

# Proletarian Era

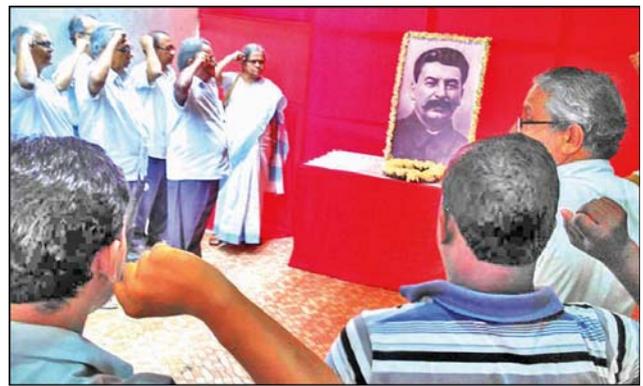
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*Comrade Manik Mukherjee, member, Polit Bureau, SUCI(C), paying tribute to Karl Marx, the great leader and teacher of the proletariat, at the Party's central office in Kolkata on 14 March on the occasion of his 134th Memorial Day*



*Comrade Ranjit Dhar, veteran member, Polit Bureau, SUCI(C), offering floral tribute to Joseph Stalin at the Party's central office in Kolkata on 5 March on the occasion of 64th Memorial Day of this great leader of the proletariat*

## State funding and simultaneous poll How far honest and tenable are the proposed electoral reforms

State funding of elections, that is funding of elections from public exchequer and holding simultaneous polls to Lok Sabha (Parliament) and the state assemblies are the two latest proposals, the union government is recently toying with. In the name of bringing electoral reforms to make electioneering process smoother, different proposals including the two mentioned above have been repeatedly raised and revamped in recent years. Election today has become a miserable combination of vulgar display of money, shameless corruption, deceitful tactics, vicious campaign on casteist-communalist lines, virulent mutual bickering and slandering and such others. All through from preparation of the list of voters to campaigning, polling and finally counting, the condition has reached such a low that despite all attempts to put up a brave face by the administration-major media-government and parties, a large section of people all over the country have started to feel cheated and frustrated with such a system. Vocal or silent, they are desiring, even demanding a free and fair election. The parliamentary parties

involved in the process and their master-mentor, ruling capitalists-monopolists too can feel it very well that the resentment crystallizing may burst out any moment. So they have taken recourse to repeatedly harping on the tune of adopting measures, they call reforms, only to divert people and hoodwink them. These so-called reforms they are bringing no doubt, but all those so-called reforms are proving hollow and deceitful. In the end those are only increasing the filth and mire of the corrupt, bogus system. Over and above, those are making it more and more difficult for any really pro-people force, leave aside the revolutionaries, to take part in this process, which the bourgeoisie themselves once described as sacrosanct. In fact, the ruling class is trying to ensure that only the parties and forces subservient to it, can rise to the seat of power and help continue the prevalent rule of exploitative capitalism as it is. The present cry for state funding and simultaneous polls is only a part of this design. People rightly resentful of the electioneering process need to recognize this truth at the outset.

### **Debates notwithstanding, proponents stood for freedom and fairness**

It is true that those people must also have known that historically parliamentary democracy at the time of its emergence was not like it is now. It was founded upon the proclamation that 'The will of the people is the only legitimate foundation of any government', meaning people were the last word. Democracy was the product in the fight of the bourgeoisie against the absolute autocratic rule of monarchs, kings, aristocrats. It demanded there be a republican government through election of representatives of the people, with the sovereign power to rule for themselves.

The will of the majority, rightful and reasonable, was held to prevail. Yet as an essential part of democracy, the minorities were given representation, they were given unfettered equal rights to express their views and assert their legal and legitimate rights, with equal laws to protect them. At the same time, provisions were suggested to thwart the tyranny of majority. So, while the stress was

put on granting equal opportunity to all, to thwart that tyranny, stress was also put on raising of "political intelligence", that is consciousness of people, consciousness of their duties and rights. Discussions and debates in parliament and outside helped raise this consciousness.

The early proponents of democracy were not just opposed to the absolute monarchical rule, they were also against corruption. They insisted on virtue of people and their representatives in the legislative body. It was conceived that people's representatives would enjoy confidence and respect of people for their service. To be a member of parliament was no profession where pecuniary gains were involved. Rather it was to be driven and guided by the sense of offering service to the country, by the sense of serving people with honesty and sincerity. The members debated and discussed on well being of the country and its people. At best and later, there appeared the custom of offering some amount of money as honorarium. The parliament, formed of such morally sound, responsible,

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## State funding and simultaneous poll

# Attest to deepening decadence of capitalism

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pro-people representatives, was given the sovereign power of legislation, that is law making, including the power of deciding on spending money for people, even a farthing or paisa. Further, for the sake of smooth governance, there were checks and balances of power. The legislative, the parliament, created laws to ensure fundamental rights of people, including freedom of expression and holding opinion, and for freedom of choice to form government, and so on. The executive, the bureaucracy was entrusted with the task of executing these laws enacted. The judiciary stood as the defender of the rule of law to assure people of freedom and justice, to guard the rights of the government, the parliament and the people, protecting them from any excess in execution. The bourgeoisie once created the concept of the powerful fourth estate, the media, for pro-people functioning of the state. It was allowed a free courageous role to delve deep into any malady of the society to make people aware and to criticize governments on valid grounds and create pressure of people's opinion on them to keep them on right track.

In sum and substance, when the parliamentary democracy was being introduced as the viable political system, though evolving within the cradle of exploitative capitalist order at the stage of its emergence, its proponents made honest attempts to introduce an election process free and fair, as far as practicable within the basic framework of their bourgeois system. And this was embodied in the thunderous pronouncement of Abraham Lincoln : *Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the Earth.* But as Mill, an early proponent had apprehended, *'When the victory .... was so complete as to put an end to the strife, ....., first stagnation followed, and then decay'*.

### **With decadence of capitalism, skeleton of bourgeois parliamentary democracy was left bare**

As free competition of early capitalist economy graded into monopoly and ultimately into imperialism, capitalism entered its decadent phase. Power, economic as well as political, were concentrated in the hands of a few monopolists. All the pious wishes, all

the pledges vanished into thin air in no time. Free will, freedom of expression, free choice and free opposition gradually became a far cry. In consequence, these days of parliamentary democracy, including elections, also have slid down fast into decadence. The façade of parliamentary democracy, though faded and torn, are retained for display and as a cover. From behind this façade, the entire election process from preparing the electoral list, choosing candidates, campaigning, alluring voters, actual polling and counting in the end, all these are put in the tightest grip of the combination of money power, muscle power and media power along with administrative power, acting under the design-supervision-beckoning of the ruling monopolists from behind the curtain. Campaigning calls for huge expenses; security deposit is increased manifold; freebies are distributed liberally to keep voters tagged. Wherefrom the stream of immeasurable crores of rupees money comes: one may wonder. The answer becomes known after the election when the monopolists, businessmen, corporates investing this huge money in electioneering, get it reimbursed it through thousand and one means from people themselves. On the other hand, in the name of causing public inconvenience, restrictions are imposed on traditional ways and means like postering, writing graffiti, holding small numerous meetings, etc., that require lesser costs, and so on. In place of genuinely respected persons, those who would only generate disrespect by virtue of their deeds and misdeeds are made candidates; nowadays even branded criminals boastfully enter the house of law-making. A major, powerful section of media sponsored by none other than monopoly houses, cater to people with guided propaganda of high pitch and flair for a few packages of information and views pertaining to this or that candidate or party. Obnoxious 'paid news' are propagated at high cost to make even untrue, concocted news gullible for people, perhaps making even Goebbles turn in his grave.

This all-powerful election machinery takes advantage of unawareness of people at large, their lack of consciousness. People are left dazzled by the show of the powers to prevent them from coming out of the illusion that this parliamentary democracy would bring them good. Days in and days out, they line-up behind this or that

party, virtually enslaved, like paid agents to perform what they are asked to. The voters, that is the people at large, go after this or that package of campaigning like a mesmerized flock, unquestioning, uncritical and even unknowing. They remain unaware that even the high-tech EVM may be used to manipulate the result in favour of some candidate or other, simply with a change in the programming controlling the machine. What it requires, is only the blessings of the master, the ruling monopolists and a pliant administration to manage an all-out rigging with the help of this election machinery using high tech contrivances for example, electronic media, or electronic voting machine.

### **Scums galore in legislative bodies nowadays: genuinely pro-people representatives left out with care**

The situation has reached such depth and dangerous portent that only the parties and their candidates come out as winners which the ruling class find the best suited for serving their purpose at any particular situation. The legislative bodies are adorned with business and industrial tycoons even known for laundering people's money, branded criminals, misogynists and such others with worst parochial, even fundamentalist-racist outlook. Real honest responsible pro-people representatives, leave aside the revolutionaries, are not being able to take part in the process, leave alone the question of entering the legislative bodies.

Recall the shape of parliamentary democracy as found today in the USA and India, particularly during the recently concluded presidential election in the USA or the five assembly elections in India to realize the picture of present day election campaigns.

As in other capitalist countries, in India or in the USA, the parliamentary bodies formed through such elections, have become sort of money-making centre, by any means, fair or crooked. They work like stock exchanges, with money changing hands in ugly shameless fashion. In countries like our own, India, members of legislative bodies, be it at the union or the state levels, cry hoarse at frequent intervals, if not in every session of the legislative bodies, for stepping up their salaries and perks. Already drawing fabulous amounts from people's

exchequer, they do not hesitate to demand more, while they firmly stand for and promulgate laws to prohibit subsidies for people's welfare like for essential services of education, health, shelter, drinking water, conveyance and such others. And this they do in a country which stands in the world among the countries with the largest population of the poor, the malnourished, children with stunted growth or dying early and so on.

In the USA, multi-billionaire tycoons studded the recently held presidential election. What was it that could not be found in the campaign! All the malicious traits mentioned above were rampant throughout. The whole world witnessed these on media in full glare. And these could take place only with liberal surge of money, election and deluge of money becoming synonymous. In the end, the new president elect right from the days of assuming the power spared no time to bring in branded tycoons, war mongers into his administration, as well as his kin, including family members to enviable posts and pillars of power and pelf.

Then again in parliaments of capitalist countries, not excluding India and the USA, political discussions and debates problems pertaining to people's life and livelihood have become rare nowadays, if not totally absent, during any electoral campaign or later within the four walls of the legislative bodies. They are substituted with sheer gimmicks, shameless false pledges and announcement for freebies, vicious racist-fundamentalist propaganda, parochial slogans, personal slandering and such others. In India, in the recent past, the parliament has been converted into dens of mutual slurring and slandering without any rightful debate on people's issues and very often adjourned for indefinite time from stage-managed hullabaloo the members create. They however, sing the same song when it comes to enhancing their emoluments or other privileges as well as to promulgating means and methods to thwart people's voice of resentment and protest.

### **The design for reforms**

Lest this real shape of parliamentary democracy is exposed to people, the monopolists, the master-mentor-custodian of the decadent capitalist order of the time, are busy in keeping the outer cover,

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## The Great November Revolution

# Even after hundred years a fiery inspiration to struggle for a society free from exploitation

[On the occasion of the centenary of the historic Great November Revolution that led to the foundation of the USSR, the first socialist state in the world, *Proletarian Era* has decided to publish different write-ups on the history and lessons of as well as worldwide response to this epoch-making event in the history of mankind. Here we start a series of articles on the tortuous, difficult yet firm, well-conceived and immaculately organized course through which Comrade Lenin, the great leader of the proletariat, had founded the Bolshevik Party and prepared for the revolution under its leadership. *Ed. Board, P.Era* ],

Revolutions are milestones in the history of mankind. Of all political – economic revolutions that rocked our planet what stands apart is the great November Revolution of Russia led by Comrade Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, the great leader of the proletariat and worthy disciple of great Marx and Engels. It is so distinctive because it heralded an exploitation-free world that the humiliated, the exploited cherished and toiled for from time immemorial. Hence, while observing the centenary of the November Revolution with due solemnity, we cannot forget that this observance is never a mere ritual. The Great November Revolution that tore apart the shackles of world capitalism and established the first socialist state in Russia overthrowing the capitalist state machine there, did not happen out of the blue. It is a unique instance of how revolutionary theory can be concretely given shape to in reality. A hundred years back Comrade Lenin, the great revolutionary thinker, leader and teacher of the proletariat, proved this in Russia by accomplishing the revolution that made an unthinkable backward country like Russia most advanced within two decades in every respect. Socialist USSR under the able leadership of great Stalin, the worthy follower of great Lenin, not only inflicted crushing defeat on Hitlerite fascism and saved mankind from an impending danger but also brought massive material relief to the emaciated war-ravaged peasants and workers. Above all, it gave them a life of honour and dignity. Today on the face of a spate of distortions of Marxist ideology, relentless slanderous campaign against Marxism-Leninism, false malicious propaganda against socialism and maligning the architects of Russian Revolution all done by the capitalists-imperialists and revisionists, it is crucial that genuine communists draw appropriate lessons from the November Revolution and apply those lessons creatively and fearlessly to make revolution possible in their own countries in the present complex world situation. It was great Marx who developed, for the first time in human history, the scientific philosophy of Dialectical Materialism

by correlating, integrating and generalizing the particular truths about the material world discovered by the different branches of science as well as those culled by the social sciences. By discovering the laws of development of the material world as well as of social development, Marx developed the comprehensive scientific world outlook based on experimentally verified truth not only to correctly interpret the material world and history but also to show, for the first time, the scientific, materialistic and historically determined course of changing the world. That is why, Marxism is not a dogma but a guide to action, the science of all sciences.

It was Marx who showed that the bourgeois society itself gives birth to the antagonistic contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and the class struggle built thereupon, and thus creates the condition in which the proletariat united on a revolutionary theory and culture, can engage themselves in a struggle against the capitalist system and overthrow it to establish socialism. It was Marx who predicted that in course of this struggle the human society through accomplishing anti-capitalist socialist revolutions by intensifying class struggle would step into the socialist system and ultimately reach classless communist society. It was Marx who had shown that emergence of the proletariat was no scar upon society. Rather it is they who have historically emerged as the most advanced class to lead the revolution to free capitalist society from its principal antagonistic contradiction between labour and capital. Marxism is thus an invincible weapon in the hands of the proletariat to herald a new dawn by overthrowing ruthlessly exploitative capitalism and free both material and spiritual worlds from the clutches of capital. Teachings of Karl Marx spread around the world across all national limits. It roused the working class with a new vision, new hope and new guideline for emancipation from the strangles of exploitation and oppression. It was his worthy disciple Lenin who proved the correctness of Marxism by accomplishing the first

working class revolution in the world and creating the first socialist state. In course of concretizing Marxism in the changed era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, Lenin by assimilating the epistemological treasures developed by Marx and Engels and grasping Marxist methodology made fundamental contribution to the treasure house of Marxist philosophy, enriched and developed it further. So Stalin showed that Leninism is the Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution.

With this background, we shall dwell briefly on the course of great November Revolution.

### Russia before revolution

In largely agrarian Russia under despotic Tsardom, capitalism had been gradually developing. Marxism, too, had made inroads there to inspire the working class of Russia to build up their struggles as well as their own organizations of struggle. As Lenin said: *Marx and Engels, who both knew Russian and read Russian books, took a lively interest in the country, followed the Russian revolutionary movement with sympathy and maintained contact with Russian revolutionaries. (On Fredrick Engels, CW, Vol.2, p.19)*

However, prior to emergence of the Marxist groups in Russia, movements against Tsardom were dominantly influenced by Narodism. Narodniks thought that Tsardom could be abolished only by precipitating terror and undertaking individual killings. They believed that it was enough for a few people to take active heroic role to overthrow Tsardom. There was not much for the masses to do. In the words of great Stalin, the basis of Narodism was 'active heroes and passive mob'. Narodniks, thus, denied the revolutionary leadership of the working class and so also the necessity of a party of their own. Hence, their thoughts evidently were anti-revolutionary.

The first Russian Marxist group, *Emancipation of Labour*, was formed in 1883 in Geneva by G V Plekhanov, while in exile. Previously he had been a Narodnik. But having studied Marxism, he broke with Narodism and became an outstanding propagandist of Marxism. He translated *The Communist Manifesto* along with its Preface by Marx and Engels and other works of the two great leaders in Russian. Side by side, Plekhanov wrote a good number of articles on Marxist outlook against the Narodnik

ideology. On the basis of that, *Emancipation of Labour*, the group he led, launched intense ideological campaign against Narodism and thus helped Marxism spread widely across the country. Among Plekhanov's articles particularly significant was *On the Development of the Monistic View of History*, which Lenin himself held to "rear a whole generation of the Russian Marxists." (CW, Russian edition, Vol.14). Certainly Marxism advanced in Russia by exposing Narodism, but Plekhanov committed some very serious mistakes. Despite his intense ideological struggle against Narodism, his views contained vestiges of the Narodnik views: it countenanced the espousal of individual terrorism. Furthermore, Plekhanov failed to develop a clear understanding on the role of the peasantry as an ally of the revolution to be led by the working class. Rather he considered that the liberal bourgeoisie was a force which could help upholding the interests of the working class. Above all, like many other the then Marxist groups in Russia, his *Emancipation of Labour* did not have any concrete experience of working class movement on the soil.

The task of freeing the working class movement in Russia from the mistakes of *Emancipation of Labour* group and developing it on the sound base of Marxism fell to Lenin. When he was just 18 and a student, Lenin was arrested and expelled from the Kazan University for taking part in the revolutionary student movement. He then joined a Marxist circle formed by one Fedoseyev. He later moved to Samara and soon afterwards set up the first Marxist circle there. In 1893, Lenin went to St. Petersburg. In 1895, he united the different Marxist circles to form one single *League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class* and started organizing a series of mass movements. It was Lenin who introduced the teachings of scientific socialism in the workers movements of that country. Narodism still had some residual influence in Russia. Lenin elaborately laid out the incorrectness of this ideology in his well known book "*What the 'Friends Of The People' are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats*". At that time, efforts were being made to unite all the Marxist groups and circles in Russia, including the group led by Plekhanov and thereupon form a single social

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## The Great November Revolution

# Smash capitalism-imperialism, establish socialism : clarion call of Great November Revolution Centenary

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democratic party (In those days, the opportunist compromising character of social democracy was yet to be exposed and they had not yet shunned the communist movement. In fact, the communists were then known as social democrats). At such a critical hour, Lenin was arrested in 1897 and was sent to exile in Siberia. Even from there, he secretly maintained contact with the comrades and wrote a number of articles. It was a time when a trend towards economism was developing in workers movements in Russia. As a result, avoiding practice of debate-discussions on political theories as also efforts towards forming a working class party, the workers were engaged in movements on economic demands. Lenin used his pen against this trend from Siberia.

### **Iskra makes its appearance**

The *League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class* formed by Lenin served as the foundation for a revolutionary party of the proletariat on Russian soil. Different units of the League that grew up in many cities of Russia had the single aim of developing a united party of the proletariat.

In March 1898, dodging police vigilance, representatives of quite a few social democratic organizations assembled at the first Congress at Minsk. The Congress decided to form Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP). With Lenin in exile, the party was not formed. Rather his absence caused difficulties in carrying out the activities of the Congress. The central leaders were soon arrested by the police. The different social democratic organizations continued their works separately in their own ways.

Lenin, from his exile, made an elaborate plan of forming a single party uniting all the revolutionary social democratic organizations. Alongside, he felt the need of publishing a political organ which could help develop organic link among the Marxist groups and organizations spread around the vast stretch of Russia and would thus make the road smooth for forming a party.

Back from his exile in December 1900, Lenin, joining hands with Plekhanov, published the first issue of *Iskra (Spark)*. The first page had the momentous headline: The spark will kindle a flame.

*Iskra* was printed outside Russia and was brought guardedly inside the

country dodging administrative vigilance. Anybody found canvassing it, was sure to be subject to strict Tsarist order of imprisonment or exile. But despite all such threats and intimidation, the circulation of *Iskra* could not be halted. The issues reached the entire Russia. In cities and towns, one after another, associations of the readers and supporters of *Iskra* sprang up. Stalin was a leader of such an organization in the Trans-Caucasia region. Afterwards, another political journal *Bradzola (Struggle)* was published from Georgia with Stalin as the editor.

### **Foundation of RSDLP**

The success of *Iskra*, planned and executed by Lenin, paved the road to the second Congress of the Party. It took place in London in 1903. The principal object of the Congress was to decide the programme for the Party and adopt it. The programmes adopted in the London Congress of RSDLP were clearly the programmes for militant movements of a revolutionary party of the proletariat. Its goal, The Party declared that its goal was: abolition of private ownership over the means of production and eradication of exploitation of man by man as well as of the class-divided society. To sum up, the ultimate goal of the Party was to overthrow capitalism and establish of socialism. To fulfill these goals, the programme affirmed, socialist revolution would have to be accomplished. Its immediate aim was to overthrow Tsardom.

But just formulating a programme was not enough. It was imperative that the leadership provided a clear outline on what would be the organizational structure of the party and how the party would discharge its responsibilities for accomplishing revolution. It also became necessary to decide upon the rules and regulations for the party. But, serious differences cropped up on these issues at the second Congress. Main difference was on who could be the member and who would not. Two groups emerged from it. The majority group led by Lenin became known as *Bolshevik* and the minority *Menshevik*. Initially Plekhanov was on Lenin's side. Later he switched over to the Mensheviks.

Mensheviks demanded that each and every individual taking part in a strike must be given the right to declare himself or herself as a party member; the different groups and individuals despite separate views

must be given party membership and the party must scrap the principle of submission of the minority to the majority. Mensheviks were opposed to the principle of centralism. They upheld self-regulating individual thinking. They were in favour of making the party a loose organization of the type of *Kvotist* party. In fact, Russia at that time was at the threshold of bourgeois-democratic revolution and the bourgeois intelligentsia often used to come forward in favour of revolution and help the party. This was the reason the Mensheviks wanted to take them in as party members.

But Lenin had a different goal of founding a revolutionary party of the proletariat. On the face of the ultra-revolutionism and anarchism of the Mensheviks, he wanted to found a revolutionary party of the working class which would have a monolithic character like a human body.

Under the leadership of Lenin, the Bolsheviks announced firmly:

1. Working class and working class party are not one and the same. A working class party is the class conscious vanguard section of the working class imbued with the ideology of Marxism.

2. The Party is not only the vanguard, the class conscious detachment of the working class, but also an organized detachment of the working class. Not merely an organized detachment, but 'the highest of all forms of organization' of the working class.

3. 'The proletariat has no other weapon but organization'. So, party members must also be the member of one or the other organization under the party.

4. To work properly and guide people with discipline, the working class party must be built up on the principle of centralism. It means the leadership will be based upon the submission of lower bodies to the higher bodies. Also, leaders and cadres of all levels will be bound to abide by the discipline of the party.

5. The party is the highest expression of the organization. So it is the party that will lead all the other organizations. So, the party must be founded with the most advanced section of the working class equipped with higher ideology, richly conversant with the rules and regulations of class struggle and experience of conducting revolutionary movement.

6. It is extremely important that the party constantly remains in close contact with the people. Otherwise, it cannot advance at all.

7. The Party will never turn into a *Kvotist* party. It will never allow the situations to go their own way and will not act as appendage to spontaneity, indulge in tailism to spontaneous incidents.

Lenin showed : "*Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement.... The role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory.*"

"*All worship of the spontaneity of the labour movement,*" Lenin said, "*all belittling of the role of 'the conscious element,' of the role of the party of social Democracy, means, quite irrespective of whether the belittler likes it or not, strengthening the influence of the bourgeois ideology among the workers.*" (SW, Eng. edition, Moscow Vol. 1)

In 1900, Lenin delineated the primary tasks to build up a genuine Marxist party in Russia. He wrote that to found and consolidate the party meant to build up unity and solidarity among the Russian social democrats (Marxists were called social democrats in those days). This unity and solidarity could never be achieved by either simply promulgating decrees or adopting proposals and decisions in the meetings of the representatives. To achieve unity some specific things must be done. Firstly, unity of ideas should be arrived at. That unity would remove the differences of opinion as well as confusions prevailing among the Russian social democrats. Otherwise, our unity would be sham unity which would help the present confusions to remain and would hamper the process of completely removing the erroneous ideas. Great Lenin laid immense stress on the struggle to achieve unity of ideas not just for implementing the programmes of revolution.

Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the worthy student of Comrade Lenin, had explained what Lenin meant by unity of ideas. Lenin meant that it is the struggle of applying Marxism in all aspects of life which alone makes possible correct grasping of this revolutionary philosophy, concretising Marxism in the concrete situation of a country, cultivating communist culture as against bourgeois culture and developing collective leadership and democratic centralism in the party.

In his celebrated book *One Step Forward Two Steps Back* Lenin upheld the role of the revolutionary party concretely for the first time in

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# The Great November Revolution

## With immaculate organization, Great leader Lenin strode to victory

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the history of Marxism. He showed that the party, the detached vanguard of the proletariat, is the chief weapon in the hands of the proletariat. Without a revolutionary party of the proletariat, there cannot be any revolution, there can be no struggle to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The majority of the social democratic organizations in Russia joined the Bolsheviks. At that time Comrade Stalin was in jail. After coming to know the decisions of the second Congress, he stood in strong support of the Bolsheviks led by Lenin.

Following it, with full vigour the Bolsheviks started organizing working class struggles. Class struggles developed in a mighty way between 1901 and 1904. In 1904, Russian-Japanese war broke out. The reactionary Tsar government hoped that this war would thwart the surging tide of revolutionary movement. Shattering this hope, the Bolsheviks organized a huge strike at the Baku oil field in December 1904. This strike triggered innumerable

strikes through the length and breadth of the whole country. All these strikes were like thunder roar that heralded the approaching revolution.

### **The first revolutionary uprising of 1905**

The Mensheviks backed Tsar's warfare moves and completely depended on the non-interventionist liberal bourgeoisie. But Lenin perceived the bourgeois democratic revolution of 1905 in a different light. He pointed out that this revolution was happening at a time when world capitalism had reached the stage of imperialism. That was why he upheld that the role of the proletarian class in bourgeois democratic revolutions was that of the leader. In his view, it was vital for revolution to be led by the working class to become victorious. That was why the Bolsheviks wanted to institute a provisional revolutionary government by destroying Tsar-rule through armed revolution, while Plekhanov, on behalf of the Mensheviks, registered severe opposition against people taking up arms. This treachery gave the Tsar an

opportunity to carry on cruel repression on the revolutionary movements. The revolutionary upsurge had to be withdrawn.

Lenin said, the immense benefits that the daring three-year struggle between 1905-1907 brought for the proletarian class of Russia and the Russian people, took several ages for many other countries to achieve. This struggle had unchained the working class from the influence of the treacherous, detested and decrepit liberalism. It endowed to the entire exploited and oppressed class of Russia the ability dynamism to develop revolutionary mass struggle. This first revolution of Russia was not successful but it exerted tremendous influence on the emancipation struggle throughout the world.

This failed revolution turned Russia into the epicenter of world revolution and the working class of Russia into the vanguard of revolution led by Lenin's Bolshevik Party. Lenin emerged as the principal thinker, organizer and leader of the Russian revolution. But the failed revolution of 1905 generated frustration as well. But it was Lenin's inspiring leadership that unshackled people from frustration and roused them anew to develop proletarian revolutionary struggle for emancipation from the yoke of oppression. Lenin had to traverse through diverse complex trails of struggle with the singular object of strengthening revolution.

In this connection let's mention the unparalleled example of Marxist interpretation by Lenin regarding joining the Duma in one situation and boycotting it in another situation by the Bolshevik Party.

In 1905, there was a possibility of a bourgeois democratic revolution against autocratic Tsarist rule and Lenin wanted the proletariat to not only take an active but a decisively leading role in that revolutionary movement so as to transform it into a proletarian revolution. But, when due to various reasons, the revolution

did not come about, the objective situation demanded fresh initiative to build up revolutionary struggle by making full use of the legal avenues. So in what Lenin said, "growing tide" of revolution, Bolsheviks correctly understood that the announcement of convening the Duma, a consultative assembly of representatives of the landlords and the big bourgeoisie, elected under the supervision and with the assistance of the autocratic government's servants on the basis of an electoral system so indirect, so blatantly based on property and social-estate qualifications, was a sheer mockery of the idea of popular representation. And hence at that time, according to Lenin, "participation of the liberal bourgeoisie in the Duma means a slackening in its agitation at the present time, its appealing more to the tsar than to the people, and the approach of a counter-revolutionary deal between the Tsar and the bourgeoisie." (CW Vol.9 p181) But Lenin made it amply clear that "it is a very great mistake indeed to apply this experience blindly, imitatively and uncritically to other conditions and to other situations." (Left-wing Communism p.22) It had been a brilliant example of how genuine revolutionaries following Marxist methodology of analysis adopt different tactics at different point of times suited to the need of the hour to strengthen revolutionary movement. In the language of Lenin, "The alternation of parliamentary and non-parliamentary forms of struggle, of the tactics of boycotting parliament and that of participating in parliament, of legal and illegal forms of struggle, and likewise their interrelations and connections — all this was marked by an extraordinary wealth of content...."

The Bolsheviks' boycott of "parliament" in 1905 enriched the revolutionary proletariat with highly valuable political  
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## People's movement in Durg against opening of liquor shops

A people's movement has been launched in Javera village in Durg, (Chhattisgarh) under the banner of 'Sharab Virodhi Sangharsh Samity' ('Anti-liquor Struggle Committee') against the move by the BJP-led state government to open liquor shops on a large scale ignoring public protest and in utter disregard to the immense harm it is slated to cause in the socio-cultural arena. On 2nd March, when some leading organizers of the Committee went to seek opinion of the local women activists on the prevailing situation, two of them, Comrades Viswajeet Harode and Devendra Patil, local SUCI(C) leaders, were arrested, detained throughout the day at the police station, taken to the court with handcuffs on and slapped with six different charges. Even the SDO of Durg had ordered jail custody for both. However, the Court released them against a security bond of Rs.50,000. Even some women protesters were arrested and implicated in false cases.

The BJP-led state government is evidently bent upon opening liquor shops in total disregard of public protest. To protest against these undemocratic arrests and to demand a total ban on sale of liquor, a demonstration was held with women participating in huge number. A memorandum focusing on the above demands was submitted to the Collector.

## Observance of 8th March, the International Women's Day



Jharkhand



Tripura



Bihar

## State funding and simultaneous poll

# Design to push genuine people's representatives out of election

*Contd from page 2*

even if it is dry and wrinkled. Lest the thinking people get to see through the whole scheme of deceit and betrayal, the ruling class and their subservient political managers, the bourgeois parliamentary parties, adopt various means now and then to generate confusion. To dissipate their resentment and wrath against such a horribly corrupt electioneering process and the legislative bodies formed thereupon, they are taking recourse to treacherous means of extreme falsehood. Side by side, they create the impression how honestly and sincerely they are trying to make the electioneering process free and fair, freeing it from impurities. Whenever any move is exposed to people, they find out another trick as a damage controlling prescription. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the power does not slip out of hand of their own desired political parties or forces and people do not unite organized under any revolutionary force.

So long as capitalism will continue with its rule, there will be no real respite from this situation. Yet people are left with a single choice. And it is of developing powerful democratic movement to bring about as much or whatever little restraint is possible, keeping in mind that all such movements must be developed with anti-capitalist orientation.

The two latest diversionary moves about which the BJP in power and along with it all other parties are talking about, are one of state funding of elections and the other simultaneous polls. They need to be judged on the above outline of design underlying them. They simply make a design for deceiving people in the name of reforms.

### **State funding of elections: a deception at most**

Long back, explaining the characteristics of the capitalist system, Karl Marx, the great leader of the Proletariat, indicated clearly that money is made supreme in capitalism. Shunning all questions of morality, values and ethics, capitalism determines everything, every action, even human relations. As briefly shown above, now when the world capitalist system has become moribund people of capitalist states unambiguously feel the truth of this observation, even with a cursory look at how

elections are being held and how the so-called people's representatives are making their way into legislative bodies riding on money power, among others.

In the days of decadent capitalism, in all capitalist-imperialist countries of all the six continents, beginning from the very powerful USA down to all others, no election can be held or even conceived without the unseen or visible ugly hand of this money flooding the process. It is not only that money has become virtually the sole factor. The forces concerned are vying with each other to prove how much more money one can invest than others do and how best they can carry out horse trading of parliament members using heaps of money. Obviously with such a shackle on its legs, election can by no means be free and fair. Money flows merrily with trickeries, even threats, at every stage at all levels. And it is not always hidden too. Side by side to hoodwink thoughtful people, all bourgeois agencies, including a major section of monopoly-controlled media carry on relentless propaganda round the clock to make people believe how sincere they are in putting a stop to this flow and reign of money. As a part of it, the governments define limits to expenses, knowing full well that none of the offenders will care for the official limits. But the latter is always being raised higher. It means, as discussed, only the parties or forces which could amass fabulous election funds from their capitalist-monopolist patrons, sponsors and well wishers, can get freely into the election process. The party or the force which stands for the vast masses of poor people, which fights relentlessly for people's cause is gradually more and more cornered and debarred from joining the process, not to speak of winning seats, because of the lack of funds. It needs no explanation that the moneyed rich, the monopolists, the business houses, the corporates, which open their wallet liberally to fatten the election fund of a party of their choice, will be adequately rewarded with crores and crores of rupees unhesitatingly and ruthlessly to reimburse their investment as and when their chosen party assumes power. The victim is obviously the people, relentlessly burdened with indirect tax-increase,

ultimately leading to ever-mounting price rise.

As the entire election machinery is run by money, it goes on spiraling. And for the most part it is the infamous black money which the holders make use of through their pet political parties. Despite all tall talks of curbing black money, it prevails and will keep on prevailing as usual and with full vigour to play its prank. With a sagacious posture the government stipulate a 2000 rupees limit for an individual to donate to a political party. One can hardly hold back from laughing, as everybody knows how the errant political parties would smoothly find out thousand and one means to bring out, on record, a list of thousand and one individuals, real or fake, each donating them within limits. So, sure and certain, money will continue to flood every part of the election process and at all its levels, monopolists will provide it to keep their machinery moving. The government, on behalf of the monopolists will make this rule or that rule. But the process will run unchecked. And on this background, state funding will mean that the government, meant to be the protector of people, will turn into devouring upon them, saviour will itself provide fuel to this devilish practice of funding elections. From where will the government get the money to fund elections? From another vital point of view it is people's money called public exchequer. Then how will it reimburse it? Naturally the government will recover it from none other than people and by nothing else but raising taxes leading to further price rise and associated burden for people. One cannot miss the point that these parties know it well how to dodge the laws and restrictions.

Now the bourgeois political parties of all hues and slogans are standing by the proposal of state funding. All of them are identified with this singular move; what else can they do? None of these parties can challenge it as all are reaping their harvest from the process. And they are aware of their master's design too.

Besides, in power or in opposition they have nothing to lose. Either way, they will enjoy the state fund above board and the usual black money underneath the

table. So the move is not just insincere, it is extremely deceptive as well. It is a reform not to improve the electioneering process, but to help the process run as usual, the sole objective being to confuse people's resentment against this nasty role of money and thwart it from growing further. It is clear as daylight that the parties subservient to the ruling class will gain fillip with this move to make use of the process for their petty party interests.

### **Simultaneous election : impracticability at its height concealing the motive**

The proposal for holding elections simultaneously is a second issue now being revamped. Avowedly, it is for the sake of bringing down expenditure and smoothening administrative steps. Incidentally it may be mentioned that even the Chief Election Commissioner of the country could not but raise a warning, though timidly enough, that the process of simultaneous polls will cost a huge amount of money over Rs 9,000 crore for a government that so often speaks of fund shortage.

Since the beginning, there was simultaneous election in independent India. However, there cropped up different reasons for which election had to be held at different times in different states. This was natural for a vast country like India. Here situations were different in different states depending on various factors, natural or man-made; the regions had their own peculiarities, problems, festivities, cultural traits and activities, etc. There were sudden disruptions. There were still other factors.

The ruling capitalist class are frantically trying to keep their subservient parties satisfied with power and pelf, in order that the latter serve them unhesitatingly. The parties, in their turn, are constantly trying to gain advantage over each other. Those in power are driving wedge into the opposition to ensure their majority; the opposition are trying to bring the ruling party down. Now it is even happening that the party running the Union government uses its clout and power to drive cleavage within some state government run by its opponents. In all the cases it is the money of the

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## Only powerful movement can put some check to the rot in parliamentary democracy

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monopolists that provide the fuel. In this rat race for power, the governments are promulgating anti-defection laws, but to no avail. Defections, even mass defections are bringing down elected governments. It becomes necessary to clamp President's rule in such cases. Chiefly because of this, mid-term election is becoming unavoidable now and often. In a capitalist set-up such mutual bickering cannot be avoided. Moreover, it should also be mentioned that dreadful capitalist exploitation is giving birth to tremendous resentment in people about to burst out at any moment. This is also causing political instability, cleavage in even a majority-run government. In such cases too, it is found that the House is being dissolved, thus necessitating fresh mid-term election. Sometimes as a diversionary tactics, the government in power facing danger of split and crumbling down is going for before-term election.

In any case, instead of holding such elections as early as possible, simultaneous election over the country on any plea whatsoever will withhold such election for some time, may be a few years. For pure and simple reason of maintaining governance, the state or the region will have to be put under a non-elected government, which in our country cannot be anything else than President's rule. It means people there would not have any elected legislative body for them and will have to bear with the rule of the executive, that is the bureaucracy. In turn, the non-elected body of bureaucrats running a government will have no accountability to the people concerned, will not need to pay any heed to whether people's interest is being upheld or not, if people's democratic rights are being violated or not. So these days when all-out crisis plagues the system and the ruling class, the monopolists are finding no ways towards any solution, such a reign of bureaucrats will simply provide a convenient tool in their hands, to implement their agenda and designs in an unfettered way. In a decadent capitalist set-up there is no escape from the political disruptions narrated above. All claims for bringing stability by this or that means are sure to prove bunkum.

### People need to get at truth and decide what to do

People need to get at these truths and would have to decide what they should do. Should they remain just a mute witness of how the bourgeois parliamentary democracy have decayed into a morbid skeleton? Or should they think of throwing it out of the society to rid the latter of a useless putrid hangover of the once bright past? Should they allow the monopolists and their subservient forces to carry through the worst treachery of which people themselves are the victim?

It is true that parliamentary democracy is the superstructure of the capitalist economic base. And the present decadent capitalist order are hell bent upon concentrating their power, economic, political and military. Such efforts towards concentration of power, a cornerstone of fascism, is manifest today in all capitalist countries. But fascism also needs garnering people's support. And so the rulers, the monopolists continue with this system of parliamentary democracy as the façade to cover up their exploitative bourgeois dictatorship, as the means to hoodwink people in support of their system. As long as capitalism remains the order, the situation is not going to change fundamentally. And within that framework, even the electoral reforms of the sort being suggested at present, will only help to further concentrate power of controlling electioneering process in the hands of the monopolists and their servile forces, thereby assuring the rise of such latter forces to power.

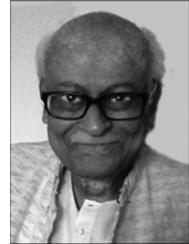
Then for people, or rather for anybody with a modicum of democratic thoughts and values, if these activities and attempts are to be checked even to the minimum, the only course left is the pressure of united powerful democratic movements. Attacks will only mount, so resistance to these should also be geared up. People may see many so-called Marxists, now turned simple social democrats, taking refuge behind the prevailing system of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, not from any respect and regard for democracy or parliament, but for power and pelf that they may happen to enjoy in some favourable situations. It gives a sorry picture no doubt, but for people those forces are virtually exposed and

## Red Salute

### Comrade Shibabrata Dasgupta

Comrade Shibabrata Dasgupta, a veteran member of the Party, a member of the Party's writing staff, breathed his last on 2nd

March, 2017, after a prolonged illness from cancer. He was 82. Comrade Shibabrata Dasgupta was initiated into the Party during his high school days by Comrade Sukomal Dasgupta, our departed leader and former member of the Central Committee.



Comrade Shibabrata Dasgupta used to visit the Culture Club that Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our leader, teacher and guide, along with his revolutionary compatriots had set up in south Kolkata during the formative days of the Party. From there, he felt immensely attracted towards

Marxism-Leninism-Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought. Thereafter, he was admitted to Bengal Engineering (BE) College and graduated in Civil Engineering in 1956. In those days, rules of BE college were very strict about movement of the students staying in college hostel. Yet, he found occasions to come out of his college boarding and attend the study classes conducted by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. He had a quest for knowledge which made him tremendously inquisitive to understand the ideology of the Party thoroughly with a singular pursuit of imbibing truth and traversing along the path of truth by way of contributing his might for growth and development of the Party. After graduation, he took up jobs and was posted at several places outside Kolkata. Later his employers sent him abroad. But at no point of time, did he fail to keep in touch with the Party which he accepted both ideologically and ethically. After returning from overseas in late 1970s, he left job and started his own consultancy firm so as to undertake Party activities more intensely. Noticing his grasp of Party's ideology and prolificacy in writing, he was inducted as a writing staff of *Proletarian Era*. For over 30 long years since then, he shouldered his assignments with full commitment and deftness. He was also associated with the publication of some of the other Party literatures as well. During later years, he defied his failing health to attend the Party programmes and discussions in the *Proletarian Era* Board. Thus, in various ways, he rendered valuable service in the advancement of ideological propaganda of the Party. He was free from self-conceit. He had no hesitation to work under his junior comrades and even was always ready to listen to his juniors and accept critical views from them. His unassuming nature, amiable conduct and ever-readiness to share his knowledge and experience with the junior comrades made him engaging to all as 'dear Shibuda'. As soon as the news of his passing away was received, comrades from *Proletarian Era* and local committees of Jadavpur and Lake in south Kolkata, his place of residence, rushed to his house. Floral tributes were offered on behalf of Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, member, Polit Bureau, SUCI(C) and Editor, *Proletarian Era*; West Bengal State Committee and Kolkata District Committee of the Party. A memorial meeting has been organized on 17 March to pay respect to his revolutionary life.

In his demise, the Party has lost a very valuable comrade of rare qualities.

### Red Salute Comrade Shibabrata Dasgupta

spent up. People may also hear the argument that it is futile for a pro-people force to take part in such a decadent process and so boycotting such elections is the way. The argument is itself useless and futile. Because, with people still suffering from illusion of parliamentary processes, the boycott will only leave them at the mercy of those forces which join the process to serve the monopolists for power and pelf. The rulers — the real enemy of

people that hatch the design — will then find it an easy game to carry through their design without any resistance.

So resistance must be there. At the same time, it cannot be forgotten for a moment that all such attempts to resist and thwart these designs must be directed towards ultimately uprooting the main evil, the capitalist system, lock stock and barrel. This is what the time demands of people right at this juncture.

# The Great November Revolution

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experience and showed that, when legal and illegal parliamentary and non-parliamentary forms of struggle are combined, it is sometimes useful and even essential to reject parliamentary forms. It would, however, be highly erroneous to apply this experience blindly, imitatively and uncritically to other conditions and other situations.

...the Bolsheviks could not

have preserved (let alone strengthened and developed) the core of the revolutionary party of the proletariat, had they not upheld, in a most strenuous struggle, the viewpoint that it was obligatory to combine legal and illegal forms of struggle, and that it was obligatory to participate even in a most reactionary parliament(Left-wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder, CW, vol. 31)

(To be continued)

## The great physicist Stephen Hawking upholds irrefutable truth : We Should Really Be Scared of Capitalism, Not Robots

Machines won't bring about the economic robot apocalypse - but greedy humans will, according to physicist Stephen Hawking.

In a Reddit Ask Me Anything ([https://www.reddit.com/r/science/comments/3nyn5i/science\\_ama\\_series\\_stephen\\_hawking\\_ama\\_answers/cvsdmkv/](https://www.reddit.com/r/science/comments/3nyn5i/science_ama_series_stephen_hawking_ama_answers/cvsdmkv/)) session on Thursday, the scientist predicted that economic inequality will skyrocket as more jobs become automated and the rich owners of machines refuse to share their fast-proliferating wealth.

*"If machines produce everything we need, the outcome will depend on how things are distributed. Everyone can enjoy a life of luxurious leisure if the machine-produced wealth is shared, or most people can end up miserably poor if the machine-owners successfully lobby against wealth redistribution. So far, the trend seems to be toward the second option, with technology driving ever-increasing inequality."* — Reuters

## Observance of Stalin Memorial Day on 5 March



Comrade Gopal Kundu, member, Central Committee addressing meeting at Durg, Chhattisgarh.

[Left] Photo Exhibition in Chennai, Tamil Nadu



Jajpur, Odisha

News of observance of Marx Memorial Day on 14 March will be covered in next issue



Muzaffarpur, Bihar



Bellary, Karnataka

## SUCI(C) severely condemns most undemocratic anti-people policy of slapping hefty charges on cash transactions with banks

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), issued the following statement on 03-03-2017 :

SUCI(C) severely condemns the most undemocratic decision on the part of three private banks to levy hefty charges beyond four cash transactions (cumulative for both withdrawal and deposit) on the pretext of promoting cashless transaction which is also chargeable. This would immensely harm, harass and penalize common citizens particularly the daily wagers, factory workers, peasants, small traders and hawkers who are dependent on cash transactions. Needless to say that this move has been taken at the instance of the government and RBI and would soon be followed by other banks including the public sector banks whose eventual privatization is in the offing as per policy announcement by the government. It is a clear instance of performing daylight robbery on the common people and militates against the very right of one to deal with one's own money as per one's own wish. Moreover, it is in continuation of the trend set of late to take major policy decisions on economic matter outside the budget.

Suffering people ought to imbibe the truth that if such economic onslaughts are allowed to descend upon them without powerful organized protest, a floodgate of such offensives would be opened to further tear apart their already miserable and penury-stricken life condition under ruthlessly exploitative capitalist rule.

## SUCI(C) protests linking Aadhar card with Mid-day meal

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), issued the following statement on 05-03-2017 :

SUCI(C) vehemently protests the most unjust decision of the union HRD ministry to compel the school students to provide Aadhar card number for getting their midday meals. This most unjust decision on the plea of bringing transparency to delivery of subsidies would affect around 120 million schoolchildren including 72 million stunted children across the country. Mid-day meals are an important entitlement of Indian children, legally enforceable under the orders of the Supreme Court as well as under the National Food Security Act. Sudden unilateral decision to link Aadhar card with school meal is a brazen subversion of this rightful entitlement. If the government really wanted to stop pilferage or misuse of subsidy, it could easily do that by taking appropriate administrative initiative under the already existing penal laws. But, the very skirting of that route by the government smacks of eventual curtailment of this facility later by raising the bogey of non-compliance with official directive. Moreover, the job of issuing Aadhar card in most of the places is now entrusted with private agencies against a fee. There are also allegations that people from the unprivileged impoverished sections are duped with fake Aadhar cards by unscrupulous quarters. In such a situation, mandating Aadhar card for school children is an out and out anti-people measure.

We call upon the suffering people to build up a powerful united movement to force the government withdraw the decision forthwith.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : PROVASH GHOSH