

Proletarian Era

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In the name of reforms, election is robbed of its very essence

Elections to the five state Assemblies have just been concluded and the results announced. The ruling dispensations in four out of the five states have been defeated. Citing that polling this time has been very peaceful and there have been no reports of rigging the election by way of unleashing widespread violence, spine-chilling terror, booth capturing and muscle flexing, the bourgeois media and other quarters of vested interest are eulogizing the Election Commission (EC) for having ushered in the change through a slew of corrective steps. Outwardly, it would appear that elections indeed have been free and fair. But, a probing eye would reveal that the set of rules and regulations introduced in the name of conducting a peaceful election have virtually countermanded the very process of ensuring a free and fair poll in the truest sense of the term. Earlier also, we had shown in the pages of Proletarian Era that the so-called electoral reforms like steep increase in deposit money which precludes workers-peasants from contesting, discriminatory amendments in the rule of procurement of voters' list, stringency in nomination filing, delay in symbol allotment and above all drastic curtailment of scope and time of campaign, brought in under the pretext of purging the electoral process of all aberrations are virtually giving a decent burial to the last vestige of democratic election and cunningly aimed at putting up as many hurdles as possible before the genuine revolutionary party while contesting polls and gradually phase it out completely from the arena of parliamentary politics. This time, there is further advancement towards that end by way of invoking a fresh set of reforms.

Essence of election

What is the essence of elections in bourgeois parliamentary democracy? The exponents of bourgeois democracy in the days of its advent envisaged that adult franchise will be based on people's consciousness. And in keeping with the spirit of bourgeois democracy, political liberty in bourgeois sense meant rights of constituting a government by general act of free choice or election on the basis of universal suffrage, controlling it by a general process of discussion, extensive ideological-political campaign in which

all have equal share. Fundamental principles of bourgeois democracy stipulate in no uncertain a term that each and every contestant has an unfettered right to communicate political stand as well as ideological viewpoint to the electorates, reaching out to the voters with plans and programmes and entering into healthy debates and discussions over various issues having definite bearing on people's life — this is what constitutes the inner kernel of elections. Such widespread campaign by various political parties and forces, clashes and contradictions of ideas generate people's interest in the elections. The electorate in turn engage themselves in examining various trends of thought, ideological standpoints, exchange opinion among themselves to understand the truth. In the process, political consciousness of the masses grows and develops, political maturity ascends yet higher rungs. In other words, the enshrined principle is to give widest scope to the electorate to be acquainted with all political opinions and divergent views so that they could take an informed decision before exercising their franchise according to conscience. Any asymmetry in information is, therefore, tantamount to counterpoising the very intent of this principle.

It may be recalled that during the days of advent of bourgeois democracy as superstructure

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SUCI (C) denounces police crackdown on Ramdev's dharna mancha

Strongly denouncing the 4th June midnight police crackdown upon thousands of men, women and children who joined the Dharna at Ramlila Maidan, New Delhi, in support of Shri Ramdev's indefinite hunger strike, Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI (Communist), in course of a statement issued on June 6, 2011 firmly opined that keeping apart our serious differences with Shri Ramdev's way of ventilating the issue of corruption, it was a highly unjustified and unwarranted police action intended to terrorize protesting people.

SUCI (C) exhorts people to build up powerful people's movement against all-pervasive corruption stemming from capitalist system

Commenting on the proposed hunger strike by Baba Ramdev, Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary SUCI (Communist) has issued the following statement on 03-06-11 :

It is well known to all that like all other unbearable burning problems of the people, the root cause of the all-pervasive corruption which is making people's life hell, lies in the existing capitalist socio-economic political system and political leaders and ministers of all hues who are wedded to this system along with the big officials of all other organs of the state are its worst perpetrators. It is a vital truth to be disputed by none that unless until this breeding ground is overthrown, there cannot be any lasting relief from this scourge and that powerful democratic movements centering round peoples burning problems and all acts of virulent corruption is the only deterrent in the meantime. While we appreciate all genuine efforts and moves against all manifestations of virulent corruption we urge our people to be aware that sensing peoples growing wrath against this invasive virulent administrative corruption, the capitalists and their agents are making concerted efforts to distract people's attention from this root cause and are also, in their bid divert people's attention from all other burning problems like sky rocketing price rice, explosive problem of unemployment, devastating effects of capitalist imperialist globalization, liberalization and privatization, making frantic efforts to hide this vital truth. The bourgeois media particularly is leaving no stone unturned to project certain individuals as the only saviors and that their moves and acts devoid of peoples participation to be the only deterrent. We urge upon all sections of our people to be aware of such illusory and deceptive moves. We also call upon them to close their ranks and give birth to powerful mass movements against this all pervasive problem of administrative corruption.

Election robbed of essence

Drastic curtailment of scope of ideological campaign and glaringly discriminatory regulations make mockery of democracy

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of the new capitalist economic order based on *laissez faire*, permitting free and equal competition among the resurgent capitalists in the economic field, the bourgeoisie was the standard-bearer of democracy, individual freedom and liberty, no doubt in the bourgeois sense. However, the professed equality to all, as the bourgeois constitution posed to guarantee, was not realizable in the life of exploited common people since in capitalism or bourgeois order, economic exploitation of man by man was not abolished. So, in the initial years of flourishing this bourgeois democracy, elections to the Parliament were by and large free and fair and broadly reflected people's will. Election atmosphere used to set in much in advance. The political parties used to jump into the fray with their respective ideological-political campaign through all available admissible modes. People also used to be deeply engrossed in political discussions, comparing and contrasting the various views and standpoints of the contesting parties and candidates, and then exercised their voting rights based on that. To that extent, it was a complete break from old monarchical system and hence a step forward.

But with the growth and development of monopoly, the wider democracy in the political superstructure ceased to be in vogue. The administrative machinery was gradually disposed of the relative neutrality and along with other bourgeois apparatus and institutions became more and more committed to the monopolists. It is at this juncture that the influence and control of the moneyed people on the operation of bourgeois democracy including elections began to be increasingly manifested. Once capitalism entered the stage of imperialism, subversion of bourgeois democracy in the form of systematic robbing of civil and individual rights and curtailing of all political rights became the hallmark of bourgeois rule. So today, in the period of decadent moribund capitalism, the election process is also being stripped of its essence. Capitalist India is no exception. Reverse direction is quite

vivid in every sphere including the electoral process.

Ideological-political campaign reduced to redundancy

For quite some time, it is being observed that the scope for wider debate and discussion centring on people's issue, polemics on ideological aspects is being systematically reduced both inside and outside the legislature. Duration of parliamentary session is shortened. Similarly, the number of days available for election campaign has long been reduced from earlier 21 days to 15 days. This arbitrary and whimsical shortening of the campaign time not only debars the serious political parties like ours of their rightful claim to put across our political analyses and formulations to the toiling people but even tramples underfoot what the ardent proponents of bourgeois democracy strongly preached. One would recall that John Stuart Mill, one of the best exponents of bourgeois democracy, was unequivocal in emphasizing that "Those indeed, if any such there be, who, under pretence of equal justice, aim only at substituting the class ascendancy of the poor for that of the rich, will of course be unfavourable to a scheme which places both on a level." Such principles are being trampled underfoot with impunity.

Not just this drastic curtailment of time of campaign. The axe has fallen on the time-tested modes of campaign as well. For example, it is known to everyone that propagating one's political line and ideology through posters and wall writing has emerged in the process of democratic movement deemed to be legal in the bourgeois set up. But the authorities have suddenly discovered that posters or graffiti by the contesting political parties 'deface' the walls. Incredible indeed! If one has to accept the logic of defacement, then how is it that the authorities are not uttering a single word against such display of vulgar and obscene advertisements on innumerable walls in the towns and cities, as well as in the countryside? Are we then to conclude that the authorities who with daggers drawn at election are opposing slogans being displayed on the walls endorse such obscene exhibition of commercial messages as decency encapsulate? If ugliness

or defacement of the very moral fabric of the nation could be sanctified by sanction, how can truth of political viewpoint be disallowed by design? Moreover, the parties or candidates have to compulsorily obtain written permission from the owners of compound walls and file the same with local police stations before using the space for campaign. It does not require much intelligence to understand that while the compound wall owners can hardly afford to refuse big political parties having backing of the rulers and administration for obvious reason, they might, despite sincere desire, deny permission to smaller anti-establishment parties fearing harassment and even threat from the power that be. So where is the coveted principle of equity?

Same is the case with organization of election meetings. Such meetings in different forms like public meetings in open space or a hall, group discussions etc. are key to propagation of ideological-political views. Previously, there was no rule to obtain prior permission for holding meetings. Only the authorities were to be kept informed of the time and venue. But now a host of bindings have been imposed. It is mandatory to obtain prior permission from the local police authorities informing them of the venue and time of the proposed meeting well in advance. Sometimes such permissions are not received even on the day of the meeting. Organizing meetings at any play ground of any educational institution or even on the road side is prohibited. There are restrictions on use of microphones. Like use of walls, written permission is also insisted on from the owners of the venue by the local administration. It is also known to all that the rules are implemented through local bureaucracy and police who invariably work in favour of the ruling parties and often commit excesses deliberately to harass the smaller anti-establishment parties like ours by imposing peculiar terms or asking for unjust compliances. That makes the situation even worse. It is the authorities which often dictate the meeting venues however insignificant a place that might be. Proceedings of election meetings are now being videographed by the police. On a number of occasions,

scheduled meetings have to be cancelled as the police fail to send their video teams for reasons best known to them. Since no one can knock at judiciary for redress and justice during campaign period, parties or candidates who do not curry favour with the ruling class become worst victims of this high-handedness of the administration.

Another glaring example of this high-handedness is the order issued by the Assam government forbidding the intelligentsia including educationists, teachers and professors not only from contesting election but even from participating in the campaign for a candidate in the elections. The service rules of the government-aided educational institutes were arbitrarily and whimsically framed in such a way that the teachers and professors could be placed on par with government employees. And so directive has been that as deemed government employees, they ought to stay neutral during the hustings. Thus, the right to the conscious role that the intelligentsia have always played in persuading and moulding public opinion in favour of progressive socio-political movement in every country including India has been nullified just by a stroke of the pen. The EC did not utter a single word on this brazen curtailment of basic right of an enlightened section of citizenry to elect and be elected nor had there been any protest from the parties of the establishment.

It obviates to say that the big ruling parties subservient to the capitalist class like Congress, BJP, CPI(M), DMK, AIADMK, AGP and such others are least affected by such whimsical and arbitrary curb on campaigning during elections as they hardly have anything of substance to place before the people. Rather by dint of their own acts while in power or in opposition, they stand as convicts before the electorates. So they do not dare to face the people rather fight shy of them. In that sense, they have nothing worth propagating. Theirs is a propaganda couched in deception and hoodwinking. These parties solicit vote by either singling mud on or letting fly at each other or dishing out a plethora of promises

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Election robbed of essence

Media-engineered propaganda virtually plays determinant role in election

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which they renege on with alacrity later. Yet, they have thousand and one means to publicize their poll agenda. Funded by the capitalist class, they massively advertise in the print and electronic media, even hire slots in TV and radio, daily spending millions of rupees. High-tech modes of advertisement like neon-signs, digital billboards, LED displays, SMS on cell phones and installation of large cut-outs of leaders and candidates at public places have become channels of campaigning by these big parties of the establishment. Even the government allocates specific time for the big recognized parties to campaign through TV and radio free of cost. More often than not, the ploy is operative through engineered 'expert opinions' and incessant doctored propaganda. Moreover, the monopoly-controlled media in the name of pre-election opinion polls and surveys and such other means, orient the people's mind in favour

of the parties and candidates of the ruling bourgeoisie projecting them as the only viable contestants. While the meetings of the parties not belonging to the camp of the ruling class are cancelled on this or that flimsy pretext, the election meetings of the big parties of the establishment are gala events, fadders for raising TRP of the TV channels. So there is wide coverage of these meetings in the corporate media free of cost. Even scheduled dates of their meetings are announced in the media well in advance with much fanfare. The leaders of these parties many of whom have either dubious past records or are known for their doublespeak and perfidious conduct, are projected as national figures, as saviours of the poor. Even an upstart or minion is also pitchforked as leader. The hollow speeches of these leaders make headlines in the media, receive massive coverage. In the process, the bourgeois media practically

arrogates to itself the role of deciding who is to win, who would sit in opposition, what would be the composition of the cabinet and even which portfolio would go to which minister. Everything is media-engineered. On the other hand, in the same media, there is complete blackout of the genuine pro-people anti-establishment party. Thus, while there is plethora of concessions, favouritisms, out of the turn advantages as well as administrative and media backings to the parties and forces reckoned by the ruling bourgeoisie as members of its subservient camps, there is a planned move to keep the hitherto available campaigning methods out of reach of the parties or forces not featuring in the favour list of the class and administration. What a mockery of fair play and equity!

If any administrative fiat visibly discriminates one contesting party from the other, if the discrimination is so wide that one of the parties is

denied the minimum necessary scope to present its political view to the people and thus virtually forced out of necessary public contact, the people are denied the rightful opportunity to know which candidate represents what ideology, what are the precise views of the various parties and candidates on the contemporary issues and burning problems of life and so forth. In that event, the electorate will go to the polls with incomplete or truncated information about the contestants. It is akin to impeding the very process of developing desired political and ideological consciousness among people. John Stuart Mill specifically sounded a note of caution about this "danger of a low grade of intelligence in the representative body, and in the popular opinion which controls it." This was the voice of bourgeois democracy during its rising period. But, the voice of today is that of drastic curtailment of the very scope

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A few words on the last Tamilnadu Assembly Elections

In the last Assembly elections in Tamilnadu the AIADMK Alliance registered a thumping victory with the AIADMK (146 seats) achieving a majority on its own in the 234 seat Assembly. The ruling DMK Alliance (31 seats) received a drubbing. Thus the AIADMK which was in power in 1991, 2001 made a comeback again in 2011, while the DMK which formed government in 1996 and 2006, had to go back once more to the opposition bench.

Notwithstanding this alternation of their positions vis-à-vis power, the two parties present nearly the same faces of typical regional bourgeois parties. Both of them have shared power at the Centre, if one with the BJP, the other with Congress, the two most trusted parties of the ruling capitalist class. In either case, perfectly in consonance with the major constituent of their respective alliances, Congress or BJP, DMK or AIADMK did never fail to serve the Indian capitalist class, implementing the same anti-people, pro-monopoly policies in Tamilnadu, whenever they got into power there. Both the DMK and

AIADMK have welcomed national and foreign monopolies with generous incentives, subsidies and various other sops, inviting FDI, opening up SEZs, taking steps to curb workers' rights and union activities. The last DMK government proved lethal to any or all sections of people engaged in any democratic movement, workers, students, teachers, people protesting forcible acquisition of their land and others; while Jayalalitha showed her fangs amply in 2003, as she dismissed lakhs of government employees and teachers at one stroke, declaring their strike illegal and using the draconian TESMA, foisted cases upon the employees, and even harassed the families of the leaders of the strike. Both DMK and AIADMK governments have earned notoriety for corruption. One cannot just brush off the involvement of DMK leaders including family members of the last Chief Minister in the famous 2G scam, to mention only a single instance.

Hence there was nothing to choose between the two for people to alleviate them from the mounting miseries with exorbitant price rise,

menacing unemployment, rampant cultural degeneration and so on in the present capitalist rule all over the country. DMK in the seat of previous state government, only earned wrath and indignation of people. Sensing this mood of people and in absence of any strong democratic movement and a serious political ambience in the state, the ruling capitalists whipped up an orchestrated campaign in the media, creating a hype for AIADMK and its leader, Jayalalitha. Even the Election Commission, are reportedly held partisan in seizing illegal money from one source, closing its eyes to those of the other contending party or changing officials in the bureaucracy and administration in favour of some force.

CPI(M)-CPI did not fail to come equal to this nasty game of parliamentary politics. They were allied with DMK in the last Assembly, held Jayalalitha an epitome of corruption and DMK as a force to fight against it. This time, however, they have switched over to the AIADMK and won a few seats. While the state CPI(M) leadership have extolled the

verdict as one against the corruption and anti-people policies of the DMK, the CPI sees it as a "historic verdict for retrieving democracy".

In such a situation, ours was the only party to talk about people's issues. Our campaigns hinged upon poster, walling, sale of party literatures and distribution of leaflets, and door-to-door as well as by auto and van campaigns. Here again, a varied set of bans and restrictions imposed by the Election Commission on poster, walling or even using auto, stood as veritable hindrance to a force that sustained on people's support and stood earnestly for their interest. People's response to our campaign was very heartwarming. They supported us with generous contributions, purchased literature. Even after the election, our signature campaign against the latest hike in petrol price was well received by people in T'Nagar. Based on these, efforts are being made, to give shape to people's committees at whichever level appropriate and launch different forms of movements on people's burning problems of life.

Election robbed of essence

Right to know truth must be protected under pressure of powerful movement

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of ideological campaign and glaringly discriminatory regulations. Camouflaged behind high sounding phrases of salvaging electoral process from deterioration, the freedom of expressing views irrespective of ideological convictions is on the verge of being banished.

Issue of black money

The so-called tonic prescribed for stopping infusion of black money in electioneering is another exercise in deception. People for long have been severely aggrieved at the way money has been playing virtually a determining role in the elections. In all capitalist-imperialist countries, the ruling class is keeping the legislature and government in its grip simply by flexing its financial muscle. Same has been the case in our country also. Everyone can make out that this huge funding in the election has been coming from the big corporate houses and black money owners. So the ruling bourgeoisie has a necessity to divert the accumulated people's wrath along a wrong channel. In the last election, we had observed an effort on the part of the rulers to realize that objective. The authorities held that new rule of compulsory opening of bank account by each candidate for recording receipts and payments in connection with election and mandatory periodic reporting of the details of receipts and expenditures to the election officials will prevent candidates from using unaccounted money. Absurdity par excellence! If mere opening of bank accounts could curb black money generation and utilization, then how could black money run a parallel economy so nakedly? Are not the huge black money owners, tax evaders and shady hawla operators having bank accounts? Then why does the system plead helplessness in even identifying such culprits let alone booking them for criminal economic offence? Any eye witness to the electioneering this time would vouch for the fact that nothing other than money power has played a deciding role in most of the cases. When the whole election has become an exclusive preserve of the rich, affluent, privileged and holders

of ill-gotten money, can there be a rein on black money operation simply by eyewash of procedural stringency?

Moreover, the EC claims that the latest decision to disallow candidates from distribution of voter's slips will incapacitate them in using the occasion to bribe the voters in cash or kind. This is another hoax. Do the big bourgeois parties and ruling regional outfits of different hues having formidable financial muscle and blessings of the class bribe the voters only while distributing voter's slip? They know how to carry out flurry of unlawful activities giving law the slip. There is every reason to apprehend that advancing the same plea, there could be total ban on door to door campaigning. As a matter of fact, in the last Assembly elections in Mizoram, raising the same argument, the local church issued a decree that no candidate would be allowed to visit and meet voters at their residences. Clearly, this contravenes the fundamental right to assembly and curbs freedom of speech. Both the state government and the EC remained conspicuously silent in the matter.

On the other hand, the anti-establishment smaller parties like ours who fight election based on public collection are compelled to comply with a host of procedural requirement, face the hazards of transacting bank accounts from remote rural areas and run around for submitting periodical details of accounts. Thus while the big parties of the establishment having enough manpower and money power can afford the luxury of such pointless compliances, smaller parties like ours are immensely handicapped because the relatively smaller number of party workers and volunteers remain bogged down in such unnecessary works instead of undertaking campaign activity. As a result, the smaller parties are debarred by design to utilize even whatever little opportunity is there to undertake ideological-political campaign among the voters. So while the authorities are trying to pose compliances with various procedural paraphernalias as *summum bonum* of election, it is the ideological-political campaign, the very quintessence of adult

franchise in bourgeois democracy which is made the worst casualty.

Equating political activists with branded criminals

There is another serious aspect that needs to be discussed in this connection. In the name of restricting entry of criminals to the legislature, the EC is publishing details of pending court cases or penal measures taken against each candidate as per mandatory declaration on the affidavit filed along with nomination. Facts will show this has by no means come in the way of election of arch criminals and tainted characters belonging to the big bourgeois parties to Assemblies or Parliament. But drawing a reference to details furnished on the affidavit, the EC is craftily categorizing the political activists who have been arrested, jailed or implicated in false cases while taking part in political movements and democratic struggles, also as criminals. This is a grave conspiracy to stigmatize the political activists including the leaders and cadres of the genuine revolutionary party. Unless this is foiled, democracy can in no way be saved.

People must foil bourgeois conspiracy to subvert democracy

Those who are seriously aspiring for a change ought to understand that in the period of decadent moribund capitalism, the very crux of bourgeois democracy is under attack by the bourgeois class itself. Mortally afraid of being overthrown by revolution, the ruling exploitative bourgeoisie is now scared to allow any free ideological campaign or debate. Rather, it's an endeavour to blunt consciousness, regiment thought process, cripple intellect and rob the oppressed people of their most powerful weapon, ideology and cult of ideology. The so-called electoral reforms are aimed at realizing that ulterior objective. That is why, a set of meaningless procedural amendments and apparently stringent regulatory fiats are being projected as redress mechanism while the soliciting of votes based on ideological campaign reflecting democratic spirit which constitutes

fulcrum of election is being slowly given a decent burial. The authorities are boasting that since violence during the elections has been successfully contained by firmly maintaining law and order, people have voted freely and as per their choice. But when the very process of ideological campaign has virtually been made defunct and consigned to redundancy, people are deprived of the very opportunity to frame their opinion based on desired political consciousness and the choice is artificially restricted by the class between two parties or combinations enjoying its backing, can the elections be considered free and fair? As against open vandalism and terror, election is being craftily manipulated off-stage by invisible hands. It is, therefore, clear that the high voltage proclamation of cleansing the electoral process of the aberrations and distortions is a blatant lie. The whole design militates against the basic postulates of bourgeois democracy. Already, the scope of an election victory of the genuine revolutionary party has been practically eliminated. Now, the endeavour is to debar it from creating any impact on the masses through propagation of their ideology. This poses a grave danger to people's cause and hence ought to be resisted.

Thus it is clear that cleverly capitalizing on the growing discontent of the people against the progressing degeneration of the electoral process caused by the bourgeois parties and on the pretext of freeing the system of all accumulated filth, the ruling capitalist class who cannot afford to have people disillusioned about bourgeois parliamentary democracy and embrace the course of anti-capitalist revolutionary struggle, embarked upon an eyewash of reforms through the EC, an inalienable part of oppressive bourgeois state machine, and use it to weed out the genuine representatives of the people from the very arena of contest. What will one call it other than killing two birds with one stone?

This must in no way be allowed. The oppressive ruling class cannot decide who will contest elections

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“Living relation with the masses, full-fledged devotion to tasks of revolution and unrelenting struggle to acquire proletarian culture — need of the hour” — Comrade Ranjit Dhar

(In previous issues of *Proletarian Era*, we published synopsis of the speeches delivered on the occasion of 63rd Party Foundation Day by Comrades Manik Mukherjee, Krishna Chakraborty and Asit Bhattacharyya, all members of the Polit Bureau of the Party. In this issue, we are publishing the gist of the address by Comrade Ranjit Dhar, member, Polit Bureau as the main speaker at the Party Foundation Day meeting at IMA hall, Patna, Bihar on 24 April, 2011. Responsibility of any translation error or inadequate expression lies with the editorial board of P. Era.)

Comrade Ranjit Dhar commenced his address with the words: Our party SUCI (C) was founded on this date of 24 April. On the occasion, this meeting is being held under the auspices of the Bihar State Committee. In this regard, what I wish to state at the outset is that in spite of there being a number of parties that claim themselves as Marxist- Leninist, why did Comrade Shibdas Ghosh step ahead to build up the party, SUCI (C).

To get at it, we must first answer : What is a political party, what does it stand for? In a class-divided society, a political party is nothing but the weapon, an instrument in the hands of a class to serve its own class interests, to fulfill its own class aspirations. How are the handful of capitalists and their groups being able to carry on unchecked and unhindered exploitation and plunder of hundreds of millions of poor and middle people of the country? It is only because with the independence they got hold of the state machine with the help of their own political party.

Comrade Dhar further placed the question: How could the British imperialists continue their rule and exploitation over this country for long two- hundred years, during our pre-independence days ? What were they armed with? In favour of and to serve their own interests, they had established a structure, that is a state machinery comprising military, judiciary, police and bureaucracy. It was with the help of that machinery that they occupied our country and exploited it; they plundered the natural resources and labour power of this land. Even during days of the independence movement itself, the country was divided into two classes: rich and

poor. It is never a fact that the country has been class-divided of late. In this country, while on one hand exploited masses of people



Comrade Ranjit Dhar addressing Party Foundation Day meeting in Patna

fought against the British rule, on the other hand even if they did not come out in the open face to face with the bullets and batons of the British, the handful capitalists and their groups too sided with people in their struggle against the British rule. But the two had completely different goals before them to fulfill from that struggle. All sections of common people of country were looking ahead that independence would bring them emancipation from all kinds of exploitation, whereas the owners wanted to get hold of the state machine with which the British imperialists had established their rule of plunder, and by virtue of that to establish their own rule of plunder in place of the British rule. They have been successful in achieving their goal. They could, because they had their own class party to serve the interests of the Indian capitalist class. On the other hand, the hundreds of millions of common toiling people who, during the entire independence movement valiantly faced the bullets and

batons of the British, unhesitatingly laid their life, gave up everything they had and made supreme sacrifices, did not have their genuinely own class party.

This simply attests to the fact what great significance political parties bear. People’s emancipation can never be attained without their party. The owners, in their turn, have also kept their rule of plunder in tact, with the help of their own party or parties. Look at the other

theirs. If you can not recognize the genuine party of your class, if you do not strengthen it to stand by you, how will you establish the rule of poorer toiling people overthrowing the rule of the capitalist class? If your own class party does not lead you, who else will guide you along the correct path? Who will lead you in your struggles? People of our country did never fall back from fighting in the past; there has been many a struggle in this country, lots of people have faced bullets and batons bare-chested; so many families have been ruined. But in absence of the leadership from a correct party not only we could not advance even an inch, we have rather been pushed back further and further. The simple reason is, those struggles did not have the leadership of the genuine working class party. So vital, so significant is the question of the party.

There is no dearth of parties in our country who go by the signboards of Marxism-Leninism. CPI, CPI(M), RSP, Bolshevik Party, Workers’ Party, all these parties swear by Marxism. Why, in spite of all these parties being present, the political power for ruling the country went into the hands of the capitalist class immediately with independence? It was because to achieve emancipation of exploited people a genuine working class party must develop through conducting struggles following correct methodology; none of these said parties did develop through conducting such struggles. Can a working class party be formed with a few people assembling together? Neither can there ever be a Marxist party formed merely on a few slogans of Marxism-Leninism and waving of the Red flag. The point is not that those who built those parties lacked honesty or sincerity; what they did not and could not adopt was the methodology, the particular kind of struggles through which only a correct Marxist- Leninist party could develop.

When Comrade Shibdas Ghosh found that only a tiny minority, the

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Proletarian revolutionary character can develop only on the edifice of higher proletarian culture

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capitalist class are going to usurp the entire benefits of the sacrifice in the freedom struggle made by myriads of common people of the country, he realized it as well that there was the need to form a genuine proletarian class party for accomplishing another revolution. Based on that realization that it is impossible to accomplish revolution without the genuine revolutionary party of the proletariat, and so it was all the more necessary to found a genuine proletarian revolutionary party, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh gave shape to this Party, SUCI(C) following the Leninist method of relentless struggle covering all aspects of life, at the same time adopting the correct base political line of waging struggle to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism thereupon. He further made it clear that the kernel, the living soul of this political line lies in attaining the character endowed with the culture commensurate with the demands and tasks of the socialist revolution. Mere slogans against capitalism would never pave way for revolution. Comrade Ghosh has taught us that the quintessence, the kernel of all the philosophies, all the thoughts is the culture. And thus the proletarian revolutionary character can develop only on the edifice of proletarian revolutionary culture.

Capitalist society is a society centred round individual, is a self-centric society, based upon private property and private ownership. It teaches to look after self first, and then after others and society. Capitalism is nothing but a social system, a social order which based upon private ownership, that is, upon owner-labour relationship, is directed or steered towards earning profits by the owners. On the contrary, socialism is a social system, a social order which is directed towards fulfilling social needs, being based upon social ownership, which implies participation of everybody in production. In the capitalist system production is made for profit, be it in factories, or in farms, or in mines, that is, everywhere. As a result, everything, such as food, education, housing, medical

facilities, all these are receding beyond the reach of common poor people. It means whether you have clothes to wear or not, you will have to go without them, if you do not have enough money to provide for the profits for the owners. If somebody dies of starvation, nobody in this society cares for that. Here children coming of poor families do not find scope for education, simply because they do not have money. Governments would not look after them. They would fetch taxes to the tune of thousands of crores of rupees and they would spend that money after the rich. They won't bother about the poor. And that is because, these are the governments for the rich and not the poor.

When capitalism abolished feudalism and made its advent, as a revolutionary force it brought about several advancements for the society. But today, the decadent capitalism can offer nothing to the human society. It is capitalism which stands at the root of all problems of people's life. Workers do not have jobs; children lack education; peasants are committing suicide as they can no longer maintain their family. None of these problems can be solved with capitalism existing there as it is. It is a society where you won't find affection, love; it is a society where people can not maintain their family. Such a society does not have the right to keep on existing. Surely, such a situation demands of us to come out in the path of struggle; in the path of struggle for overthrowing capitalism. Everybody, every toiling people must be roused. We will have to destroy this society that rests and survives upon the pedestal of injustice. And to lead this struggle to success we will have to strengthen the Party. Soviet Union showed how stupendous development people of all sections of life could achieve in socialism. But they could not protect and preserve socialism in the long run. It is because in the realm of culture, instead of proletarian culture gaining ground, infiltration of bourgeois individualistic culture or its impact, gradually increased in Soviet instead of waning with time. Even in socialism if the culture

commensurate with the system of social ownership can not be created and fostered, individualistic capitalist mental make-up is sure to gradually assume dominance. In spite of socialism having been established in the Soviet Union, remnants of older social thinking were still persisting. Though those could not raise their ugly head during the days of Lenin and later during the days of Stalin, in the post-Stalin days those kept on mounting ultimately endangering socialism itself. So, those who, having been associated with the SUCI (C) founded by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, have engaged themselves in revolutionary activities must acquire proletarian culture. Whether we live in our family or in a party centre, we must shun individualism from our thought process. We must carry on relentless struggle to acquire a mental make-up which stands for unqualified submission to the social interest, for happily accepting collective decisions and for not being guided by individualistic thinking.

There was a time when it was difficult to convince people of anti-Marxist trickery of the so-called communists like the CPI or the CPI(M). However, 35 years of their rule in West Bengal have virtually brushed off whatever illusions people entertained about these parties. It hardly needs any proof today to show that the CPI or the CPI(M) are not communists. Long back, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh showed that the so-called Marxists do nothing but hoodwink the masses. To deceive workers, they use strong words against the mill owners, while sustain their organizations with money from the same owners. With blessings and backing of the capitalist class, the bourgeois media bring them into the limelight. In spite of these, people's illusion about these parties is shedding apart. Even without any media propaganda, people are increasingly realizing it is the SUCI (Communist) which alone can show them the correct path of emancipation.

The bourgeois media highlight even the Maoists on a grand scale. Don't, therefore, think that they command enormous strength.

Except in certain pockets of few states like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh, they have no existence. It is not possible to organize revolution from some pockets in the jungles, isolated from the masses, through individual killings by chanting the name of Mao Zedong. Communists do not indulge in the politics of individual killings. They fight against an order to overthrow it and bring in a new order. References to Mao notwithstanding, these self-styled Maoists fail to see that the socio-economic condition obtaining in India is widely different from that of China. Revolution in India will not follow the Chinese path. Fully aware of this truth, the bourgeois propaganda machinery extends copious coverage to their actions. The revolution in India can be achieved only by following the base political line enunciated by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh.

Conditions for revolution have matured in the country in all respects. The revolutionary party is also there. What it lacks is the required strength. Hence this party has to be strengthened by all means and with all might. The situation had never been so congenial to make the party stronger and more powerful to come equal to the task.

The SUCI(C) was founded in 1948 in an outlying corner of West Bengal. Today Party has spread to almost all states of India. Although our strength falls short of the necessity, we are a force to be reckoned with. In the state of Bihar too there is an excellent possibility for our expansion. But the problem is that we do not devote as much time for that as every one of us should. The lifestyle of the Party leaders at least should be such that they breathe and think of revolution round the clock. They should always live with the masses like the way fish live in water. If we are able to keep such a living relation with the masses, devote ourselves whole time to the tasks of revolution and engage in the unrelenting struggle to acquire proletarian culture—then and then only will the celebration of the Party Foundation Day be meaningful.

Brief perusal of the last Assam Assembly elections

State Legislative Assembly elections for Assam was held on 4 and 11 March with counting of votes held on 13 May. Giving the lie to all so-called post-poll surveys by the bourgeois media that there would be a hung Assembly, the ruling Congress party secured a robust absolute majority (of total 126, it won in 78 and its partner BPF in 12 seats). The opposition was reduced to a shambles, AGP from 24 to 10 and BJP from 10 to 5. The AIDUF, a party which came into existence just before the last Assembly election projecting itself as the saviour of the Muslim minority community people and spreading Muslim fanaticism, raised its tally from 10 to 18. However, numbers do not speak of the dirty manipulations that these parties undertook, as they tried to forge combinations to reach the power. Naturally, the question that haunts any right thinking person is how far the poll mandate reflects the true aspiration of people of the state.

The present election campaign started when both central and state governments led by the Congress had been charged with strong allegations of huge scams of thousands of crores of rupees like 2G Spectrum and CWG scams under the central government and 1000 crore rupees scam in the

North Cachar Autonomous Council under the state government. Added to these, there were corruption with fake ration cards for the PDS, loot and plunder of funds for different developmental work. On the other hand, rise of price of all essential commodities leading to destitution of people, lack of any initiative towards minimum industrialization and development of fast communication to work as palliative for menacing unemployment, disastrous situation in education and health, continuous rise in electric tariff, higher land tax etc., none of these spoke in favour of the UPA or Congress.

But there was no left and democratic alternative to people as their instrument of struggle. Our repeated appeals to other left parties simply fell flat on them, as CPI(M)-CPI have abandoned the path of movement and have indulged themselves in opportunistic parliamentary politics to win somehow some seats through direct or tacit understanding with regional or other bourgeois parties. Thus the bourgeois media could easily pose two combinations as alternatives to people, one led by the Congress and the other combining AGP- BJP. Both these tried to woo votes by pursuing their chauvinist and communal line raising the bogie of deportation of

so-called foreign nationals. The ruling Congress pushed itself ahead of others in this nefarious game, and appeasing the AASU agreed to update the NRC in a dangerously modified form for Assam. Time and again, our party brought out its implications, even on the pages of *Proletarian Era*. It may suffice here to reiterate that the move was a conspiracy hatched with AASU to anyhow stamp few lakhs of minority people as foreign nationals. Mounting grievances thus generated among the minority community people, this only helped forces like the AIDUF to raise their ugly head, benefitting both the Congress and the AIDUF. Besides, the major fraction of the ULFA which had surrendered for a negotiated settlement ultimately played in favour of the Congress from behind the curtain.

The bourgeois parties took advantage of this murky political situation and without paying any heed to the so-called avowed watchful sentinels of democracy, the Election Commission, they squandered the huge fund of black money to purchase votes, turning the election to a sheer nasty game of money. People, without any viable alternative, groped in the dark.

With our limited strength, our party all-through gave exposure to

this nefarious game. It also made it clear that in this oppressive capitalist system, election and a change of government through that means, can bring no change in people's life. It requires a united democratic movement of all sections of oppressed people, their mass and class struggles made conducive to preparation for revolutionary movement to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism, to help people look for their freedom from exploitation, oppression and discrimination. However, taking elections as a political battle included in the same process, our party contested 25 seats, some even in districts where we had never fought before. Common people at large appreciated our principled political stand, distinctly in contrast to those of all other parties. True, they failed ultimately to come out of the euphoria created by the bourgeois media and parties subservient to the ruling capitalist class and their appreciation for us was not reflected in the ballot box. It now remains the task of the party to consolidate this political-moral support of people into organizational shape, turning those people as forces of democratic movements, that the party is committed to continue.

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Inside Capitalist Russia today

After dismantling of socialism in Soviet Union through counter-revolution triggered by revisionist conspiracy aided and abetted by reactionary world capitalist-imperialist camp, the people of Russia are rising in protest against oppressive capitalist rule. Here are some of the news of the struggle of suffering toiling masses of capitalist Russia.

Flour Mill workers' wrest demands

Workers of the Mikhailovsky Flour Mill affiliated to PAVA- one of the largest grain processing enterprises in Russia went on strike and were successful in getting the management sign an agreement, as a result of which they stand to gain by wage- increase. Vladislav Tsvil-chairman of the strike committee was reported saying that the authorities had to give in to the workers' demands because they were able to forge out unity and solidarity among themselves.

Workers in Chelyabinsk on protest over unpaid wages

At the Chelyabinsk Confectionary Factory workers went on strike to protest unpaid holiday wages for over two years. The management of the factory refused to meet the delegation of striking workers. However their strike was supported by the workers of other trade unions. The owner of this factory is a private Russian Bank.

Students on protest against decrease in education funding

In Latvia—belonging to

erstwhile Soviet Union and now an independent capitalist state, students took out a demonstration on the streets of Riga- the capital, to protest against the government having issued the direction to stop the funds so long allotted for higher education and culture. The students carried banners that read "Hands off Higher Education", "Do not stop funds for cultural activities", etc.

Representatives of different organizations and movements joined in . The Association of Latvian Trade Unions too had their representation in this demonstration. Students of the Latvian Academy of Arts, Latvian Academy of Music and the Latvian Academy of Culture had organized the protest demonstration.

Russian Prosecutor's Office collecting data on students in movements

St. Petersburg State University Administration are reported to be collecting data on students taking part in organizations, protest actions and their political affiliations to mark anti-establishment agitators.

University authorities have ordered the students through a notice to provide the information on their participation in social movements or street demonstrations.

The Russian Students' Union has protested stating that such an act is against the Russian Constitution that portends : "any dissemination of information about the private life of a person without his or her consent is not permitted."

This shows how flagrantly democratic rights are curbed in Putin's Russia. (Source:- North Star Compass, March-April, 2011)

Kerala Assembly elections in retrospect

The assembly election in Kerala has resulted in formation of government by the Congress led UDF by a slender margin. In the 140 member house UDF have won only 72 seats whereas the CPI(M) led LDF could secure 68. What kind of governance with what extent of stability, this government is going to present to the state is already evident from naked and fierce interplay of communal power centres, mutually conflicting groups and petty sectarian interests within the front partners at the stage of ministry formation itself. Such a situation with communal forces and vested power brokers figuring out as decisive political factors could develop in the state in the past two or three decades, much from the contribution of the LDF, more so of CPI(M). For petty parliamentary gains, the latter utilized one or the other of these forces often with a fraudulent theoretical cover and Congress did not fail to follow suit with greater alacrity. Hence people

of the state cannot expect this Congress-led UDF government to be any different in character from the central UPA Government, led by Congress, and most anti-people, nakedly pro-monopoly and corrupt to the core.

On the other side, the preceding government of CPI(M)-led LDF, were marked by rising indignation and wrath of people against their despotic, corrupt, arrogant deeds, naked pro-monopoly stances and totally group ridden misrule, glaringly recorded in their defeat even in their strongholds in the last local body elections just six months back. Yet certain factors could save the Kerala CPI(M) from an ignominious debacle they suffered in West Bengal in a much similar situation. The first and foremost was the absence of a powerful mass movement covering the vast parts of the state. In spite of all our efforts towards building up formidable mass movements on different burning problems of people's life, those

could not be enough to decisively influence the political situation. Thus people were left with an artificially polarized situation into UDF and LDF, amply whipped up by the ruling capitalist class and their subservient appendages like media, or even the EC. Both these combinations have proved their worth to the monopolists and so the latter had no hesitation to reward them with their support. But people had nothing to expect from either of the two; both were similarly, if not equally corrupt, anti-people and pro-monopoly. Hence both the contending combinations were crowned with a helpless, negative voting. Besides, compared to LDF, UDF was fraught with much bitter internal squabbles, back-stabbing etc. CPI(M) fully aware of the inevitable doom awaiting it, pulled all its strength together to fuel and run its election machinery, as far as practicable. It might have been augmented with an 'Achuthanandan Factor', again carefully whipped up by the party, CPI(M), and the bourgeois media, cunningly shifting the blame of the past misdeeds upon the official party leadership.

Added to these are the array of undemocratic interferences and undue restrictions from the Election Commission, with which public election campaigning is being taken over by the print and electronic media largely controlled and monitored by none other than the monopoly houses and capitalists. As the major parliamentary parties have nothing to offer to people with their pro-monopoly, anti-people policies, and are increasingly being involved in corruption, mutual bickering, and slanderous campaigns, such campaign without political discussions turns out convenient to

them. The ruling class, in their turn, could easily project the desired forces as alternatives. But it hinders forces like our party, which stand for people's interests to make room in the campaign, robbing people of another scope for ventilating their choice.

It was our party alone which earnestly attempted to bring the basic questions concerned with people's life to the fore and discuss on the task while facing the election. Hundreds of public meetings and propaganda squads, sale of literature including *Unity*, our Malayalam Party organ, in thousands and distribution of several topical leaflets in lakhs, all this was part of our campaign, spread over 11 districts in 26 constituencies. We emphasized the need for building up mighty democratic mass movements upholding proletarian cultural-ethical values and thereby giving shape to a real people's alternative in face of the all-out attack on people's life by the capitalist class. People everywhere keenly attended and received our views with great appreciation, helping us materially and financially. Wherever there were mass movements under our leadership in recent times, people, who had come closer to us, came out with emotional support in the election campaign too. Party district organizations were entrusted with the task of setting up election machinery, pulling resources and conducting the campaign work for their respective constituencies. It strengthened lower level organizations, helped those earn valuable experiences and improve capabilities of comrades, even mobilizing inactive cadres and the supporting rank. The political battle we took up was thus rewarded with marked organizational gains and more penetration among the toiling masses.

Election robbed of essence

Contd. from page 4

and who will not, what the contesting candidates will speak and how they will speak or conduct themselves, whom only the people will choose as their representative to the legislature. In that event, there will only be a façade of democracy stripped of its essence. What else is that other than a precursor of fascism? People should remain ever vigilant against vile bourgeois ploy to subvert democracy under the camouflage of strengthening it. It ought to dawn upon their consciousness that there are definite methods and course of propagating truth. Every citizen has the right to

know the truth. Truth is beauty. So an attack on the very process of knowing the truth is an infringement of that inalienable right, an act of dispossessing life of beauty. This right has to be protected. And the only way to safeguard this right is to build up countrywide sustained organized powerful movement against the sinister bourgeois design to butcher democracy. Under pressure of such movement, the government must be forced to withdraw all such stipulations of crippling democracy euphemized as electoral reforms. We call upon our countrymen to assert their power through movement.



AIDSO organized Education Convention in Cuttack on 22 May against Centre's automatic promotion policy till class VIII, now being implemented by BJD-led Orissa state government. Renowned educationists and intellectuals attended the convention.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : PROVASH GHOSH