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Marxism-Leninism-Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought is the only way to emancipation

Comrade Provash Ghosh at the 24 April meeting in Kolkata

(This is the first instalment of the English translation of the speech delivered in Bengali by Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), at the 75th Party Foundation Day meeting held at the Shaheed Minar Maidan, Kolkata, on 24 April 2022. Responsibility of translation error or inadequacy of expression, if any, lies with the Editorial Board of Proletarian Era.)

Comrade President, Comrades and Friends,
You all are aware in what suffocating a situation of the country we are observing the Foundation Day of the Party today. Two resolutions have been placed before you. From those you have come to know what severe an attack, both in the national as well as in the international sphere, we are now facing. I shall try to place before you a few words, as per my realization, on how we can correctly understand the nature of the problems and decide our tasks based on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought.

Had socialism been in existence, Ukraine would not have faced Russian aggression

You all know that for quite some time, imperialist Russia is continuing military assault on a small country like Ukraine. The attack is on all fronts—aerial, naval and ground. As a result, Ukraine is being razed to rubble. Which Russia is this? Let me remind you that when the Second World War was in full swing, the fascist axis of Germany-Italy and imperialist Japan was on the



rampage and had occupied almost entire Europe; France was occupied and England was on the brink of defeat. All luminaries of the then Western world like Romain Rolland, Bernard Shaw and Einstein were horrified. Freedom fighters and leading lights of our country were also frightened. Who would save civilization? Rabindranath Tagore was on his death bed. Yet, he was keeping himself abreast of the developments of the war. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, renowned scientist and Mathematician of international fame was with him. He wrote that when news of advancement of fascist Germany was reported, Rabindranath's face turned pale and he used to throw away the newspaper. When he learnt before his last operation that the Red Army led by great Stalin had to a great extent been able to thwart that advancement, he was delighted and said, 'Yes. They alone can do it'. All renowned personalities, freedom fighters and antifascist forces were then looking at the Soviet Union with great expectation and confidence. Great Stalin was marshalling the Red Army against the fascists. He was working day and night. Marshal Zhukov, his close revolutionary compatriot, had said in his memoirs of Stalin that they could never make out when was he taking rest or sleeping even at such an old age. He used to call everyone at any point of time to discuss about the strategy to be adopted in the war. One of Stalin's sons was taken prisoner by the German Army. Germany gave an offer that if the Red Army releases one of their Marshalls held captive, it would reciprocate by

releasing Stalin's son. Stalin declined that offer. He said that a Marshal cannot be exchanged with a Lieutenant. He also said that he knew the German fascists would mercilessly torture his son. But he believed that his son would never betray his fatherland. With deep pain, Stalin said how harrowing was this holocaust of war which was making so many parents bereaved of their children. It was great Stalin who saved the world by inflicting crushing defeat on the fascist axis.

Competition between US and Russian imperialism to establish dominance over Ukraine

Now, Soviet Union is no more. After demise of Stalin, socialism in Soviet Russia had collapsed because of the conspiracy of the counter-revolutionaries within the Soviet Union in connivance with the global imperialist forces and capitalism was restored there. Khrushchev, as an agent of the imperialist powers, was instrumental in hatching the conspiracy from within. Once socialism was dismantled, the imperialist sharks round the world, the capitalists and the bourgeois media of our country were elated and joined the chorus of claiming that democracy has been re-established in Russia. But what did that democracy have in store? Look at Putin's Russia today. After restoration of capitalism following the fall of socialism, Russia has turned into an imperialist country and launched an armed aggression on a small country like Ukraine in the name of 'special military action'. US imperialism once formed NATO—a military alliance to destroy Soviet Union. Even today, it has kept that alliance alive to sustain its economic-military-political dominance over Europe. It wants Ukraine to join NATO. Ukraine which is afraid of Russian imperialism also wants that. We have also spoken against NATO in the resolution placed in this meeting. We demand that NATO be dismantled. At the same time, Russian imperialism has no propriety to attack Ukraine because the latter wants to join NATO. If Bangladesh enters into a military treaty with imperialist China and sets up a military base, can India attack Bangladesh on that pretext simply because it is a neighbouring country? Similarly, if India signs a military pact with US imperialism and allows it to install a US military base here, can China on that plea launch armed assault on India because it shares border

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SUCI(C) demands availability of petrol-diesel-LPG at cost price

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), issued the following statement on 22 May 2022:

"The recent announcement of reduction in taxes on petrol-diesel by the central government is virtually negligible compared to the phenomenal escalation during last several years and hence is nothing but a face-saving measure. Alongside withdrawal of all taxes and cess on fuel, Indian government must endeavour to build up world public opinion against periodic rise in international crude oil price.

While demanding of the government to ensure availability of petrol-diesel-LPG at cost prices, we call upon all categories of people to build up united, organized, sustained and powerful movement to compel the government to yield to these legitimate demands."

Comrade Provash Ghosh's speech

Fascism is a general feature in all imperialist-capitalist countries

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with India? This cannot be. Such an excuse is only for justifying military assault.

Contradiction between two imperialist powers

Secondly, two imperialist powers—US and Russia—are in conflict and contradiction with each other over establishing dominance on Ukraine. Russian imperialism has launched this armed attack to take hold of mineral resources, agricultural lands, ports and sea routes of Ukraine. On the other hand, US is raising voice of protest because it is losing grip over Ukraine. Another objective of Russia for keeping Ukraine under its control is to continue supplying natural gas to Europe via that country. So, the very objective of imperialist plunder is inherent in this move. There is one more aspect. Of late, unemployment, poverty and oppression of the working class are rising in imperialist Russia. Against all these, people of Russia are bursting forth in agitation. Russian people have awakened once again and 80% of Russians have opined in favour of return of socialism. Thousands of Russians are out in the streets with photos of Great Lenin and Stalin. So, the imperialist leaders of Russia are panic-stricken. They want to distract people's attention. For that also, they need this war. At the same time, US imperialism also requires war. In US also, people's agitations are gaining momentum. Few years back, the "Occupy Wall Street movement" stirred not just US but the entire world. In Europe also, one after another strike by the working people is bringing life to a standstill. The 'Yellow Vest Movement' that rocked France and other European countries is still on. In fact, people of the whole world are spontaneously bursting forth in movements. In order to divert people's attention, the imperialist powers need such wars.

Great Stalin had shown long back that in order to stave off the economic crisis the imperialists-capitalists are taking recourse to militarization of economy. In other words, economy is becoming dependent on arms manufacturing and arms trade. Wretched, because of ruthless capitalist exploitation, people are unable to buy consumer goods. So, the consumer goods market is squeezed. So, there is more and more tilt towards militarization of economy which means there should be a boost to production of arms and the state

would buy those arms with people's money. And the imperialists-capitalists need market for selling these arms. Unless the produced arms are used, there would be no fresh production of arms. So, they need wars. That is why, US is sending arms to Ukraine in the name of giving aids. The imperialist powers of Europe are also using this war to release their stockpiles of weaponries and artificially stimulate their arms industries. At the same time, capitalizing on the opportunity, US imperialism is increasing their economic-political-military power in Europe. It is also trying to capture the foreign markets hitherto dominated by the Russian imperialists.

On the other side, you are well aware of the role of India. The Indian ruling bourgeoisie has not protested against Russian military aggression on Ukraine because of its own class interest. India is looking forward to getting oil, fuel and arms from Russia at cheaper rates. Moreover, Russia has unity with China. So, if India refrains from taking an anti-Russian stand, it expects that Russia would not directly stand by China in the Indo-China border conflict. A sovereign country like Ukraine is being destroyed by imperialist attack. Thousands of Ukrainians are killed. Many others sustained grievous injuries. Many towns and villages are being razed into rubble. But India is not opposing the carnage. When US imperialism militarily aggressed and demolished Iraq on the false pretext that the Iraqi rulers possessed weapons of mass destruction, Indian capitalist rulers did not utter a word in protest. They played the same role at that time also. We need to keep this also in mind.

All capitalist-imperialist countries have destroyed democracy and assumed fascist character

The imperialists are saying that the Ukraine war is a fight between democracy and autocracy. As if the US imperialism and its European counterparts are watchmen of democracy whereas Russia is having an autocratic rule. We know Great Lenin had said long back that capitalism in its rising period was more attached to democracy and freedom. But that capitalism after attaining the stage of imperialism is now decadent and moribund, and hence destroying democracy as well as individual liberty and relying more on militarism and bureaucratism.

Great Stalin had observed that capitalism has thrown the banner of bourgeois democracy and freedom into the dust. I want to remind you that just after one year of founding the SUCI(C), in 1949, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, Founding General Secretary of the Party and an outstanding Marxist thinker of the era, had pointed out that real full democracy no more existed in any capitalist country. Fascism has appeared as a general feature in all imperialist-capitalist countries as a destroyer of human civilization. Capitalism has resorted to fascism. Fascism, the worst enemy of mankind was becoming the order of the day in capitalism. He showed that, economically, in the stage of monopoly, capital is getting more and more concentrated in the hands of a few financial oligarchs; in the sphere of politics, power is centralized more and more in the hands of the bureaucracy by curbing the powers vested with the judiciary and legislature; and in the realm of thought, on the one hand, capitalism is abandoning secular humanism and democratic concepts it highlighted during the days of its advent and instead unleashing a widespread cult of spiritualism, religious fanaticism and traditionalism while, on the other hand, it is destroying scientific bent of mind and only encouraging some technological developments to create a handful of skilled labour. It is through this fusion of spiritualism and technical aspects of science, fascist mindset and culture are being fostered. Fascism is developing with these common features everywhere. Whichever party is saddled in power, it is strengthening fascism in the interest of dying capitalism. In India, the Congress had started this and now the BJP is further firming it up. So, there is virtually left nothing of democracy anywhere.

We know the slogan of equality-liberty-fraternity raised during French Revolution has now turned into a cruel joke. Severe economic inequality has engulfed the capitalist world. 70-75% of the global wealth is concentrated in the hands of 1% monopolists. The rest 99% people are wretched, pauperized and languishing in abject poverty. During the BJP rule, 1% monopolists have amassed a wealth of Rs 324.5 lakh crores. 83 % Indians earn just Rs 20 a day. 20 crore Indians go hungry every day. Where is equality, where is fraternity? In the whole world, there is spurt in aggressing foreign lands, imperialist wars, religious-racial-casteist- ethnic and lingual conflicts and bloodbaths. This is the 'fraternity' of capitalism today. And

by 'freedom', capitalism means unbridled right of loot and plunder by the imperialists-capitalists. On the other hand, cores of oppressed people are enchained in slavery of capitalism. Individual freedom, dissent, protest movements are ruthlessly suppressed. The very catchphrase of "by the people, for the people, of the people" only exists in the pages of text books. In reality, it is "by the money-power, for the money power, of the money power". Who represent the money power? The imperialists, monopolists and multi-nationals. Everything is controlled by them. The media, bureaucracy, etc. are all under their control. A large number of criminals are at their disposal. Money power-media power-muscle power-administrative power decides everything including vote.

Bourgeois parties are destroying self-esteem of the people by turning them into beggars

Election is a big deception in all imperialist-capitalist countries today. Round the globe, parliamentary democracy has turned into a worst form of hypocrisy and fascist autocracy. You all know what happens during elections in our country. In our country, starting from the BJP, Congress to RJD, Akali Dal, DMK, AIADMK, TMC-all start making investments for quite some time before the polls. Crores of people go hungry, having no income, no jobs, no clothes, no food, not even a roof over their head. Hundreds of people are committing suicide every day. Thousands are starving. So harrowing is the situation. The ruling parties give these starving countrymen one, two kg of rice or wheat as alms. Along with that, they float some populist schemes like 'Ayushman Bharat', 'Lakshmi's Bhandar', 'Kanyashree' and so forth on the eve of elections. These all are their investments. All governments—whether of the BJP at the Centre or the state governments run by the various bourgeois parties, including the TMC government in this state, have now adopted this line of making pre-poll investments. If starving persons get a fistful of rice, they feel happy. These hungry millions have no education, no political consciousness. Bereft of political consciousness and education, these unorganized people are helpless, hapless. They do not know that they are not supposed to be objects of pity of the governments. On the contrary, they have an inalienable right to a job, education, healthcare, food, shelter, cloth from the government.

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Comrade Provash Ghosh's speech

Contradiction among the imperialist powers generates war

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They are unaware that the governments run on their money. So, they cannot press for their righteous claims. Instead, they feel that the government or the ruling party is so magnanimous as to give them alms. In this way, the BJP, Congress, TMC and others are turning the countrymen into have-nots dispossessed of any self-respect, consciousness and rational thinking and inured with a begging mindset. This is a grave danger. Now a new phenomenon has appeared. After receiving pre-poll doles, people are found to express gratitude for getting at least something. Such things are happening in elections. Everyone knows that before vote, the bourgeois parliamentary parties distribute cash in the areas inhabited by the poor people, in the slums and shanties. Vote is purchased by money. One or ten votes are bought by thousands of rupees.

Does this money come from the kitty of the distributing political parties? Not at all. This money is supplied by the monopoly houses, multi-nationals, black-marketeers, and hoarders so that they could carry out their plunder with alacrity. These parties are managers of oppression and loots by the oligarchs and tycoons. They spend lakhs of rupees before election to make profits in terms of crores later by exploiting the people. They only jack up the prices. Can the governments not arrest price rise if they so desire? Both the central and state governments are responsible for this phenomenal price rise. It is true that price of crude oil is going up in the international market. But petrol-diesel are not sold at the price crude is procured and refined. The governments, both central and of the states, impose hefty tax and cess over the fuel prices. As per media report, the share of taxes and cess slapped by the central and West Bengal governments are 63% and 37% respectively. Thus, retail tariff soars sky high. As a result, costs of both production and transportation of goods go up. And with the help of the governments, the monopolist giants reap huge profit. Moreover, immediately after production, the goods including essential items are procured by the big distributors, black-marketeers and hoarders. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had said long back that if the government seriously wanted to bring down prices, let them introduce all-out

state trading of food and other essential items. Let the government directly purchase the goods from the manufacturers and agricultural produce from the peasants at determined prices and then distribute the same at affordable prices to the people through its own retail network. In that case, price rise can be reined in. Only our Party had repeatedly raised this demand. But all other left parties opposed this proposal. Because they all are tied up with the black-marketeers and hoarders. The black-marketeers and hoarders finance these parties to meet electoral expenses. On the other hand, the people are carried by the incessant propaganda in favour of these parties in both print and electronic media. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had shown six decades back people lack political consciousness and are not organized. The bourgeois media creates a hype, the parliamentary parties distribute money provided by the capitalists and the common masses get swayed by that just like a straw in the winds. the way a sheaf of reed gets swamped by onrush of water. Such is the nature of election today which is nothing but a farce. During election, propaganda carried out in the bourgeois media artificially create impression as to which party is more powerful this time, who would win, who would defeat whom and so forth. Media also indirectly influence people to caste vote in favour of a particular party or dispensation. So, they sometime bring the BJP to the forefront, sometimes the Congress at the national level. Similarly in West Bengal, they sometime bring the CPI (M) and sometimes the TMC as per the choice of the ruling bourgeoisie. And being swayed by the media publicity, the politically unconscious people who toil day and night to make both ends meet think that perhaps a new incumbent would prove better than the current incumbent. Next time, they would feel that this particular party has been tested and proved worthless. So, better to switch to the other. This only goes on. From 1952, elections have been taking place in this country. Quite a number of times, the baton of governance has passed on from one party to the other. But are the common people benefitted in any way? Rather, acute crisis and misery in their life is increasing. Before election, the bourgeois leaders feign to be so eager to serve the people and give

many hollow promises to deceive people. Thereafter, all those promises vanish in the blue. When asked, they say nonchalantly that such gimmicks are necessary to win election. The people feel cheated and say in a frustrated voice that 'he who goes to Lanka, becomes Ravana'. Such has been going on for long. That is why Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had said long back that election and revolution are not one and the same. Government is changed through election. But revolution changes the exploitative socio-economic system. Hence, in order to be emancipated from exploitation and solve the burning problems of life, what is needed is revolution and not election. Our Party has been following his teachings all along.

This is the only party which the capitalists will never be able to purchase

It is true that we contest in the elections. Great Lenin had taught that revolutionaries would need to take part in election till the time the people are consciously and positively freed from electoral illusion. It is necessary for a revolutionary party to participate in election to show that by being elected to the legislature, no basic problem of life can be solved. But Lenin did not have the opportunity to come across a specific situation in which a revolutionary party could become part of a government in a bourgeois system. So, he did not provide necessary guideline in this regard. In 1967, people of West Bengal defeated the Congress in the assembly election and gave verdict in favour of the United Front of which our Party, along with some other left parties, was a constituent. When the question of formation of government arose, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh in further enrichment of Lenin's teachings said that the United Front government would spend whatever limited resources it had for upliftment of the poor. More importantly, this government would help development and intensification of class and mass struggles of the workers and peasants and the police would not be allowed to interfere in legitimate class and mass struggles. But, the CPI (M) was joined by the CPI, RSP, Forward Bloc, Bangla Congress and others in resolutely opposing this guideline of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. Then Comrade Ghosh said that we would not join the government. A few years earlier, the CPI (M) had come out of the undivided CPI branding S. A. Dange as 'revisionist' and sought to woo the CPI workers to its side posing itself as revolutionary. So, the CPI

(M) cadres at that time had urge for revolution. The CPI (M) leaders could make out that if unity with our Party was ruptured at that point of time, they would be in serious trouble because they would face questions from their own workers. So, they ultimately accepted our proposal. They might have thought that a small party like SUCI(C) would not be able to cut much ice. To put us in trouble, they allotted the labour ministry to us. Based on the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, Comrade Subodh Banerjee as labour minister declared that the United Front government would not suppress the legitimate working class movements and mass struggles by police. This sent a chill down the spine of all industrial houses of the country who demanded ouster of the SUCI(C) from the government and the ministry. Being dictated by the industrial houses, the then Congress-led central government toppled the United Front government. Then again, the second United Front government was formed in 1969. But at that time, under pressure of the industrial houses, labour ministry was snatched away from us. These are all history. You need to know this history.

Today also we take part in election based on this teaching of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. He categorically stated that we might not get a single seat, even a single vote but we would not give up the revolutionary line of the Party. All of you know, all our countrymen are even aware that we run our Party based on funds collected from the public contributions. Our comrades raise these funds through street collections as well as moving from door to door. Even the security deposits of our election candidates are so collected. Only our Party raise funds from public like this. To meet the expenses of today's meeting, our workers have collected funds from the people of both urban and rural areas. This is the only Party which the Ambanis-Adanis-Tatas-Birlas could not purchase and would never be able to purchase. We are a Party of the exploited people. We run our Party with the help of the toiling millions. We fight elections also in the same way. The CPI (M) gave us offer of seat adjustment in the election in 2001. We rejected that because of their pursuit of anti-people non-left policies. The TMC too offered us ministry in 2011. We rejected that too. This Party is not for ministerial berth, MLA or MP seats. Our progress has neither been on the strength of governmental power nor

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Comrade Provash Ghosh's speech

Vote-mongering parties are turning countrymen into have-nots dispossessed of any self-respect, consciousness and rational thinking

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based on the number of MLAs and MPs or media-backing.

You know that way back in 1948, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh began his revolutionary journey with a handful of revolutionary compatriots. The party was founded in a small hall in Jaynagar town of South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal. No one at that time knew the name of the Party. No newspaper carried any news of the Party. Even today, the media do not give any coverage to us. Today the CPI (M) is weakened, routed in the election. But at the time of our Party foundation, the undivided CPI was a big powerful party. It enjoyed support of great Stalin and Mao Zedong. It had influence throughout the country. Forward Bloc founded by Netaji Subhashchandra, RSP formed with the support of Anushilan Samiti and RCPI established by Soumen Thakur etc.—were all big parties then. They all taunted Comrade Shibdas Ghosh by saying that 'a mushroom has sprouted. SUCI(C) is not a party but a club.' Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had not answered any of these taunts. He quietly bore with all these deriding remarks and scorn. He only engaged himself in an arduous struggle to build up this Party. At that time, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had no permanent place to stay. He spent nights on the footpaths, on railway platforms, on the roof of a big wholesale market in central Kolkata. Day after day, he went hungry. He himself told that there were days when he could not collect even a pittance. Today, we have organized so massive a meeting. We all are sitting on the chairs. But Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had walked mile after mile to recruit one comrade.

I was associated with the Party in 1950. Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, my comrade-in-arms, joined after a few years. We have seen Comrade Shibdas Ghosh starving. I had organized a meeting in our school where Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had come late. On enquiry, we came to know later that there was only one shirt for both Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and Comrade Nihar Mukherjee. Whoever went out had worn that shirt. On that day, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee was late in coming back. So, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh was late in attending the meeting. Where is Forward Bloc, RSP or CPI today who had mocked Comrade Shibdas

Ghosh earlier? Where is even the CPI (M)? They all are losing strength rapidly. But our Party is growing. There is no place in West Bengal where our name is not pronounced with deep respect. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh is a highly revered name today. The Party which they once ridiculed as a club has been organizing Foundation Day meeting today in 23 states. Like this meeting, thousands of Party workers are observing this day with due humility by garlanding Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's portrait and holding high the red flag. Empowered by the invincible ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought, our Party is making bold strides ahead. So long as we would follow this ideology, we shall go on gaining strength.

Unprincipled political leaders are criminalizing the youths

You know election has turned into a farce in all countries today. Another dangerous thing is happening. On the one hand, the power-monger parties are turning the people into beggars and then creating their respective vote banks by throwing some alms, both in cash and kind, to these pauperized millions. On the other hand, they are building up armed criminal brigades throughout the country. They are targeting the unemployed youths who might burst forth in movement against injustice. So, in order to divert them, the vote-based parties are encouraging these youths to be drowned in liquor, drug, gambling addiction and sex perversion. With the assurance that they would be safe under the umbrella of the ruling party, they get encouragement to resort to theft, snatching and robbery. Alongside, there is proliferation of liquor trade, vulgarism through all mediums, propagation of blue-films, scandals of film stars and obscene literature. In this way, the ruling capitalism and its subservient parties are destroying conscience and human essence among the youths. Thus, the youths are emasculated from within, divorced from youthful vitality and vigour as well as the indomitable courage to stand up against injustice.

In this state, the TMC government is opening liquor shops in every locality. Now it is learnt that they would arrange home delivery of alcoholic drinks. It is not only just for increasing revenue earning of the government. That objective is no doubt there. But alongside, the other objective is to

keep the youths intoxicated. As a result, youth are involved in vulgar discussions about women physique, sexual promiscuity and crimes. That is why, incidents of rape and gang-rape are occurring in so large in number every day. So many women victims are killed so that their protests and screamings are not heard. Starting from a 6-year-old girl child to a 70-year-old woman, none is spared from this brutal atrocity. This is the spectacle of 'development'! Society has so degenerated that daughter is accusing father of rape. Can the wails of thousands of oppressed and raped women be suppressed by shouting in triumph about 'Lakshmi's Bhandar', 'Kanyashree' and 'achhe din' or in the frenzied roar of Hindutva or religious clamour of Ram Navami? What would have Rammohan, Vidyasagar, Phule, Rabindranat, Vivekananda, Saratchandra, Nazrul, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan, Netaji Subhash, Premchand said if they had witnessed all these filth and rot? Rapes, gang-rapes, murders are increasing day by day. Youths are turned into criminals. In reality, it is not criminalization of politics but criminalization by the corrupt power-monger politicians. It is the scenario of the whole country. These criminals are human beings in physical appearance but are totally bereft of conscience, sense of just and unjust and human essence. In fact, they are worse than animals. This horrific situation in every nook and corner of the country has been created by the political parties subservient to ruling capitalism. During election, these criminal brigades are pressed into action for snatching away ballot papers, rigging, intimidating the voters not to go to the polling stations as they would cast votes on their behalf or threatening them of being forced out of the locality if they dared to vote a certain party. Likewise, on the one hand, the 'march of so-called development' as per the design of these parties is going on while on the other hand, incidents of killings, burning alive inside closed rooms and rape are soaring in number. In this regard, there is a competition between the BJP-led UP and TMC-run West Bengal.

Another alarming feature is that corruption in every sphere has become the order. Either at central government level or at state government level, no work is done without bribe. As if, that is the

undeclared law. Of late, you have come to know that in BJP-led Karnataka, a contractor has committed suicide after writing a letter accusing a minister of malpractice. The minister had demanded cut money up to 40%. The contractor brought the matter to the notice of even the Prime Minister. But that too was of no avail. It is clear from this incident how in the rule of the BJP waving the flag of Hindutva, the much-trumpeted promise of *na khaunga, na khane dunga* (neither shall we take bribe nor allow anyone to do so) is being honoured. In all states, one needs to grease the palms of the ministers to get a contract. Then while getting the bill passed, one needs to pay cut money. During the TMC regime in West Bengal, bribes of lakhs of rupees have been taken for giving appointment of school teachers. Now, a court case is going on regarding such kickbacks. Apart from that, extortion, overlordism of real estate syndicates are continuing unabated. Killings and clashes among the criminals under the fold of the TMC are also taking place centring on share of the booty. Besides, trafficking of women and children has become a roaring trade.

They are doing one more harm by corrupting the common people. Under the 100 days rural employment scheme or MNREGA, the poor people get jobs and work for 20/30 days while the ruling party leaders, touts and associates are usurping maximum of the money due to them and paying them only the rest. This is going on. Jobs include planting of trees, digging ponds, etc. The leaders-ministers are already corrupt to the bone. Now, they are corrupting the poor by making them accustomed to receive wage by either not working or working for a few days as against the stipulated period. The money granted by the central as well as state governments for such projects are thus misappropriated by the leaders and ministers at different levels. If one is sanctioned Rs 3 lakhs under the government house building scheme, half the amount ought to be paid to the high-ups. Everywhere, this is going on and people have also come to accept this as a normal procedure. The law does not take its own course but is dictated by the ruling party. As the CBI, ED move as per directive of the BJP, the police-administration in the state of West Bengal function as per dictates

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Russia-Ukraine War

A Gold Rush for the Western Arms Manufacturers

The most devastating war is going on between Russia and Ukraine for several months. Thousands of people are killed, many thousands are injured, and millions fled to neighbouring countries to take shelter because of the attack of imperialist Russia on Ukraine. Many cities, towns and villages are destroyed including hospitals and schools. Thousands of soldiers from both the sides lost their lives. Daily the newspapers and the electronic media are carrying painful plight of the hapless people there. Many countries are facing fuel and food crisis due to the war. In the columns of previous issues of Proletarian Era, we have concluded that this war is the outcome of intense contradictions among imperialist countries over capture of market. Russia, being the aggressor, wants to establish its hegemony over the countries of erstwhile Soviet Union, while the Western imperialist countries led by USA want to expand war machine of NATO to the borders of Russia using Ukraine as scapegoat. We have also shown clearly that imperialist countries based on militarization of economy cannot survive without engineering local or partial wars somewhere or other if not full-fledged World War.

War Merchants make huge fortunes

But there is another side of this deadly war. 'The business of War'. Many industrial sharks, arms producers, contractors, and oil merchants are gaining huge profits and accumulating their wealth during the present time. Starting from the World War I, in every minor or major war, these death merchants gathered huge profits. Major General Smedley Butler, in his book *War Is a Racket*, criticized war profiteering of US companies during World War I. He wrote about how some companies and corporations boosted their incomes and profits by up to seventeen times.

In the book, Butler wrote that "It has been estimated by statisticians, economists, and researchers that the war cost your Uncle Sam \$52,000,000,000. Of this sum, \$39,000,000,000 was spent in the actual war period. This expenditure yielded \$16,000,000,000 in profits". Companies like Opel and IBM increased their profits by working with the fascist Hitler regime. In the case of IBM, they

developed technologies that were used to count, categorise, and select Jewish people who could then be targeted for efficient asset confiscation, consolidation in ghettos, deportation, enslaved labour, and annihilation.

During Vietnam war US imperialists bombed every inch of the country. Texas-based Brown & Root company was awarded massive engineering contracts to build numerous new ports, bases and airports in South Vietnam. Another American company, Bell Helicopter, was also a huge beneficiary. US based oil companies also benefitted a lot from the vast quantities of extra fuel oil, gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel expended by the forces of the U.S. and its allies. As several analysts and political observers have pointed out, whenever there was a military conflict, the U.S. military-industrial complex made a fortune. During the Afghanistan War, defence sector stocks outperformed the average of the stock market by 58%. Though outwardly the 2021 Taliban takeover of Afghanistan is being considered as a failure for the United States, the political and economic analysts are saying that for the powerful industrial houses and defence contractors it turned out to be an extraordinary success.

Private arms manufacturers of US are flushed with funds

Like in all imperialist wars, in the present war too western arms manufacturing companies are competing with each other to earn billions of dollars. Although USA and its European allies condemned the Russian invasion, in reality, they want it to be continued further to enable them to supply more arms. William Hartung, an expert on the international arms trade, points out that "these opportunities represent a 'gold rush' for the industry."

It is known to the world that most of the weapons Ukraine is using in the war such as Stinger, Javelin (anti-tank missile) and Stormer missile systems are manufactured in USA. The imperialist countries headed by the United States, especially their arms dealers, have raked in super profits from both NATO's enlargement and the Russian attack on Ukraine. As reported in New York Times date 20 April 2020, the Pentagon had arranged a classified meeting with the top officials of eight major arms

manufacturers such as Boeing Defense, Space & Security, L3Harris Technologies, Raytheon Technologies, BAE Systems, Lockheed Martin Corporation, Huntington Ingalls Industries, General Dynamics and Northrop Grumman. Raytheon Company and Lockheed Martin Corporation, manufacture sophisticated military hardware like Lavelin (anti-tank missile) and the Stinger (anti-aircraft). When queried, the Pentagon officials informed that they apprised those arms manufacturers that "the Biden Administration is working around the clock to fulfill Ukraine's priority security assistance requests, drawing down weapons from US stocks when they are available, purchasing directly from industry for rapid delivery to Ukraine, and facilitating the transfer of weapons from allies and partners when their systems better suit Ukraine's needs".

In fact, the Biden administration has already spent about 3.2 billion dollars in arms aid to Ukraine. Again, on 19 May last, the US Congress has approved 40 billion dollars for aiding Ukraine. This aid is by and large nothing but arms from the current stockpile or trading from private weapon manufacturing companies.

In the US and in Europe, defence manufacturing is primarily in the hands of private players. When a government announces military aid, one pre-condition is that it would pay the defence manufacturers who supply arms to the receiving nation. When the war is being continued and supply of arms is being increased, the share prices of these arms manufacturing companies shoot up many times. In March last, the share value of Lockheed Martin Corporation is whooped up by 16%. Similarly, General Dynamics shot up by 12%, Raytheon Technologies by 8% and Northrop Grumman by 22%. While commenting on the war, one retired Indian Major General told to media persons that "this is what countries like the US do. They make profits out of war. This is what they did during World War II. They pitted Russia and Germany against each other. 25 million Russians died. The death toll for the Germans was 7 million. Those who supplied arms and ammunition laughed their way to the bank."

Increased militarization of economy and arms trade

Another revealing fact of the war is that 20 members of US Congress personally invested in top weapon contractors who are slated to reap huge profit from the recently sanctioned Ukraine aid package of 40 billion dollars. Many Republican and Democratic members of US legislature are reported to have invested heavily in the defence contractors. Following the trail, the other European allies of US are also increasingly militarizing their economies in the wake of the Ukraine war. The British government has also been holding meetings with defence industry officials, and hosted representatives from Ukraine for a display of the power of the armoured missile launchers known as Stormers. Britain has now reportedly agreed to send the weapons to Ukraine. Germany is seeking to reshape their entire military and has already placed an order for 35 F-35 fighters, the world's most modern combat aircrafts, from USA manufacturer Lockheed Martin. The move came after German chancellor Olaf Scholz said Berlin would increase its military expenditure by a one-off payment of 113 billion dollars and commit to devoting 2 per cent of its annual budget on arms expenditure.

Accumulation of huge profits by killing people and destroying the civilization is not because of some devil minded blood thirsty profit mongers. It is the inevitable outcome of the present-day decadent capitalist-imperialist system. The architect of November revolution, great Lenin said long back that "Imperialism generates war." Maximization of profit is the sole motive behind production in this system. As the inevitable consequence of crisis in the capitalist-imperialist economy, purchasing power of the people goes on dwindling and market crunches. So, in order to create artificial market, the capitalist-imperialists are resorting more and more to militarization of economy. Great Stalin had taught that "In order to eliminate the inevitability of wars imperialism must be destroyed." Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, Founder General Secretary of the SUCI(C) and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of this era, had shown long back that "In expanding their

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Comrade Provash Ghosh's speech

Opportunist vote politics of CPI (M), CPI has created ground for RSS-BJP to raise their ugly heads

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of the TMC. All sins are condoned if one has allegiance to the ruling party. Otherwise, even if there is not even slightest of deviation, daggers are drawn. "Good governance", "achhe din", "government at your doorstep" (Duare Sarkar), "tell Didi" (Didike balo)-all are on the papers only.

Far removed from Marxism, CPI (M) has lost mass support

All these started in West Bengal in 1972 when Siddhartha Shankar Ray-led Congress government was in power. Later these wrongs and malpractices assumed much bigger proportion during the rule of pseudo-Marxist CPI (M). Right from the panchayat level to the top, these evil practices and corrupt activities went on unrelentingly. By ruling 34 years at a stretch, the CPI (M) has spoilt the youth. Now when they are losing in one after another election, they are deriving satisfaction by whatever little percentage of vote they have received more.

This state, as is known to all, was once the bastion of left-democratic movement. In undivided Bengal, revolutionary organizations like the Anushilan Samiti and Jugantar were founded here. Torch-bearers of the uncompromising revolutionary trend of freedom movement like Kshudiram, Bagha Jatin, Benoy-Badal-Dinesh, Pritilata, Surya Sen and others were born here. Later, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose emerged as their best representative.

The Gandhites within the Congress were rightists whereas followers of Subhash Chandra were called leftists. The undivided CPI once gained strength based on the emotion of the people of Bengal towards leftism, victory march of communism in Soviet Union and China and its huge impact on this land. But from the role of the undivided CPI in the freedom movement, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh could realize that though that party was calling itself Marxist, it did not grow as a genuine Marxist party. As Lenin had once said the Second International had degenerated, so, a Third International was required. Lenin further said that the RSDLP was not a genuine Marxist party in Russia.

So, he founded the Bolshevik party. If there is any activist or supporter of the CPI (M) in this meeting, I would call upon them to think what massive a support they once enjoyed in this state. How, in

course of playing one after another anti-Marxist role, they have now reached such a stage as to derive consolation over slight increase in their percentage of vote?

Non-left politics of CPI (M) has paved way for emergence of BJP

I would like to remind you certain incidents. During Indian freedom movement, Great Stalin had pointed out that the big bourgeoisie, meaning the chief patrons of Gandhite leadership of the Congress, was compromising with the British imperialist rulers. The task incumbent on the Indian communists was to unite with the petty-bourgeois revolutionists and isolate the big bourgeoisie-backed compromising Congress leadership like the way Communist Party of China had done under the leadership of Great Mao Zedong. The undivided CPI did not follow this guideline of Great Stalin. The Congress was then virtually divided into two camps—the Gandhites representing the interest of the big bourgeoisie and the uncompromising revolutionary leadership represented by Netaji Subhashchandra. The CPI opposed Netaji Subhash and stood in support of the Gandhites. Once an opportunity came to establish leftist leadership in the Congress when Netaji Subhash was elected as Congress president. But in the Tripuri Congress, the CPI went against Netaji and backed the Gandhites. In the Congress conference at Wellington Square in Kolkata, Netaji Subhashchandra was forced to quit presidentship. Even after that, at Ramgarh left conference, he called upon the CPI to join and form a left consolidation. But the CPI did not respond. You need to be acquainted with this history.

Many of you might not be knowing that it was the Hindu Mahasabha, the progenitor of the BJP, which first mooted the concept that Hindus and Muslims are two separate nations. Muslim League endorsed this view later. You would be astonished to know that the so-called Marxist CPI also supported this two-nation theory of Hindustan-Pakistan. In 1942, the entire country plunged in the "Quit India" movement. But CPI opposed this movement raising the slogan of supporting the British imperialist government. Netaji Subhashchandra had never stood in favour of fascism. He also condemned the attack of fascist Germany on Soviet Union. On tactical consideration, he

took help of Japan to build up Indian National Army (INA). Whether that tactic was right or wrong could be a subject of debate. But did he do so to allow Japan to occupy India? In the edition of 10th January 1942 of 'People's War', the then organ of the CPI, Netaji was called a quisling and an agent of Japan. The CPI further said that it would thenceforth consider Subhashchandra as a traitor. Later also, the CPI hailed Nehru as progressive and branded Sardar Patel as reactionary. In various meetings at this very Shaheed Minar maidan, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had explained in his speeches that the Indian national bourgeoisie had not only assumed power in 1947, it had by that time given birth to monopoly capital and attained imperialist character. The stage of revolution of India after independence is of anti-capitalist socialist revolution under the leadership of the working class in alliance with poor peasants while other poor sections of the people and the middle class would be allies. But, according to the CPI [and also its present various factions like the CPI (M), CPI (ML), etc.], India is in the stage of People's Democratic Revolution against imperialism-feudalism. Who would be allies of that revolution? The National bourgeoisie and the rich peasants (meaning the landed gentry). However, their cadres no more take part in such theoretical discussions or debates nor do they read Marxist literature. In any case, they have continued to pursue anti-Marxist line. They held that Indira Gandhi was progressive while Morarji Desai was reactionary. In 1975, a massive movement surged forth against the autocratic policies of Indira Gandhi. The students and youths round the country had organized that movement spontaneously to protest against price rise, unemployment etc. Later when Jayprakash Narayan joined that movement, it came to be known as 'JP movement'. Since the leftists did not provide leadership to this movement, the RSS-Hindu Mahasabha-Swatantra Party and other rightist forces took full advantage of that movement. In order to isolate the rightists and provide a left leadership to the movement, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had repeatedly requested the CPI (M), CPI to join this movement as the demands were democratic and common people were involved.

But they did not agree. The CPI straightway supported Indira Gandhi. The CPI (M) also covertly

followed suit. But as justification of their non-participation, the CPI (M) argued that since the rightists were there, it could not be part of that movement. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh pointed out that since the leftists were not there, the rightists were reaping the benefits. Yet the CPI (M) leadership remained non-responsive. Had there been a left leadership, the BJP could never gain so much of strength by usurping credit of that movement. The CPI (M) did not participate in the movement on the pretext of presence of the right reaction. But in 1977, these very rightists, including RSS-Jana Sangh (predecessor of the BJP) formed the Janata Party. The CPI (M) could sense that this Janata conglomerate would win election and come to power. So overnight, it turned 180 degrees and lent support to the Janata Party knowing fully well that arch Hindu communal RSS-Jana Sangh were its constituents. It lent support to the Morarji Desai government in which Atal Behari Vajpayee and Lal Krishna Advani were ministers. At this very maidan, BJP leader Vajpayee and CPI (M) leader Jyoti Basu had jointly addressed a public meeting. Later the V P Singh-led government was jointly supported by the BJP and the CPI (M). The CPI (M) had done all such things one after another. Sometimes it allied with the BJP against 'autocratic' Congress, while in other times, it formed unity with the Congress against 'communal' BJP. In fine, the sole consideration of the CPI (M) in deciding an ally was to gain electoral benefits and increase the number of MLAs and MPs.

CPI (M) leaders are deceiving their own workers by calling Congress secular

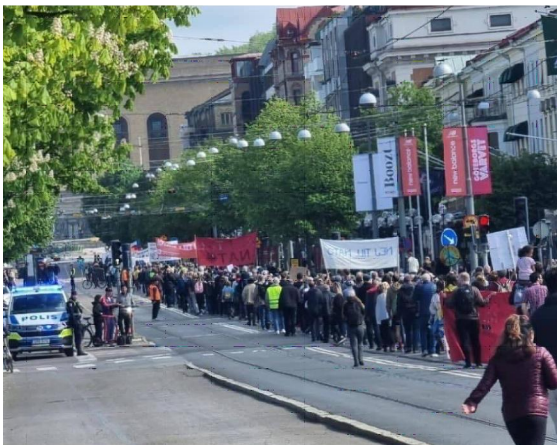
I want to discuss another point here. The CPI (M), of late, is painting the Congress, RJD, DMK and others as secular. Is the Congress secular? What is the meaning of secularism? Secularism means the material world is the only reality. It presupposes non-recognition of any super-natural entity. So, it preaches that religion would have no place in politics, education and social relations and activities. Religion should remain as a matter of personal belief. This was the concept of secularism that arose during the advent of bourgeois democracy in Europe. Netaji Subhashchandra also affirmed this concept and said that religion should remain out of politics. Politics should be guided by political-economic and scientific theories. But the Gandhites did not agree to this. Another reason

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Russia-Ukraine War

Capitalism is resorting to militarization of economy*Contd. from page 5*

respective economic and political influence, the imperialists, therefore, are finding it still harder to reconcile their conflicting interests, resulting in the contradictions between them taking a naked shape. And the more acute the crisis is becoming, the more frantically the imperialists are militarizing their economy. Of course, these are nothing but attempts, in vain, by the imperialist-capitalist countries to maintain, at least temporarily, the relative stability of the capitalist market through artificial stimulation by constantly increasing military consumption." Today, the relative stability of



Citizens of Gothenburg, Sweden, are demonstrating on 22 May against induction of Sweden in NATO.

capitalist market is virtually extinct. So, through escalated militarization of economy and arms trade and engineering local and largescale wars to release the stockpiled arms, the imperialists-capitalists are trying to stave off the crisis.

People all over the World are at receiving end

While the war merchants of imperialist powers are making fortunes over the war, common people round the globe are put to untold suffering. Apart from large scale devastation and increased death toll day by day in both the warring countries, disruption of supply chain of goods, exorbitant price rise and mounting unemployment are haunting the other countries also including the US. The sanctions imposed on Russia fuelled the surge in oil and natural gas prices world over. Because of war, significant quantities of wheat, corn and barley are trapped in Russia and Ukraine, while an even larger portion of fertilizers is stuck in Russia and Belarus. Russia is the world's largest fertilizer exporter, providing about 15% of the world supply. When farmers around the world are prepared for rowing season, Russia told its fertilizer producers to halt exports. The result is that global food and fertilizer prices are soaring. Russia has largely been unable to export food because of economic sanctions slapped on it by US and some of its allies. Ukraine, meanwhile, has been cut off physically from others as because Russia has blocked the Black Sea for exports and Ukraine lacks enough rail cars to transport food over land. Since the Russian invasion, wheat prices have increased by 21%, barley by 33% and some fertilizers by 40%. Countries like Armenia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan and Eritrea who depend on Russia and Ukraine for importing wheat

from Russia and Ukraine, are facing shortage of food. Tunisia struggled to pay for some food imports before the war and now is trying to prevent an economic collapse because of supply disruptions. Inflation has already set off protests in Morocco and Sudan. One of the reasons behind the Indian capitalist rulers' maintaining a so-called neutral stand is that over 50% of the Indian weapon imports come from Russia. At the same time, has a close business tie with US and western countries. So, Indian big corporates and monopoly houses are also looking for an opportunity to extract maximum benefits from this ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Not to speak of other countries including India, even in US, prices of all essential commodities are up 8.6% over a year prior, the largest increase in 40 years, according to government data. Economists expect the war to further inflate those prices. Objecting to the 40 billion Ukraine Bill, the American senator Mr Rand Paul could not but reveal that "US cannot save Ukraine by dooming the US economy. In March, inflation hit 40 years high. Gasoline alone is up 48% and energy prices are up 32% over the last year. Food prices have increased by nearly 9%. Used vehicle prices are up 35% for the year and new vehicle prices have increased 12% or more. Yes, inflation does not come out of nowhere. It comes from deficit spending... Americans are feeling pain. And the Congress seems intent only on adding to that pain by shovelling more money out the door as fast as they can..."

Rise up against imperialist war machination

This is the scenario of world today in the context of Russia-Ukraine war continuing for about three months. As the traditional imperialist countries led by US are trying to perpetuate their dominance over the world, Russia and China, who have emerged as new imperialist powers after counter-revolution are challenging their hegemony. When US is trying to extend its sphere of influence by forming various economic and military combinations and dragging many other capitalist countries under its fold, intra-imperialist contradictions are intensifying and leading to wars endangering world peace and progress.

War means death, destruction, devastation, mass exodus and untold sufferings to whole humanity. So, the only conclusion that can be drawn is that until and unless imperialism-capitalism are overthrown, the threat of war would loom large. Therefore, the peaceloving people around the world should get united and unleash a powerful, well-coordinated anti-imperialist movement to exert pressure on the war-mongers. Let the suffering people imbibe the truth ingrained in the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh: "It would be possible to banish war for good from human society only when socialist revolution would become victorious throughout the world or when the present capitalist encirclement will be replaced by the encirclement of a few remaining capitalist countries by the world socialist system."

Mr. Chidambaram's pedantic observation on growing economic crisis

On 14th May 2022, Mr. P. Chidambaram, the former finance minister of India and one of the prominent leaders of the Congress, opined that the state of the Indian economy is a "cause of extreme concern" and called for a "re-set" of the country's economic policies. He made these statements while addressing a press conference on the sidelines of the two-day 'Chintan Shivir' of the Congress held in Udaipur, Rajasthan. He said, inter alia, that "A Congress-led government ushered in a new era of liberalisation in 1991. The country has reaped enormous benefits in terms of wealth creation, new businesses and new entrepreneurs, a huge middle class, millions of jobs, exports and lifting 27 crore people out of poverty during a 10-year period. After 30 years, it is felt that, taking into account global and domestic developments, it may be necessary to contemplate a re-set of the economic policies... the Congress "certainly is not stepping back" from liberalisation but" is stepping ahead in the post-liberalisation era". (The Economic Times, 14 May 2022)

The contradiction in his statement is glaring. How could a country that "has reaped enormous benefits in terms of wealth creation" at the same time produce "rising inequalities" and "extreme poverty"? How has a significant portion of the population pauperized so that the government had to "lift 27 crores of people" among them "out of poverty"? Have those "lifted" been leading a human life? Have the factors leading to such maladies been eradicated from the social life? Unless these questions are answered, the "cause of extreme concern" will remain as it was before resulting in still greater "wealth creation" associated with further "rising inequalities and extreme poverty". Secondly, citing facts in regard to all-embracing economic crisis engulfing the country, he accused the BJP of being "clueless on the ways to deal with these developments". (The Indian Express, 14-05-2022).

Perhaps, he himself has no clue either because the policy of liberalization-globalization which the Congress ushered in 1991 and went on following during its tenures afterwards is only avidly pursued by the BJP and the burning problems tearing people apart are all bred by that policy. It does not require much intelligence to understand that more and more concentration of wealth in the hands of a few rich presupposes rapid pauperization of the people at large. Wealth creation and poverty are two sides of the same coin, an irreconcilable contradiction inherent in capitalist mode of production whose motive is to maximize profit of capitalist owners through ruthless exploitation of labour.

No bourgeois economist, scholar or political leader subservient to oppressive reactionary corrupt obsolete capitalist order ever dares to admit this reality. So, has not Mr Chidambaram as has not BJP Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman either.

Demonstration in Kolkata on 24 May against corruption in recruitment of school teachers, illegal appointment of TMC school education deputy



minister's daughter as teacher and in demand for immediate appointment of all legitimately selected and wait-listed candidates. Over 100 Party workers including two State Secretariat members were arrested by police which forcibly stopped the demonstrators from advancing towards the Education Department building.

Covid 19 has been a bliss to the super-rich, bane to people

The recently published Oxfam report shows that 573 people became new billionaires during the pandemic, at the rate of one every 30 hours. 263 million more people are expected to crash into extreme poverty, at a rate of a million people every 33 hours. Billionaires' wealth has risen more in the first 24 months of COVID-19 than in 23 years combined. The total wealth of the world's billionaires is now equivalent to 13.9 percent of global GDP.

Billionaires' fortunes have not increased because they are now smarter or working harder. Workers are working harder, for less pay and in worse conditions. The super-rich have rigged the system with impunity for decades and they are now reaping the benefits. They have seized a shocking amount of the world's wealth as a result of privatization and monopolies, gutting regulation and workers' rights while stashing their cash in tax havens—all with the complicity of governments", said Gabriela Bucher, Executive Director of Oxfam International.

Oxfam's new research also reveals that corporations in the energy, food and pharmaceutical sectors—where monopolies are especially common—are posting record-high profits, even as wages have barely budged and workers struggle with decades-high prices

amid COVID-19. The fortunes of food and energy billionaires have risen by \$453 billion in the last two years, equivalent to \$1 billion every two days. Five of the largest energy companies (BP, Shell, Total Energies, Exxon and Chevron) are together making \$2,600 profit every second, and there are now 62 new food billionaires.

The pandemic has created 40 new pharma billionaires. Pharmaceutical corporations like Moderna and Pfizer are making \$1,000 profit every second just from their monopoly control of the COVID-19 vaccine, despite its development having been supported by billions of dollars in public investments. They are charging governments up to 24 times more than the potential cost of generic production. This rising wealth and rising poverty are two sides of the same coin, proof that our economic system is functioning exactly how the rich and powerful designed it to do," added Bucher. Oxfam added that an annual wealth tax on millionaires of two percent, and five percent for billionaires, could generate \$2.52 trillion a year. Such a wealth tax would help lift 2.3 billion people out of poverty, make enough vaccines for the world and pay for universal health care for people in poorer countries, it said. (Source Oxfam 22-05-22 and NDTV 23-05-22)

Anganwadi workers of Kanpur, UP, demonstrate before District Magistrate's office on 22 May 2022 to highlight their legitimate demands



SUCI(C) decries raked up mandir-Masjid issue by RSS-BJP-Sangh Parivar

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI (Communist), issued the following statement on 24-05-22:

"When common people of the country are extremely suffering from unprecedented unending price rise, retrenchment, unemployment, poverty, unbridled corruption in all levels and other problems, the RSS-BJP-Sangh Parivar are again fomenting the Temple-Masjid dispute in order to distract the attention of the people from the burning problems of life; to divide the people on communal line and foment communal tension; to stimulate religious fanaticism and destroy scientific bent of mind and more particularly to strengthen its 'Hindu Vote Bank'.

This is a dangerous attack against the interests of the common people. We condemn this sinister fascist design of the RSS-BJP-Sangh Parivar. We call upon all secular, democratic and left minded people to come forward at this critical hour of the country to develop united sustained movement to defeat this menacing attack."

Beware! CM seat on auction

Former Union minister Basangouda Patil Yatnal, the BJP MLA from Vijayapura, Karnataka, stirred a controversy by stating that he was asked to arrange Rs 2,500 crore to become a chief minister. He said some leaders from New Delhi met him and gave him the offer, Yatnal said while addressing a programme at Ramdurg on 6

May 2022.

Warning people not to join politics and spoil their lives, he said, "There are many cheats in politics who will assure you that they will take you to New Delhi and introduce you to top leaders like Sonia Gandhi, JP Nadda, etc. Don't fall into their trap." (New Indian Express-07-05-2022)

Comrade Provash Ghosh's speech

Congress was never secular

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for rise of the BJP is this flawed political stand of the Congress. The Congressites have all along been advocating equal encouragement to all religions and upheld religion-oriented nationalism in the name of practising secularism. And while cultivating religion-oriented nationalism, in the name of nationalism, the upper-caste Hindus provided leadership of the Congress. As a result, not only the Muslims, but also the so-called lower caste or scheduled caste people even did not participate in the freedom movement.

Had not the Congress engineered communal riots later during its rule? Fratricidal bloodbaths in Rourkela (Odisha), Bhagalpur (Bihar), Nellie (Assam) and anti-Sikh riot in Delhi-were all these examples of secularism? In UP, Samajwadi party (SP) is a casteist outfit. DMK in Tamil Nadu is a parochial party. But the CPI (M) is embellishing these parties with secular colour simply to buttress narrow electoral interest. It is also labelling the Congress as a

democratic force. But this very Congress during its rule had brutally suppressed democratic movements, clamped emergency in the country, promulgated one after another fascist black Act which the BJP is now using. By all these pronouncements, the CPI (M) is cheating both its workers as well as people at large. It has maligned leftism during its 34-year long rule in West Bengal.

Let me remind you that observing the anti-people policies pursued by the CPI (M) during the United Front period, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, as far back as in 1969 sounded a word of caution: "In this situation, the fissiparous groups and religious fundamentalists like the Jana Sangh (forerunner of the present-day BJP) are waiting in the wings. They are waiting for an opportune moment. As soon as whatever attraction the people still have towards left movement evaporates, they would come out in the open."¹ See how correct was his warning. (To be continued)

[Source—1 Some Aspects of United Front Politics and Party Work, SW Vol. III]

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