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– Lenin

Opportunism in the upper ranks of the working-class movement is bourgeois socialism, not proletarian socialism. It has been shown in practice that working-class activists who follow the opportunist trend are better defenders of the bourgeoisie than the bourgeois themselves. Without their leadership of the workers, the bourgeoisie could not remain in power.

Glorious Victory of Electricity Consumers in West Bengal

A glorious chapter was added to the history of mass movement in the state when the All Bengal Electricity Consumers' Association (ABECA) scored a significant victory in its ongoing movement against the anti-people electricity policies of the CPI(M)-led West Bengal Government. Following a mass hunger strike till death of electricity consumers at Esplanade, Calcutta, beginning on 3rd January, 2006 and lasting for four days, it wrested some concessions from the unwilling hands of the CPI(M) chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee and secured a time-bound assurance of redressal of the other demands.

As is well-known, the Central and the state governments, pursuing the anti-people policies of globalization, liberalization and privatization, have reduced electricity, an essential service and component of production process, to a commodity based on commercialization and privatization. The policy formulation, enacted by the Centre as the Electricity Act, 2003 was cunningly adopted to enable the electricity producing bodies reap super

profit on the one hand and supply electricity to the big industries and MNCs at lower tariff rates through eliminating the so-called cross-subsidy, on the other. As a direct fallout of this twin policy, power tariffs for the poor and the middle class people, small scale industries, trade and the agricultural consumers have been increasing by leaps and bounds. For its implementation, the Act provided for setting up an Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) by each state.

The CPI(M)-led West Bengal government, despite its occasional anti-globalization verbiage to hoax the people and keep its "leftist" image intact was a party to this anti-people conspiracy. Basudeb Acharya, the present leader of the CPI(M) in Parliament was a member of the Parliamentary Committee that framed the Act. With so many MPs in Parliament, the CPI(M) and its associates did not oppose the Act on the floor of the House. While chief ministers of some other states were opposed to the Act, the CPI (M) chief minister of West Bengal, Buddhadeb

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Central Committee Severely Condemns Tribal Massacre in Orissa

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in a statement issued on 3rd January '06 severely condemned the bestial unprovoked indiscriminate police firing on poor tribal people in Kalinga Nagar, Orissa, on 2nd January last, killing 13 men and women and grievously injuring many. These extremely penury-stricken tribal people, said Comrade Mukherjee, were quite justly opposing their unjust forcible eviction from the arable land they were solely dependent on for bare survival, by the monopolist owners without giving adequate compensation or guaranteeing their future source of income and habitation.

Comrade Mukherjee demanded immediate resignation of the totally anti-people BJD-led Naveen Pattanaik government of Orissa and called upon the people of the whole country to rise in vehement protest against such brutal massacre of common people seeking to protect their life and livelihood and demanded immediate stoppage of all such cruel inhuman eviction of the most wretched sections of the toiling masses without any reasonable compensation and provision of rudimentary safeguard to their bare minimum economic needs for subsistence.

Called to observe 7 January as the All India Protest Day

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in a statement issued on 5th January called upon the people of the country to observe "All India Protest Day" on January 07, 2006 against the beastly savagery of the police that raved wild on the tribal people legitimately resisting their most unjust eviction from their cultivable land and habitation by the Tata industrial house at Kalinga Nagar, Orissa on 2nd January last in which 13 men and women were killed on the spot and many sustained grievous injury. He urged upon the countrymen to demand on that day :

1. Institution of a high power judicial enquiry to probe into the incident ;
2. Payment of adequate compensation to the families of the dead and injured ;
3. Immediate stoppage of this most cruel forcible eviction of the downtrodden tribal people without paying them adequate compensation, and providing them guarantee of employment in the proposed industry slated to be set up in the land so acquired by force;
4. Immediate stoppage of such brutal attack on their life and livelihood.

Organized sustained mass movement can bend down despotic government

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Bhattacharjee, was the first to put his signature to the assent. His government has been outdoing the other state governments in faithfully implementing the anti-people, pro-monopoly Act. Even before enactment of the Electricity Act, this government abolished the so-called cross-subsidy in the name of development and reduced electricity to a commodity just for maximizing profit. To mislead and hoax the people, the West Bengal Government cunningly poses that it is helpless in the matter as its hands are tied by the Electricity Act, 2003 and the West Bengal Electricity Regulatory Commission (WBERC) and it is forced to adopt the anti-people measures. This is an outright lie, for even the Electricity Act in its clause 108 provides that a state government may, in the public interest, direct the ERC in policy matters and to follow such directions is mandatory for the ERC.

Whereas in most of the other states the governments run by bourgeois parties, even while giving effect to the anti-people Electricity Act, have shown some consideration by providing subsidy to give some relief to the consumers, particularly the Below Poverty Line i.e. BPL and agricultural consumers, the "leftist" West Bengal government has shown no such mercy. As a result, electricity tariffs for domestic and agricultural consumers in West Bengal are the highest in the country. The ABCEA has been conducting movement against these phenomenal tariff hikes for over a decade.

Last year, the blow of fresh spurt in tariff hit the consumers, particularly the 100 per cent hike on tariff for agricultural consumers for 2005-06, unprecedented in the country, which opened up the prospect of a bleak future before the agriculturists on the eve of the Boro sowing season. At least five farmers in the state caught in debt trap committed suicide. The ABCEA lost no time in stepping up resistance movement of the consumers. It appealed in writing to the WBERC chairman, the state power minister, the WBSEB chairman and the governor of West Bengal, one after another. But there was no response. On August 25 last, 20,000 peasants

with prior notice came in a mass deputation in Calcutta to hand over a memorandum to the chief minister. But the chief minister, instead of meeting them went away to Indonesia to hobnob with the monopolists of Salem group. On October 27, 5000-strong consumers' mass deputation led by the ABCEA went to the office of the chairman, WBSEB, at Salt Lake, Calcutta. The police came down with a pre-planned, savage attack on the peaceful consumers, showering brickbats on them and then resorting to tear-gassing and lathi-charge followed by 14 rounds of firing. 60 were seriously injured, and 2 received bullet wounds. Terror was let loose in the locality. Distinguished personalities of the state and the media compared the outrage to the police brutality at Gurgaon, a few months back. Besides, police are being sent to villages to disconnect the electric supply to cultivators who had been boycotting bill-payment, on a large scale when the boro paddy cultivation season was fast approaching.

As the last resort, the ABCEA addressed a letter to the chief minister on 26th December seeking his immediate intervention for redressal of the legitimate grievances and the police atrocities in order to resolve the situation. The letter also notified that if there was no positive response from the government by 2nd January, 2006, electricity consumers would be forced to sit in a mass hunger strike unto death on and from 3rd January at Esplanade, the hub of the busy city life of Calcutta.

The appeal fell on deaf ears. There was no response from the government. With all avenues of a negotiated settlement thus exhausted, the mass hunger strike began in the afternoon of 3rd January on a charter of demands after garlanding the portrait of immortal martyr Jatin Das who created history by dying in British prison after 63 days of fasting. 945 electricity consumers led by Sanjit Biswas, the ABCEA general secretary participated with grim resolve.

As the days of the mass hunger strike unto death wore on, mass support to it snowballed. People from all walks of life thronged the venue of hunger strike to express

sympathy and support. Distinguished personalities from the fields of literature, judiciary, science and sports, eminent intellectuals and mass leaders came and addressed the gatherings expressing sympathy and support. Singers of repute, singing groups and drama groups performed in support of the movement. The air was filled with strains of patriotic songs and songs expressing deep fervour and resolve of mass movement. Mass organizations including AIKKMS, UTUC-LS, AIMSS, AIDS0,

forcible disconnection of power supply to the consumers who had been boycotting the power bills since July last, and agreed to waive the late payment surcharge that had been levied. The chief minister also promised an enquiry at magistrate level into the police atrocities at Salt Lake, Calcutta on October 27 last. He further promised a grant of Rs.25,000/- from the chief minister's relief fund as expenses for the medical treatment of bullet-hit Khuddar Sheikh. On this basis, the hunger strike was called off by



A part of the huge procession of electricity consumers in Calcutta before the start of the hunger strike

AIDYO, State Government Employees's Federation (Nabaparjay) and others came in big processions to greet the hunger strikers and express solidarity with them.

At first the dais erected for the occasion was forcibly pulled down and dismantled by the police. But the hunger strike went on. When some of the strikers, who had fallen sick, were forcibly removed by the police to hospital, they still resisted all attempts to force-feed them there. With the condition of the hunger strikers deteriorating fast, prominent intellectuals of the state, in a statement appealed to the chief minister to intervene immediately. At last, through public pressure, and being alarmed at the prospect of repercussion of the possible death of some hunger strikers, the government was forced to bow down and the chief minister had to agree to meet the ABCEA representatives unconditionally to discuss their demands.

At the meeting on 6th January, the chief minister had to accede to the demand of state subsidy for electricity tariff and assured that he would intimate the amount of subsidy or whether electricity could be supplied to agriculture @50 paise per unit, to the ABCEA in writing within 7 days. He also instructed for putting a stop to the

the ABCEA in the evening of 6th January. But the movement goes on. ABCEA has announced that mass hunger strike on a larger scale will be undertaken if the government goes back on its words.

The movement and its success have added a glorious chapter to the history of mass movement in the state. Mass hunger strike unto death on this scale on legitimate demands is, to our knowledge, unprecedented in the country, during the freedom struggle or in the post-independence days. Although the monopoly-controlled mass media have underplayed and virtually blacked out the movement and its success, its message is reaching out to millions of homes. This victory is heartening and generates hope all round. Lessons of the movement and its present victory are enduring. These are, firstly, that there is no alternative to mass movement in wresting any concession or relief from the exploitative capitalist system. This is a slap in the face to the motivated propaganda in the monopoly-controlled media that mass movement is fruitless, it achieves nothing. And secondly, organized, disciplined and sustained mass movement is invincible and can achieve even the seemingly impossible.

It is for all of us to imbibe the lessons.

Explosive Sri Lanka

Which is the way out to a lasting solution ?

For decades together, Sri Lanka has virtually been known as a country torn by violent and nearly incessant strife between the Sinhalese and the Tamil communities. Of the latter, the LTTE or the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the leading militant Tamils' organization, demands independent Tamil state carved out of the prevailing Sri Lankan state for the Tamil-dominated northeastern parts of the island country, based on the Tamils' right to self-determination. It has already earned ill reputation as a dreaded outfit for their methods of individual assassination and terrorization to realize their demands. In the name of combatting such an organization, the Sri Lankan army in its turn, has made a mark of achieving equal, if not greater notoriety for mass-killing or uprooting minority ruthlessly.

The country faced presidential election on November 17 last, an exercise oft repeated in this war- and crisis-ravaged land. The present election was also marred by violence and explosions and virtual boycott of polls in the Tamil-dominated northeastern regions of the country. There figures even recorded 1465 polled out of 701,938 eligible or 1 out of 91000 or 4 out of 84000 in this or that sector. Mahinda Rajapakse, hitherto the Prime Minister in the existing government of the ruling United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) won by a minimum margin over Ranil Wickremesinghe, head of the opposition, United National Party (UNP). Said to be a hardliner vis-à-vis the Tamils, Rajapakse was supported by the JVP or Peoples' Liberation Front, a Trotskyite outfit on one hand, and the National Heritage Party of the Buddhist monks on the other. Wickremesinghe, once made the Prime Minister by Chandrika Kumaratunga, the then President, was also brought down by herself subsequently. These apart, in spite of the Norway-mediated peace negotiations since 2002, there are reports of attacks from both sides, LTTE and the Sri Lankan Army, including a recent incident of LTTE attack on Lankan Navy patrols. All these merely indicate the confusing political trends of the country and disturb any right-thinking person with pinching questions : What is

this going on in this small country? How could the people who constituted one people of one nation, reach a situation where they are virtually cleaved into two camps, bearing mutual distrust and hostility towards each other with no apparent sign of reconciliation? How would this deadlock end to reach a lasting rational solution to the problem centring round the Tamil-speaking population of Sri Lanka? Obviously, answers need a thorough and in-depth analysis.

Though with seeds of disunity, Sri Lankan nation state embraced both Sinhalese and Tamils

Historically speaking, Sri Lanka emerged as a sovereign modern bourgeois nation state with the end of its colonial rule. The Sri Lankan independence struggle against the British imperialism though largely dormant and with both compromising and uncompromising elements and trends in it, developed as a single struggle of that country, embracing both the Sinhala and the Tamil communities. The Ceylon National Congress (CNC), a broad platform of varied forces formed in 1919, was in the leadership, itself being dominated by a compromising, yet powerful section of the rising Sri Lankan national bourgeoisie. At least in the early days of the movement, it spoke for greater autonomy and not independence and even opposed universal suffrage. Anagarika Dharmapala and such other revivalist-reformist leaders, represented a parallel, more uncompromising trend supported by the peasantry, small industrialists and businessmen and workers, including plantation labour of Indian Tamils (beginning with introduction of coffee in 1830s and tea in 1880s), which tried to cut across the old barriers of caste, language and religion. Subsequently from this arose a more secular youth movement, committed to Poorana Swaraj (Complete Self-Rule) and national unity and then a left-leaning movement, including the Marxist Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP). The leftists, however, later developed deviations like Trotskyite or other trends, thereby leaving the leadership of the independence struggle with the compromising national bourgeoisie. The latter

controlled the State Council, enjoyed privileges of ministry and administration and won the 1947 elections under the leadership of a coalition of the United National Party (UNP) of DS Senanayake, the Sinhala Maha Sabha of SWRD Bandaranaike and the Tamil Congress of G.G. Ponnambalam, ultimately to form the government after independence and establish the rule of Sri Lankan capitalism.

The Sri Lanka nation state emerging through this singular independence struggle against the British imperialism under the leadership of the Sri Lankan national bourgeoisie thus embraced both the Sinhala-speaking and the Tamil-speaking communities. However, it developed at a time when world capitalism had become crisis-ridden and moribund and had entered the stage of imperialism and proletarian revolution. The bourgeoisie as a class had become reactionary and mortally afraid of revolutionary struggles of people. Thus they could not and did not lead the nation-building processes to their logical culmination by bringing about all-out unity of people, irrespective of language, religion, caste, race and such others. Rather, in the haste of assuming power, they left the tasks of social and cultural revolutions essential for democratization of society, unfulfilled, leaving out the seeds of social and cultural disunity to remain in the society. This history was repeated in Sri Lanka too, where as we stated above the leadership of the national freedom struggle rested with the upcoming national bourgeoisie of the country. Thus the Sri Lanka nation state grown in the decadent stage of capitalism, grew with inherent weaknesses. During the colonial rule, the Tamil-speaking population, by virtue of their being educationally more advanced were at the helm of bureaucracy and even dominant in administration. Backwardness of the Sinhala-speaking population, in its turn, might have worked up some injured misgivings among them. After the independence, it was required to take note of this latent current and take proper steps to eliminate such differences between the two communities as might have been existing and thereby dispel the misgivings of the Sinhala-speaking

population towards their Tamil-speaking brethren. But the Sri Lankan bourgeoisie, coming dominantly from the Sinhala-speaking community and now in power, looked the other way round. They played upon the latent crack to develop it into wide cleavage, in an effort to work out a deep-rooted design.

On assuming power the Sri Lankan bourgeoisie set out with the aim of consolidating capitalism there as best as they could. However, at that time the world capitalism-imperialism itself had entered the third phase of acute recession. The shadow of crisis soon swamped the Sri Lankan capitalist economy. Country's economic problems became apparent; parallel to it increased the plight of people, the Sinhala-speaking and the Tamil-speaking population alike, as the ruling class went on shifting the burden of the crisis on to the people. At the same time, strong popular resentment grew in reaction even going to the extent of massive, sometimes violent movement.

Sri Lanka bourgeoisie brought down naked chauvinist discrimination and oppression on Tamil-speaking community

In spite of such mounting resentment of common toiling people, irrespective of language, or religion, the country was also marked by the absence of any united massive democratic movement involving all sections of oppressed population. The Sri Lankan ruling class, the capitalists, did not fail to take advantage of this situation. They adopted the treacherous heinous move of bringing disunity among the people, making use of its seeds that were already there. To play upon the complex in the Sinhala-speaking people at the edge the Tamil-speaking people enjoyed during the colonial rule, bourgeois chauvinist forces took the rein. They fomented Sinhalese chauvinism, which ultimately in its course gave birth to counter Tamil chauvinism. The trends, in effect, distracted both the Sinhala-speaking and the Tamil-speaking population from identifying the root cause of their misery and exploitation, that is the capitalism.

Major bourgeois political

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Notwithstanding seeds of disunity, Sinhalese and Tamils together made Sri Lankan nation

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parties like the United National Party (UNP), (led by D. S. Senanayake, the first prime minister who met accidental death) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) (led by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, the country's fourth prime minister who was later assassinated) shared the governmental power virtually by rotation. They differed in their phrases and slogans; the UNP retained rather a rightist stance; while the SLFP put on radical cloak of bringing in nationalization of banks or foreign capitals, land reforms and so on, really with a view to serving no more than the aggregate interest of the capitalists. By virtue of this cloak they, however, won the parliamentary support of so-called leftist parties and thereby could create more confusions in the people about their real motive. Whatever be the apparent differences, both the parties identified themselves with the interest of the ruling capitalist class and indulged in fomenting bourgeois chauvinism, primarily with an eye to capture the imagination and support of the majority Sinhala-speaking community to meet their parliamentary ends.

Thus, one after another there came draconian, divisive enactments. Going against the commonly accepted idea that after independence English will be replaced with Sinhala and Tamil, as the official languages of administration, Bandaranaike announced in his 1956 election campaign, that only Sinhala would be given official status as both Tamil and English were cultural imports. In addition, the 2,500th death anniversary of the Buddha coincided with the 1956 election, electrifying the political atmosphere. Shortly after its victory, the Bandaranaike government declared Sinhala the only one official language. Protests from the Sri Lankan Tamils were followed by a communal riot in May 1958. Bandaranaike government forcibly relocated more than 25,000 Tamil refugees from Sinhalese areas to Tamil areas in the north. After Bandaranaike was assassinated in September 1959, his widow, Sirimavo Bandaranaike enforced the same language policy and declaring a state of emergency suppressed Tamil political activity and

resentment. The UNP won the next March 1965 election with support from the Tamils, replaced the Christian sabbath with the Buddhist poya full-moon holiday and tried to earn favour with the Tamils by enacting the Tamil Regulations in 1966, designed to make Tamil a language officially "parallel" to Sinhala in Tamil-speaking regions. Sinhalese - Tamil strife, however, went on increasing. In the next 1970 election, a new United Front (Samagi Peramuna) of Sirimavo Bandaranaike's SLFP, the LSSP and CPSL (the two so-called leftist parties which were, however, shunned by Sirimavo by 1977) emerged with pseudo-radicalism and pseudo-leftism combined to oppose the UNP for its alliance with the two main Tamil political groups. Upset with the economic and political crisis, the government promulgated a new constitution in 1972, whereby it did away with federalism and concentrated more legislative, executive, and judicial power in the National State Assembly. A new constitutional status for Buddhism replaced existing provisions for minorities. The constitution also lowered university admission criteria for the Sinhalese students, in effect, drastically telling upon Tamil students' chances for taking admission in higher education. In addition, recommendation of a parliamentarian was made necessary to secure a government job. This, too, affected the Tamils. In face of countrywide mounting unemployment, they further lost access to public employment because their political representatives, especially after the 1977 general election, had very limited influence.

Oppression on Tamil-speaking community took shape of national oppression, only to give rise to secessionist call from the Tamil

Naturally these draconian measures had their grave implications. They virtually cleaved a country vertically into two camps. Two powerful communities living in broad harmony as parts of a nation were placed face to face with mutual distrust and hostility. The government working for the ruling Sri Lankan bourgeoisie, emasculated the Tamils, snatched away their rights and privileges one

after another, trying effectively to reduce them into second-class citizens. Obviously these gave birth to strong resentments among the Tamil people. Again, what was required, was to launch united democratic struggle under a genuine Marxist leadership involving both the Tamils and the Sinhalese common people, against the divisive, chauvinistic policies which had their roots in the prevailing capitalist system, and which stemmed from the design of the ruling class towards disuniting the two communities with a view to consolidating and continuing their rule of exploitation on both of them. Only that would have been also the course to defend the democratic rights of the Tamils that were being snatched away. But the parties in Sri Lanka that professed leftism, were either revisionist-reformist or Trotskyite in character. Instead of putting up effective resistance against these chauvinist policies they preferred to go with the current, extending support to this or that major ruling party. Thus people's resentment could not be crystallized or channelized into desired united democratic movement against these policies. On the contrary, the situation gradually reached a stage where it gave birth to national oppression of the Tamil-speaking community by the Sinhala-speaking community. Bourgeois chauvinism, coming up in the form of the Sinhalese chauvinism reached the end it had been running after. It gave birth to counter Tamil chauvinism, to be fomented by none other than the equally aspirant Tamil bourgeoisie. They raised the demand of Tamil Eelam, that is a separate land for the Tamils to be carved out of the Sri Lankan state. The demand was formally embraced by the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) in May 1976 as also in its election manifesto in 1977 election. It went as follows: "The Tamil Nation must take the decision to establish its sovereignty in its homeland on the basis of its right to self-determination." (TULF Election manifesto 1977)

However, as Marxists we know that demand for secession is no answer for bringing an end to national oppression within a bourgeois national state, which developed through one single struggle against imperialism and

feudalism, as it was the case with Sri Lanka. In the ultimate analysis such a national oppression of one weaker nationality by a dominant nationality is nothing but an offshoot of the capitalist oppression itself; it falls within the category of exploitation of man by man. In this era of decadent capitalism, no bourgeois national state can help build a homogeneous people going over communal, racial, linguistic or other divisions. Rather it lives on people's divisions and disunity on these grounds and it discriminates people. Unequal growth of different nationalities and unjust exploitation of weaker nationality by a dominant nationality are thus characteristics of the capitalist system itself. The system, unable to solve its unassailable crisis in this era of decadent capitalism, always tries to shift the burden of the crisis on to the people. At the same time, lest there developed against capitalism any massive organized united movement of exploited people of all nationalities and communities, the ruling capitalist class unleashes among other divisive measures, oppression and discrimination of weaker nationalities. Through fomenting such nationality chauvinism, they bring about disunity between the toiling masses of the dominant and the weaker nationalities, set them against each other and thereby distract them both from identifying their main enemy, the root cause of their plight and exploitation, that is the capitalist system and its rule itself.

Ending national oppression is linked intimately with ending of capitalism

Thus in a bourgeois national state with the exploitative capitalist system entrenched in it, to end with oppression on a nationality, the working class and the entire masses of oppressed toiling people face the task of overthrowing capitalism. From outside, we do not know how far the LTTE has incorporated any agenda to fulfill this task through their movement for freeing the Tamil people from oppression. Had they done it, they were expected to include the oppressed masses of the Sinhala-speaking people also in a united fight of them and the Tamils together against the ruling Sri Lankan bourgeoisie. Rather from whatever information we could

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Massacre of tribal people in Orissa

Unprecedented Orissa Bandh All India Protest Day observed

The Orissa police has created a new record of barbarity by killing 13 protesting Adivasis including a woman and a boy on 2nd January last at Kalinga Nagar of Sukinda. This savage atrocity of the police under the Orissa government's supervision in the interest of the monopolists like the Tatas and the Jindals was preplanned. The presence of 25 platoons of armed forces is ample proof of this plan to brutally crush any protest demonstration. In fact, this ghastly massacre has surpassed all the previous instances of the kind at Paradwip, Burla, Kashipur, Gopalpur and Surana of the same state.

Condemning this barbaric killing the State Committee of our party, SUCI gave the call of Orissa Bandh on 7th January. On the same day, an All-India Protest Day was observed at the call of the Central Committee.

With the plea of industrialization the Orissa government has been doling out all the natural resources of the state to the capitalists of home and abroad. On the other hand, the Adivasis and other sections of the common people whose lands are being taken away have either been given a pittance as compensation or deprived totally of it on the ostensible plea that since they have no patta in their possession, they are not the owners of the land. It is

known to all that there are so many tribes who have been farming the land over long years but did not know the urgent necessity of possessing patta of their lands. The governments also did not discharge their responsibility of handing over this patta of the lands to them. Today all the state governments have been vying with one another to attract monopoly capital in the name of so-called industrialization. For this they are helping these monopolists to plunder the natural resources through merciless eviction of the poor peasants without thinking the future of the country even. The Orissa government too did neither compensate the tribal

people of Kalinga Nagar nor made any arrangement for their rehabilitation.

SUCI has long been conducting movement in Jajpur district and the whole of Orissa on this issue. After this massacre movement is further stepped up. Protest demonstration was organized on 6th January before the Jajpur Collectorate and Sukinda Tehsil office. The tribal people continued their road blockade. The Bandh called on 7th January was a total success, rather unprecedented in Orissa. Police arrested hundreds of SUCI workers when they were campaigning in support of the bandh at Bhubaneswar, Langul, Jagatsingpur and other places. Comrade Tapas Dutta, Member, Central Committee and Secretary, Orissa State Committee of the SUCI congratulated the people for making the Orissa Bandh a grand success

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Trial of Saddam Hussein

Compel US aggressors to stop this farce

Astounding though it may seem, a unique (!) trial is going on today in occupied Iraq. Saddam Hussein, President of Iraq, a sovereign, independent country, is being tried under the supervision of the invading US army, far removed from the public eyes, and to the utter disregard of all canons of international law. In the Green Zone at Baghdad, where the namesake of a trial is being held, armed guards are on round the clock vigil, so that the proceedings are not interfered with by 'outsiders'. The defendants, Saddam and his associates, have been kept in total isolation – denying them any interface with anyone, even their lawyers.

A special tribunal has been set up under the aegis of the US imperialists, with Paul Bremer, the administrative head of the imperialist occupation army as the chief. The US Congress has sanctioned as high as 128 million dollars for this farcical episode. It is but an out and out illegal set up, with Salem Chalebi – nephew of Ahmed Chalebi – the Deputy Prime Minister of the puppet Iraqi government subservient to the US regime delegated with the authority of holding the court. The same Bremer has appointed other judges of the tribunal as well. And those judges had been imparted training in UK by the US and British governments!

Again, the so-called trial of

Saddam Hussein is unprecedented in that, Saddam and his associates are being simply denied the right to put up even a defence. Does not even bourgeois jurisprudence entitle a person to be tried – whatever trivial is his crime and however insignificant is his identity to appoint lawyers to argue in his defence? Even Ramsey Clark, former attorney general of US has not been permitted to plead Saddam's case. It is unheard of in a modern civilized society that an accused is denied outright his right to defend himself! Not only that, no lawyer is allowed to be a defendant of the accused, even the defence counsels are being physically annihilated. Two of them have already been killed and others are receiving regular threats. What is more, not just intimidation, even physical tortures are being inflicted on the accused themselves! The world cannot but be stunned to know that Saddam Hussein and his co-defendants have been repeatedly complaining of ill treatment. ... "We have been beaten by the Americans, and we have been tortured one by one" ... "Everywhere on my body" – were Saddam's exact words that could percolate out of the wall of stringent censor imposed by the US imperialists and their client regime. So preplanned are the moves and so obvious is the outcome that Saddam

has also been reportedly saying "I am not afraid of execution."

Such has been the million dollar farcical trial to export 'democracy' to a country which has courageously stood up against the imperialist tyranny to defend her freedom and sovereignty. Flouting barest precepts of democracy and trampling underfoot all international laws, the US imperialists, under the fraudulent pretext of Saddam possessing weapons of mass destruction (WMD), pounced upon Iraq with all modern sophisticated arsenal even internationally prohibited weapons killing lakhs of innocent civilians including women, children and hospital patients. Within no time, they razed an independent country to the ground, went on plundering and marauding with a gusto, destroyed historical monuments, looted priceless artifacts and forcibly occupied a foreign territory solely to capture its oil fields and buttress other business interests in singular imperialist pursuit. These killers of millions, these pirates, these brigands are now claiming propriety to try the elected President of the occupied country on a charge of ordering execution of over hundred people. What could be more incredible a paradox! In fact, it is the US imperialists and their UK allies who should be tried in an international court for mass murder and illegal

occupation of foreign land.

If Saddam is to be tried for any crime, it should be at the discretion of his own countrymen – people of independent, sovereign Iraq and not by the puppet government set up by the occupiers.

In fact, Saddam Hussein, whatever his antecedents, had through his determined defiance of and opposition to the dictates of US regime emerged as a symbolic figure of struggle against the bludgeoning imperialist forces. Refusing to give in to the imperialist design of capturing the nationalized oil fields of Iraq, supporting the freedom movement of Palestinian people and never yielding to the terms of the US-backed Israel, he became a sore in the eyes of the US imperialists. So it became imperative for them to renounce and disgrace him in the eyes of the world and in the process break the moral backbone of the brave patriotic Iraqi people.

Hence is the enactment of this mockery of a trial. But the imperialist oppressors and aggressors have not taken any lesson from history. Already there is seething anger and hatred throughout the world against this sinister act of the US aggressors and pressure is mounting on them from the peace-loving democratic-minded people to immediately stop this farce. It is incumbent on all of us to accentuate the anti-imperialist struggle and compel the US regime to accept the verdict of the people.

Capitalism the root of chauvinist discrimination and oppression on Tamils

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gather it appears that the leadership of the movement lies with the aspirant Tamil bourgeoisie themselves. Under the circumstances, even if the demand for ending with national oppression be realized within the bourgeois national state of Sri Lanka and a new national state for Tamils is formed, carved out of it, will it not just make way for another new set of capitalist exploitative system to be established in the new state in place of the older one? From the experience and teachings of history, it must be realized that with a view to fulfilling the task of really ending with the national oppression, it is all the more necessary to develop united surges of mass movement of people of both the dominant and the weaker nationalities leading into massive irresistible uprising against the ruling class. Unity of toiling people of different nationalities must be maintained like the apple of an eye; vigilant they must remain to see that nothing jeopardizes this unity.

Demand for secession can be raised in a capitalist state only when the nature of exploitation has taken the form of colonial exploitation. This does not take place once and often. One may recall the emergence of Bangladesh in the seventies of the last century, as the solitary example of such a case in recent times. But it must be remembered that even in that case there was a serious weakness in the nation-building process that produced Pakistan, the state from which Bangladesh seceded. West and East Pakistan, the two provinces geographically and economically wide apart and socially-culturally entirely different with hardly any interaction between their respective people, were united in the Pakistan nation, exclusively on the ground of religion, instead of a common psychological make-up, a commonness developed within people of a single, contiguous geographic territory sharing common economic activities through their united struggle against a common enemy of feudalism in the earlier days of capitalism, and later also against colonial rules. In no time, this inherent weakness of the nation-building process that had culminated in the capitalist-feudal rule of Pakistan, gave way to

colonial exploitation of East Pakistan by the West Pakistani rulers. Thus within that ill-founded yet single, national state of Pakistan, the Bengali-speaking people of East Pakistan, irrespective of religion, race and such other differences, developed in themselves a national aspiration, an urge for liberation from colonial chain. The liberation struggle that, in turn, developed on this commonness, the common aspiration for freedom, this psychological make-up, successfully culminated in emergence of the independent Bangladesh national state. Bangladeshi nationhood developed through a struggle against this West Pakistani oppressive rule, the national liberation struggle of Bangladesh thus earned fullest justification and hence unstinted support from the freedom-loving people of the world too. However, the new national state of Bangladesh had the new rule of the national bourgeoisie of that country themselves, that continued thereafter.

Facts and figures that trickle out of Sri Lanka do not indicate by any measure, that in Sri Lanka the oppression in the Tamil-dominated regions of that country perpetrated by the Sri Lanka rulers have assumed the character of colonial exploitation and a Tamil nationhood has developed with a view to fighting against it. In spite of all heinous attempts of the Sri Lankan rulers to segregate the Tamil and non-Tamil population, toiling poorer masses of both are spread out in different parts of the country and live together with all kinds of economic and social interactions between them and facing the exploitation of the crisis-ridden capitalism of Sri Lanka alike. Discrimination and oppression on nationality add cruelly to the plight of the Tamils.

LTTE emerges on Tamil resentment; Indian governments kindle it to extend its grip on Sri Lanka government

Governments of Sri Lanka, run by the bourgeois outfits since independence, failed to recognize the strong Tamil resentment at their policies. Had they gauged the popular mood correctly and had they taken serious and earnest efforts through necessary

negotiations to bring about adequate redressing measures that the situation demanded particularly concerning the Tamil-speaking population, the events might have taken a different course. But they continued to foment the Sinhalese chauvinism, using parliamentary representatives of the Tamils in parliamentary gambles, brutally suppressing any movement of the Tamils outside parliament. Thus while the need of the hour was to fight back the anti-people chauvinist policies of the governments with the help of massive democratic struggle with all progressive forces united irrespective of language or religion, the reality was otherwise. Consequently, frustration and resentment of the Tamil-speaking people, particularly the middle class Tamil youth, mounted every day, in every sphere. Finally different militant Tamil groups emerged to take the stage. In the late 1980s there might have been at least thirty such groups of which five, including the LTTE, were the most important. Differing significantly in terms of strategies and ideologies, they tried to combine at times, for instance in March 1985, but soon broke up and drifted apart, even being involved in violent clashes. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had emerged in 1972 though it was only in 1974 that an incident of police brutality brought the LTTE on its career of insurgency. They maintained contacts with similar forces abroad and reportedly had their training camps in India's Tamil Nadu state with the patronage of the state and union governments. Up to a stage their leaders, thus, kept friendly, though watchful, relations with the Indian politicians.

Here a few words on the treacherous role of the Indian government towards the Tamil movement in Sri Lanka will be relevant. India, itself a much more powerful capitalist country than Sri Lanka was, had developed imperialist trends of exporting its finance capital to weaker countries of Asia, and Africa and exploit their labour and raw materials. At the same time, it had also developed a big-brotherly hegemonistic attitude towards its neighbours particularly in south Asia, with a view to building up its sphere of influence. This expansionist attitude, the

overlordism and hegemonism of the Indian ruling class, caused its neighbouring rulers, included among which were the Sri Lankan rulers, to nurse grievances and apprehensions about Indian ruling monopolists. To serve this expansionist design of the ruling class, the Indian government, particularly since the regime of Indira Gandhi as the prime minister, wanted to bring the Sri Lankan rulers into its clutches. With that ulterior motive, it started to use the Tamil militant groups, particularly the LTTE factor against the Sri Lankan government to put a clamp upon the latter. They even provided opportunities to the LTTE and other militant groups to carry on their training on this land. But when the outfits, the LTTE in particular, started building their network on the Indian soil and the government sensed that it might kindle the dormant secessionist seeds existing in Tamil Nadu itself, when the LTTE refused to follow the dictates of the Indian government, the latter took a U-turn and became wary of the LTTE. Subsequently, the ghastly 1983 riot which affected the Tamils in Sri Lanka severely and the 1985 massacre in retaliation by the LTTE, put the Sri Lankan government under Jayewardhane to extreme disadvantage. They looked for a military solution, seeking India's help. This coincidence of interest against LTTE fitted perfectly well with expansionist efforts and desires of the Indian monopolists and their government. Thus in June 1987 with Rajiv Gandhi as the prime minister of India, the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) moved into northern Sri Lanka, on an agreement with Jayewardhane to enforce a so-called peace agreement. There, instead of mediating any negotiated settlement, it joined hands with the Sri Lankan ruling class to brutally suppress the Tamils. Moreover, IPKF appeared to the Sri Lankan people as an occupying force and its presence evoked strong resentment among all quarters there and activated fresh riots. The country was further terrorized and the economy crippled. In fact, overlordism and hegemonistic attitude of the Indian bourgeoisie, much apprehended by people of its neighbouring countries including Sri Lanka, particularly added serious obstacles to searching for a permanent, peaceful solution of the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka. Jayewardhane retired in 1988;

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Secession to form new bourgeois state will never end plight of Tamils

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Ranasinghe Premadasa of the UNP succeeded him in 1989 with an election pledge to remove the IPKF. Under the pressure of people's opinion, the Indian troops had to come out of that land by the end of that decade, though that hardly stopped the strife. Rajiv Gandhi, the Indian prime minister and Premadasa, were assassinated by Tamil suicide bombers in 1991 and 1993 respectively, and there were violent clashes between the LTTE and the army in 1992 and 1993. A peace negotiation was however initiated in 1995, only to falter now and then till a new one with Norwegian mediation to start in 2002.

LTTE politics hardly presents efforts to win over masses

All along this time, the LTTE had come out with vigorous and violent reiteration of the Eelam slogans demanding recognition of the northern and eastern portions of the country as the Tamil homeland carved out of the prevailing state of Sri Lanka and recognition of the Tamils' right to self-determination meaning secession from a national state that had existed with the two communities together for quite a long time. Their modus operandi hinged on individual assassination and terrorization and did not spare even either of the Sinhalese and Tamil civilians. Apart from that, the pivotal point of their politics turned out to be silencing any dissenting opinion by physical force, threat and intimidation and wiping out any kind of opposition to their ways and claims, individual or in group, from the Sinhalese or the Tamils. Instead of winning over the followings of other political parties, they simply want to wipe them out by physically suppressing their activities and views. Within their strongholds they were not ready to allow any political party or group to work without their approval. This they did claiming them as the only genuine representative of the Tamil cause.

But history provides us with ample instances that a determining force of a revolutionary, even democratic movement of a country, which is leading the masses on its correct base political line, wages continuous intense ideological campaign and commensurate organizational and other activities as

part and parcel of its movement. Through these, it exhausts the role of other reactionary, bourgeois-petit bourgeois parties. It is only this way, that it isolates the latter parties from the masses by defeating their politics. It never requires use of force or threat or intimidation for that purpose. Rather such measures are likely to bring in opposite results. It is only this way again that a revolutionary force wins moral support for its movement from the democratic-minded, progressive people of the country and the world.

On the other hand, the LTTE politics, their theory or practice, their words or activities do not present any indication of the unified approach that a progressive party must bear in a multinationality country. Instead of forging necessary unity of the Sinhala-speaking toiling people with the legitimate democratic movement of the Tamil-speaking toiling people against injustice and oppression, the LTTE activities have become confined to the Tamils only. LTTE activities have only given way to a vicious cycle of violence through almost incessant wars and frequent major communal riots. The rulers and the Sinhalese bourgeois chauvinist forces, taking advantage of the situation, have cunningly pushed them to be pitted against the common Sinhala-speaking people of the land. They have incited common Sinhala-speaking people against the Tamil-speaking people and have brought down, thereafter, unbridled state terror in the form of harsh retaliation against Tamil civilians by the government and the army taking resort to random arrests, tortures, and executions of hundreds of young Tamils. Thus it appears from outside the country that even after so much of sacrifice, the movement does not seem to be making any headway, nor could it even slightly alleviate the Tamils from any discrimination and oppression. Even, as it is apparent on many occasions, it could not develop unanimity among the Tamils on the ways and means.

This brings us to face another important question: Today, can any progressive force, under whatsoever banner or name it may be, bring toiling masses out of the national oppression by opposing Marxism-Leninism, opposing communism, by avoiding or opposing the base

political line of fighting against capitalism or by concealing it, inadvertently or deliberately under any pretext? Any leadership that may stand for the just causes of the Tamils need, thus, to recognize that today nationalism is not the creed that may help end with the oppression of a nationality by another. It is proletarian internationalism based on Marxism-Leninism that stands as the guarantee for the end of discrimination and oppression of nationalities by another.

How far tenable is the demand for creating separate Tamil Eelam

It will be easily understood that on a grave issue we are dealing with, a correct approach is extremely essential. So at this stage of discussion, we would like to quote a few invaluable teachings of the great proletarian leader Lenin on some relevant issues. On the question of the right of nations to self-determination and secession, he clearly defines the tasks of the communists as "...The interests of the working class and of its struggle against capitalism demand complete solidarity and the closest unity of the workers of all nations; they demand resistance to the nationalist policy of the bourgeoisie of every nationality. Hence, Social-Democrats would be deviating from proletarian policy and subordinating the workers to the policy of the bourgeoisie if they were to repudiate the right of nations to self-determination, i.e., the right of an oppressed nation to secede, or if they were to support all the national demands of the bourgeoisie of oppressed nations." [The Rights of Nations to Self-Determination: Collected Works v., 20, 1914; Selected Works 1960 Edn., p.659] Categorically, he points out "The right of nations to self-determination means only the right to independence in a political sense, the right to free, political secession from the oppressing nation. ...this demand is by no means identical with the demand for secession, for partition, for the formation of small states... the advantages of large states, both from the point of view of economic progress and from the point of view of the interests of the masses, are beyond doubt." [The Socialist Revolution and the Right

of Nations to Self-determination : CW, v. 22, 1916]. So, " For a Marxist, of course, all other conditions being equal, big states are always preferable." [National Program of RSDLP : CW, v.19, 1913, p. 545] Lenin wrote on when and why Marxists stand for the right of secession: "The mass of the population knows perfectly well from daily experience the value of geographical and economic ties and the advantages of a big market and a big state. They will, therefore, resort to secession only when national oppression and national friction make joint life absolutely intolerable and hinder any and all economic intercourse." [The Rights of Nations....: CW v., 20, 1914; SW 1960 Edn., p.658] Elsewhere he added: "... the focal point in the Social-Democratic programme must be that division of nations into oppressor and oppressed which forms the essence of imperialism. It is from this division that our definition of the " right of nations to self-determination" must follow, a definition that is consistently democratic, revolutionary, It is for that right ..., that the Social-Democrats of the oppressor nations must demand that the oppressed nations should have the right of secession..." [The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination: CW, v.21, 1914-15, p.409] Thus generally speaking, Lenin writes " Inasmuch as the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation fights the oppressor, we are always, in every case, and more resolutely than anyone else, in favour, for we are the staunchest and the most consistent enemies of oppression. But inasmuch as the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation stands for its own bourgeois nationalism, we are opposed." [The Rights of Nations....: CW v., 20, 1914; SW 1960 Edn., p.648] Marxists stand "for the full right of all nations to self-determination [Selbstbestimmungsrecht] and expresses its sympathy for the workers of every country now suffering under the yoke of military, national or other absolutism." At the same time, Marxists call upon the workers of all such countries seeking their right to self-determination " to join the ranks of the class-conscious [Klassenbewusste — those who understand

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Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's thoughts spread throughout the globe

Communist Party of Deutschland (Bolshevik) has brought out German translation of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's work, "An appeal to the leaders of the International Communist movement" published in 1963 emphasizing the scientific process of resolving the differences that cropped up in the international communist camp at that time.

Marxist Leninist Communist Party of Turkey (MLCP) has also released Turkish version of the aforesaid work. Beside, the MLCP of Turkey has also published Turkish translation of the work, "On steps taken by the CPSU against Stalin" written by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh in 1962 after 22nd Congress of the CPSU when the revisionist Khrushchev leadership embarked upon a policy of de-Stalinization which Comrade Shibdas Ghosh rightly forewarned would "uncrown Lenin himself".

Only fight against capitalist rulers may lead to regain unity of toiling people

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their class interests] workers of the whole world in order jointly to fight for the defeat of international capitalism and for the achievement of the aims of international Social-Democracy." [vide The Resolution Of The London International Congress, 1896 quoted in The Rights of Nations: CW, v., 20, 1914; SW 1960 Edn., p.665]

As we have discussed above and further, judged on the anvil of these Leninist teachings, the demands raised by the LTTE for secession on the basis of the right of self-determination, do not appear to be either tenable, or justified, or even feasible. Nor the words and deeds of those concerned or involved in the movement reflect any total commitment to Marxism-Leninism without which there cannot be any progressive movement in this era of decadent capitalism and proletarian revolution. It cannot also build up and meet success without the overwhelming support of the toiling masses of the soil on which it is being waged; neither can it be protected to its desired end without mustering the moral support of the democratic-minded, progressive people of the world. Any movement otherwise led on uncalled for demand is to end in a bleak future of more ruthless repression from the rulers and more disunity among the ranks, among the people.

From our proletarian internationalist obligation, we place our views on the issue of the LTTE and Sri Lanka. We urge upon the democratic-minded Sinhala-

speaking common people to recognize that with a view to preserving the territorial integrity of their country, as also to preserving the unity of the entire masses of toiling people of Sri Lanka irrespective of language, religion etc., they must stand by the Tamil-speaking common people fighting against discrimination and oppression. They must compel their government to abandon their chauvinistic haughty and hawkish attitude to crush Tamil movement with the help of unbridled state terror and instead, to take resort to just and negotiated settlement conducting it with a mind and ambience, to mitigate all justified and genuine grievances and fulfil aspirations of the Tamil-speaking population.

We also earnestly call upon the right-thinking people of the Tamil-speaking community of Sri Lanka, to ponder seriously and calmly over the points we raise. We will hope, they give a serious thought to every possibility, if there be any, of a solution to this decades-long problem within the framework of prevailing united Sri Lanka itself with the two people, the Sinhala-speaking community and the Tamil-speaking community, maintaining harmony and unity between them.

We believe, howsoever difficult the situation may be, the working people of the two communities will come forward to give patient and serious consideration to these points, we raise in fraternity with and in sympathy to their just causes.

SUCI protests drastic slash in food subsidy by central UPA government

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in a statement issued on January 9, 2006 severely condemned the rabid anti-people decision of the Congress led CPI (M) backed central UPA government to drastically slash the food subsidy by a whopping Rs. 4,524 crores thereby raising rice and wheat prices and reducing the quantum of foodgrains available under Public Distribution System. This, said Comrade Mukherjee, is in keeping with the WTO directive of gradual withdrawal of agricultural subsidy to, in the process of progressive phasing out of government control over food and other agricultural crops, eventually open the huge agricultural produces market for indiscriminate loot and plunder by the national and foreign monopolists as well as multinational corporations and once again lays bare what lurks behind the much trumpeted 'reforms with a humane face'. While thousands of crores of rupees are allotted to defence budget, massive expenditure is incurred on administration particularly to meet the expenses of lavish and luxurious life of the ministers and several thousand crores are swindled from public exchequer through various scams, the ruling Indian capitalist class, as an inalienable part of the crisis-ridden moribund decadent corrupt world imperialism-capitalism, is unleashing limitless economic savagery on the common people bleeding white, day in and day out, under ruthless capitalist exploitation.

Comrade Mukherjee called upon the entire people of the country to rise in protest against these worst economic assaults and build up intense organized democratic mass movement to thwart such repeated fierce onslaught on their life and livelihood.

Afterwards due to public protest the government kept the decision in abeyance.

Massacre of tribals in Orissa

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and called upon to protract the movement on this issue. He also appealed to observe 26th January as Protest Day in Orissa.

All India Protest Day Observed

The preplanned massacre of tribal people by the BJP-BJD led Orissa state government to serve the interest of the Tatas and Jindals is another exposure of the naked servitude of the governments to the capitalist giants. Only an overwhelming pressure of mighty sustained mass movement and not mere protest can compel the despotic governments to stop such massacres and terrorization and accede to the legitimate demands of the people, and of tribal people in particular. With the call to imbibe this lesson and build up waves of movements our party observed All India Protest Day and one-day Orissa Bandh on 7 January, responding to the call of the Central Committee throughout the country. Reports that were received till date are given below.

Delhi

The capital city witnessed protest demonstration at Parliament Street near Jantar Mantar at 12

noon. The speakers included Comrades Pratap Samal, Secretary, Delhi State Organizing Committee, R.S. Sharma and Ramesh Tyagi.

Haryana

Protest demonstrations and street corner meetings were organized at Rohtak, Rewari, Sonapat and Bhiwani.

Kerala

Protest meetings were held in the state capital Trivandrum and other district headquarters like Calicut, Ernakulam, Kottayam and Pathanamthitta.

Tamil Nadu

Protest demonstration was held at Neyveli bus stand. Comrade P. Narayanasamy was the main speaker.

Bihar

Protest meeting was held in the state capital Patna. It was addressed by Comrade Shivshankar, State Secretary, Shiulal Prasad, Patna District Secretary, Sadhna Misra, State Secretary of AIMSS, Raghunath Gandhi and others. Before the meeting a protest rally burnt an effigy of the Tatas.

West Bengal

All India Protest day was observed in different districts of the state and particularly in Calcutta.

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