he said, could pave the way to thwart the fascist onslaughts being perpetrated by the ruling Congress(I) Government at the Centre one after another.

Com. K. Sridhar, Secretary State Organising Committee, while unmasking the out and out anti-people policies and measures pursued by NTR-Government in the State urged the people to build up strong counter current of mass movements to forestall the fiscal savageries and systematic robbing of democratic rights of the people by both Governments of the Centre and the State.

Com. Murahari, in his presidential speech, urged the people to carry forward the tasks ahead towards achieving emancipation of the exploited and oppressed people of the country.

TAMIL NADU

The State level public memorial meeting was held at Madurai on 5th August. Comrade Jagannathan, Secretary, Tamil Nadu State Committee, presided. Comrade James Joseph, Member of the Central Editorial Board of the SUCI was the main speaker.

In his emotional speech highlighting different aspects of history of emergence of the SUCI, the revolutionary party of the Indian proletariat, Com. Joseph recalled the life-long struggle of Com. Shibdas Ghosh to build up the genuine Communist Party on the soil, the SUCI. He appealed to the people to study and re-study Comrade Ghosh's thoughts which is the only beacon light to lead the proletariat to their cherished goal.

It is worth mentioning, apart from holding of the State level meet-

ing, memorial meetings were also held in Madras, Chengalpet and South Arcot districts.

TRIPURA

Tripura State Organising Committee held a memorial meeting on 5th August at Agartala Rabindra Centenary Hall. Com. Milan Majumdar, Secretary, Tripura State Organising Committee was in the chair. Com. Chhaya Mukherjee, Central staff, addressed the gathering as the main speaker. She urged the people to build up a mighty movement against fascist policy of the Central Congress(I) Government and the opportunist policies of the pseudo-Communist parties.

MAHARASHTRA

A big public memorial meeting was held at Ranjan Meeting Hall, Matri Seva Sangh on 13th August. Veteran freedom fighter Comrade Baburam Dhote took the chair. Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee, Central Staff of the party was the main speaker. She highlighted the immortal teachings from the life and thoughts of Com. Shibdas Ghosh. Com. Dhote in course of recounting the different facets of freedom struggle observed with pain and anguish that the dream of the toiling masses remained unfulfilled still today. Only the path charted out by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh can lead the Indian masses to their cherished goal, he said.

ASSAM

A largely attended public memorial meeting was held at Dhubri at Gouripur Maidan in Assam on 5th August. Com. Kalyan Chowdhury, Secretary, Assam State Committee, was in the chair while Com. Pratiba Mukherjee, member, West Bengal State Secretariat and a Central Staff of the party, addressed the gathering as the main speaker.

In her inspiring speech, Com. Mukherjee upheld the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. Citing the ordeal the

(Contd. on page 7)

Conventions against Hospital Bill

CHANDIGARH

Chandigarh units of AIDTO, AIDSO along with Medical Service Centre jointly organised a largely attended convention against Hospital Bill at Lajpat Rai Bhawan, Chandigarh on August 19 last. Com. S. P. Chawla, Convenor, local AIDTO, presided and Com. Prithish Chanda, President, UTUC(LS), was the main speaker.

In his address, Com. Chanda said, that the purpose of the Bill was to crush the workers' right to agitate on their legitimate demands and to tighten the stranglehold of employers and Government over them. For the last decade the Government had failed to get these Bill passed due to stiff resistance of the affected sections and other democratic minded people. The Bill which was passed by Rajya Sabha on April 28, was sweeping in scope as it applied to all hospitals, educational institutions, philanthropic organisations, khadi and village industries etc. and affected all categories of workers in these including doctors, nurses, technicians, teachers, researchers etc. Com. Chanda pointed out that the Bill would snatch the fundamental rights of workers contravening the Constitution and the norms of the I L O of which India was a member. As per this bill, all grievances of the employees would be handled by redressal authorities dominated by the employers or the Government; any agitation would attract heavy fine and imprisonment. In conclusion he emphasised that this Bill along with the 59th Constitution Amendment and Trade Unions and Indus-

trial Disputes (Amendment) Bill was a part of a conspiracy of the Congress(I) Government on behalf of crisis-ridden ruling capitalist class to drag the country toward fascism. He gave a rousing call to build up countrywide sustained democratic mass movement which alone could be the antidote.

Other speaker included Dr. Jagadish Chander, Convenor, local MSC, Triloknath Sharma of PGI, Chandigarh, Dr. A. C. Choudhury, President, HCMS, Haryana, Dr. Hardeep Singh, General Secretary, JDA, Punjab, Dr. Jaswant Singh, Secretary, MSC Haryana and Omprakash of All India Health Employees' Association, Haryana. All of them termed this a black Bill and demanded its withdrawal.

In presidential address Com. S. P. Chawla said that the Central Government in the face of endemic crises of capitalism and agitation by workers was determined to stick to power at any cost by fanning up fundamentalism - casteism - parochialism on the one hand and by curtailing democratic rights and civil liberties of the people on the other. Hence this spate of draconian Bills and Acts. He gave a call for united and sustained struggle against the Bill so that the Bill could be foiled and lapsed as had happened in 1978 and 1982.

A resolution strongly condemning the Bill and demanding its withdrawal was unanimously adopted.

BANGALORE

As a part of the movement being conducted by our party in the States, a State-level Convention against the undemocratic Hospitals and other Institutions Bill was successfully held at the Senate Hall, Bangalore University on 22nd August last. It was jointly organised by the AIDSO, AIDTO and MSC with Dr. Gangadhar, President, Karnataka MSC as the Chairman.

The speakers included N. D. Jayappa, Vice-President, AIDTO and Vice-President, Bangalore University College Teachers' Association (BUCTA), M. Basavarajiah, President, Karnataka Government College Teachers' Association, Dr. Srinivasa Gowda, Professor, Kempegowda Institute of Medical Sciences, Theppeswamy, Adviser, All India Government Nurses Federation and Dr. B. R. Manjunath, President, Karnataka AIDS. All the speakers strongly condemned the utterly undemocratic Bill and called upon the people to build up powerful sustained movement to foil this conspiracy of Central Government to deprive the people of their right to organise themselves and struggle. G. K. Govind Rao, former President BUCTA could not attend owing to sickness, but expressed the same spirit in a message.

A strong committee against Hospitals Bill was formed with Dr. K. S. Gangadhar as Convenor for organising a strong, sustained resistance movement.

Debt Trap

(Contd. from page 3)
20 per cent last year. The actual ratio reaches at 33.5 per cent if we take the extra-budgetary debts into account. The trend shows that it is liable to increase further in the coming years. This extra-budgetary loan is stemming from the pro-owner liberal export-import policy of the Rajiv Government resulting in the direct huge foreign debt by the commercial and mercantile houses. The 'Debt Service Ratio' is also galloping at such a rate that at the end of this decade the economy will reach at an explosive stage. The external debt trap is a vicious circle from which there is very little chance of coming out. The more the attempt to get rid of it, the more one is caught in the trap anew by making newer loans. That this sort of situation India is going to face was warned by the Reserve Bank of India though belated in its Report of 1987-88 to the Central Government.

However, as far as possible, an approximate figure of external debt has been made out which stands at 70 billion dollars or 91,000 crores of rupees. that means per capita share of this debt burden comes out to 90/91 dollars. or Rs. 1300/- (approx). The internal debt burden has also been made out as approximately Rs. 1,15,000 crores meaning thereby that per capita debt burden of an Indian reaches at Rs. 1642/- And if we add these two loans together it goes up to Rs. 2942/- per capita debt burden. This is a glaring example of how our poor countrymen are being entangled in the debt trap.

If we analyse the gradually increasing tendencies of our economy and the problem it is suffering from, we will safely arrive at the conclusion that our country has already been entangled in the trap of both external and internal debts. If the productivity and utilisation of capital are not maintained pro-

perly and not in conformity with debt, the economic growth comes to a standstill and all these pave the way for crisis in the capitalist economy. Then there rises a situation where there is no other way than to take new loans to pay off old loans. The real rates of interest far exceed the growth rate of the economy only when the disastrous symptoms of crisis-ridden capitalism are manifested in various ways. What the Indian economy is suffering from at present is nothing but this sort of disastrous crisis.

5th August

(Contd. from page 6)

Assamese people had to undergo, she pointed out how the ruling capitalist class was destroying people's unity and solidarity taking advantage of absence of united democratic mass movements in the country. She called upon the people to build up powerful protracted mass movements conducive to anti-capitalist socialist revolution to fulfil the behest of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh.

M.P. (Jabalpur)

Jabalpur District Committee of the SUCI held a public memorial meeting on 5th August at Chitragupta Hall, Lal-mati. Comrade Bhawan Ghosh was in the chair.

Com. Ashoke Ganguli, Secretary, Madhya Pradesh State Organising Committee, was the main speaker. In explaining the significance of observance of Com. Shibdas Ghosh Memorial Day, he showed how the observance of 5th August is closely interwoven with the correct grasping of the essence of Marxism-Leninism and Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's Thoughts.

In Sagar a memorial meeting was held on 7th August. Com. Ashoke Ganguly addressed the gathering as the main speaker. Comrade K. D. Sharma also spoke.

Joint movement against N. E. P.

MAHARASHTRA

The AIDS, DYU along with SFI, DYFI, AISF, Yuva Janata, Chhatra Janata, Yuvak Kranti Dal, Bharatiya Republican Party and Yuva Samity etc. under the banner of Yuva Vid-yarthi Hakka Sangharsha Samiti led on the heart of Bombay a mammoth demonstration of students and youth force of over thirty thousand coming from all over Maharashtra. This massive march was against the Central Government's National Policy on Education and for other legitimate demands. The impressive demonstration, the outcome of the united effort, the first of its kind in the State, started from Azad Maidan and terminated at Kala Ghoda.

A delegation met the Chief Minister, Sarad Pawar, who was forced to give assurance to meet some very important demands like providing immediately grants-in-aid to schools in backward regions, setting up of North Maharashtra University by the 1989-90 academic year.

The rally was addressed by Com. Madhav Bhone, in-charge DYU, Maharashtra Unit among other students and youth leaders.

ANDHRA PRADESH

On 4th and 5th August, the All Andhra Pradesh Students Unions' Convention against NPE in particular was held at the University of Hyderabad. Shri B. H. Krishnamurthy, Vice-Chancellor of the University inaugurated it. In the delegate session the student representatives highlighted the importance of fighting unitedly the anti-student NEP of the Congress(I) Government. The Convention expressed serious concern over Government

moratorium on expansion of colleges and universities, its banning evening and oriental colleges, police camps in university campuses.

AIDS, along with ABVP, PDSU, SFI and elected union members of colleges participated in it.

PURULIA

Dastradly attack by C. P. I. (M)

Com. J. N. Singh, Assistant Secretary and Com. G. P. Karan, Vice-President, Hindustan Steel Coal Washeries Employees Union, Santaldih, Purulia, affiliated to the UTUC(LS), were severely assaulted by the CPI(M) anti-socials inside the washery plant on 13th September at 10-45 P.M. As a result Com. Singh sustained serious head injury and had been admitted into Ranchi Government Hospital in a state of unconsciousness and since then has been fighting for life with twentysix stitches. His condition is critical. Com. Karan is out of danger now.

The CPI(M) which had been trying in vain for the last eleven years to capture the union, found no other alternative than resorting to this heinous action to kill Com. Singh, a prominent leader of the Purulia district UTUC(LS). The culprits, though named in the FIR, are moving in open day light.

This incident created a deep indignation among the workers against CPI(M) and they en masse reported for the duty on 14th, the Bangla Bandh Day, called by the CPI(M)-led Left Front.

Com. Fatick Ghosh, Secretary, West Bengal

SUKINDA

(Contd. from page 1)

Upatyaka Mines Workers Union is the only union and a tripartite agreement was pending, the management all of a sudden declared a lockout on that day. This company along with others backed by the State Government and the Congress(I), in an attempt to introduce machine in mining, left no stone unturned to crush the Sukinda Upatyaka Mines Workers' Union. But with the passage of time the exploited working class out of their life's experience realised that it is only the UTUC (Lenin Sarani) which can protect their interest against various onslaughts of the exploiters.

It is to be mentioned that TISCO which operates with full machine-mining and is the biggest lease holder in the chrome zone of Sukinda, backed by INTUC in combination with Misirlal Mines, Suruabil, took the agreement as a challenge to their own profit-making machine-mining operations. The State Government which all along tried to suppress the movement through various means but failed, took this as a defeat. And thus on 6th September, the day after the agreement was signed with the OMC, 144 CrPC was declared in the whole mining zone, special contin-

State Committee, UTUC (LS), meanwhile called on the DG police, West Bengal, and the Home Secretary, Mr. N. Krishnamurthy and demanded immediate arrest of the culprits.

The UTUC(LS) has decided to hold a massive rally in front of the Washery on 25th September where Com. Fatick Ghosh will remain present as the main speaker.

gents of armed police force were heavily deployed. Com. Mayadhar Nayak, General Secretary, of the Union and Secretary, UTUC (LS), Orissa State Committee, was debarred from entering Sukinda Valley and sixty leading party workers and trade union activists were put behind the bars and arrest warrants were issued against hundreds.

In the meanwhile all the Central Trade Unions of Orissa excepting INTUC have declared their support for the movement. Sri Prabir Palit, State Vice-President, AITUC, Sri Lambodar Nayak, State President, CITU, Sri Krishna Chandra Patra, State Secretary, HMS, Sri Saroj Mitra, State President, BMS and Sheikh Qasim, State Vice-President, UTUC (Lenin Sarani) in a joint statement condemned the authoritarian move of the Congress(I) State Government of Orissa in suppressing the legitimate democratic movement of workers in connivance with the management and demanded immediate withdrawal of prohibitory orders on Com. Mayadhar Navak, withdrawal of 144 CrPC, release of the arrested workers, withdrawal of false cases against the workers and leaders.

The Opposition leaders also reacted. In a joint statement Sri Srianta Jena, General Secretary, Janata Party, Orissa, Sri Anadi Charan Das, M.P., Jajpur, Sri Bhajaman Rout, State Convenor, Jan Morcha, Sri Loknath Chowdhury, Secretary, Orissa State Committee, CPI, Sri Sivaji Pattanayak, Orissa State Secretary, CPI(M) and Sri Tapas Datta, Secretary, Orissa State Committee, SUCI, demanded immediate withdrawal of 144 CrPC and prohibitory orders on Com. Mayadhar Nayak & other organisers. They also demanded that the Congress(I) Government which talks tall

DSO Victory in Delhi

Com. Prakash Devi won the Vice-President portfolio defeating her nearest ABVP rival and NSUI candidate in Bharati Mahila College.

In School of Social Work (Delhi University) Com. Subhas Gautam won the Central Councillor seat.

In Sivaji College Com. Narendra Singh lost in the General Secretary seat by only 3 votes.

In Law Centre (Delhi University Campus) Com. Siucharan lost the Vice-President post by a meagre 14 votes.

Com. Chandram in Swami Shradhanand College lost the G.S. seat by only 4 votes

In the last 3 Colleges our candidates stood second in respect of votes which is no mean an achievement considering political trend prevailing in Delhi. It also reflects the growing popularity of AIDS among the student community.

about democracy should stop interfering in the fundamental rights of Sri Nayak and thereby creating hindrance in his day-to-day activities, and stop arresting common people and torturing them in police custody.

In protest of the police barbarity a massive demonstration was held before the Sukinda Tehsil Office on J. K. Road on 13th September last.

The Orissa State Committees of SUCI and UTUC(LS) have given a call for Sukinda Day on September 23.

The Orissa State Committees of the party and UTUC(LS) have condemned the version of the Orissa Police and the mines management published in a section of the Press and described it as an attempt to malign the glorious role played by the party and the UTUC(LS) in protecting the interest of the workers.

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