

Proletarian Era

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SUCI(C) expresses grave concern over BJP's electoral victory in the Lok Sabha election and calls upon the countrymen to develop mighty people's movement to squarely confront the attacks of the Government on people

Reacting to electoral victory of the BJP in the just concluded Lok Sabha election, Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), issued the following statement on 27 May 2019:

Being rattled by one after another wanton anti-people policies of the BJP government in naked subservience to bourgeois class interest, toiling people of the country were seething in rage in the pre-election period and were desperately seeking relief from this strangulating situation. But during the time of electioneering, all these problems and issues wreaking havoc in people's life, were surreptitiously relegated to the back not only by the RSS-BJP but also by the vote-based other bourgeois opposition parties and even the CPI (M), CPI. Further a bunch of cooked up issues were cunningly brought to the fore to divert people's attention. Religious fanaticism, national jingoism, war psychosis and communal-casteist polarization were vigorously fanned up and with the blessings of ruling bourgeois class, money-muscle-media-administrative powers were recklessly let loose to shrewdly manipulate and rig the results in favour of the ruling BJP, much against the will and interest of the people. Time and again, we have been emphasizing that today, there is not an iota of what is called free and fair election. It has been completely reduced to a farce. The worst forms of machinations, deceptions, dishonesty and hypocrisy indulged in by the RSS-BJP in this Lok Sabha election have once again proved that vital truth beyond doubt. Another pertinent fact to be noted is that violating all democratic norms and conduct, the Election Commission pretending to be impartial and neutral has in a brazen manner did everything to serve the electoral interest of the ruling BJP.

Our Party guided by Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought has been emphasizing that in order to repulse the crass communal fascist politics and attacks of the RSS-BJP, task imperative is to build up a deterrent in the form of developing sustained powerful united left-democratic movements centring round the burning problems of people's life. We further pointed out that the ambience of this united left-democratic movement would create a cultural milieu which would frustrate the sinister design of the RSS-BJP to divide people based on religion and other

nefarious means. Pointing out the fact that throughout the country, one after another spontaneous movements of the peasants, workers, women and students were surging forth thereby providing enough scope for developing organized left democratic movements. Repeatedly we urged upon the CPI (M), CPI and their associates to spurn the line of clinging to bourgeois parliamentarism and come forward to organize such united mass struggles. But all these fell on deaf ears. The CPI (M), CPI paid no heed to our appeal and instead frantically tried to get a few seats by entering into unprincipled opportunistic alliances and understanding with other bourgeois oppositional parties and in some cases with certain parochial regional bourgeois parties, stamping them as 'secular' and 'democratic'. As a result, the ruling bourgeois class succeeded in installing once again the BJP, its most trustworthy political manager, in power at the centre. It is to be noted that under these circumstances, braving all odds and difficulties, our Party took part in this election battle holding high the banner of Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought and militant leftism, which got wide appreciation from the right thinking people.

Though the election results have been devastating from the perspective of people's interest, we feel there is no question of getting disheartened. The call of the hour arising out of this shocking result of this parliament election is to rise to the occasion and take solemn pledge to repulse each and every ferocious attack of the ruling capitalist class and the BJP Government. It is quite possible to thwart the rabidly anti-people communal fascist activities of the RSS-BJP by releasing the tide of mighty class and mass struggles based on correct base political line of struggling leftism as well as higher ethics, morality and culture. We fervently appeal to the countrymen as well as the honest rank and file of all left parties to join the initiative in spearheading these legitimate militant mass movements one after another throughout the country.

Our Party, the SUCI (Communist), founded, reared and geared by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat, stands committed to develop and lead these militant class and mass movements on the basis of his thoughts and teachings.

Notwithstanding vandalism of his statue, Vidyasagar remains the unblemished name of an unforgettable character with an amazing personality in Indian history

A statue of Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, the doyen of the Indian Renaissance, was shamelessly vandalized during the road show of the BJP President in Kolkata in the recent Lok Sabha election campaign. It was not just an act of vandalizing a statue, dragging it down and smashing it. It amounted to a heinous affront to the Indian people – a foul attempt to desecrate Vidyasagar, the great luminary of Indian Renaissance, himself. Protests were lodged in different parts of the country against this vandalism. Based on the reports so far received, a few photos of the protests are given here.

Along with that we present here an extended excerpt from the widely acclaimed book, The

Pioneer of Indian Renaissance Iswarchandra Vidyasagar : A Marxist Evaluation by Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary of our Party, Socialist Centre of India (Communist), based on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought and his brilliant analysis of Indian Renaissance. It brings out at what height Vidyasagar stood in his time, and in the history of India, and how deplorable and heinous is the act to vandalize a statue of a outstanding personality like Vidyasagar and try to desecrate him. Below is the excerpt :

"Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, (was) an unforgettable character with an amazing personality in Indian history. from the middle of the nineteenth century and Swadeshi

movement till today, all have bowed their heads to this great man, and still do so, in reverence. Born of this reverence, the idea that has come to prevail for long in our country is that he is an ocean of kindness and compassion, a social reformer, a reformer of the education system, implementer of widow marriage and such other deeds. This is how he has been known to a large extent to the people of this country....

The famous poet, Michael Madhusudhan Dutta, in a letter, said about him — "The genius and wisdom of an ancient sage, the energy of an Englishman and the heart of a Bengali mother". Another famous statement of Madhusudhan

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Farce of Fasal Bima

How far the second term of Modi led BJP government would address the farmers' distress?

India, whose rulers claim it to be the 'largest democracy' has celebrated its 'festival' of elections for almost two months long. Now the new incumbent, Modi led BJP government has once again occupied the office to rule the country for five more years. During its previous tenure, the Modi-government had promised to double the income of the peasants by 2022, announced increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for procuring the produce from them and talked of having protected them by way of a crop insurance (Fasal Bima) in case of any crop loss because of natural calamities etc. Obviously, one would like to review how far the announced measures had benefitted the peasant community, pauperized and marginalized with every passing hour, and then proceed to see what this second term of the BJP government is going to offer the millions of suffering peasants of our country. Was this government serious about addressing the question of farmers' distress that caught national attention just before the elections? In fact, the crisis in agricultural sector has become so acute that in the recent past, entire country had witnessed surge of quite a number of militant peasant agitations. So initially, all the parliamentary parties of different hues who are engaged in vote-based politics had posed themselves as champions of farmers' cause till the announcement of election schedule. But once drum-beatings of election campaign started, all burning problems of the people including the issue of farmers' distress were relegated to the back. All non-issues had become the issues of election. A conspiracy had been hatched to focus mainly on personal mudslinging and muscle flexing against each other, instigating divisive feelings, competing in enmeshing religious sentiments, stroking national jingoism with warnings of war-like attacks at borders etc. Thanks to the pliant media and bourgeois propaganda machinery that the attention of the people were craftily diverted from the real issues and made to veer around the spruced up topics. But the hard realities of life cannot be hushed up for long. People cannot but come forward to ventilate their suppressed grievances again and again. The distressed farmers are no exception to it. They will have to

hit streets again with much more strength and stamina. So what is needed is a clear conception about farmers' distress, its root cause and ever-lasting solution.

Spectacle of doom and disaster

It is a fact that over the years, the crisis in farm sector has intensified and hit hard by the onset of capitalist globalization. Farmers' suicides have become order of the day. All the successive governments irrespective of hues did nothing to rescue the hapless farmers who were forced to end their life finding no way to come out of the debt trap or appalling poverty. In the two decades between 1995 and 2015, as many as 3,10,000 farmers had committed suicides. During the period between 2001 to 2011, farmers suicides had increased at an alarming rate. On an average, one farmer committed suicide every 30 minutes. Reasons for untold misery of farmers are several. The costs of all agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers and pesticides have been spiralling day by day because, consequent to implementation of the prescripts of globalization, the governments have cut down the input subsidies drastically and the production as well as distribution of such inputs were handed over to the giant MNCs and other private operators on a silver platter while government-owned production houses like the Hindustan Fertilizer were made sick by design and closed down. In fact, the private companies, owned by both domestic and foreign monopoly capitals, have established their monopoly over the market of agricultural inputs. According to an estimate, prices of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides have increased by 800%, 300% and 500% respectively. Even some of the MNCs have virtually been allowed to corner production and distribution of particular inputs. Added to all these miseries, the supply of spurious seeds, fertilizers and pesticides is rampant. The governments never bothered about farmers in arranging proper supply of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides at reduced rates.

Another foremost problem of the small and marginal farmers is about indebtedness. As the institutional credit advanced by national banks has become the privilege of a few influential rich

peasants, small and marginal farmers are falling into the clutches of private money lenders whose interest rate is exorbitantly high enough. Money lending by the micro finance institutions is creating havoc in life of rural populace with its illegal terms and conditions in case of non-payment of loans. So for the ordinary farmers, even the payment of interest itself is something impossible let alone the clearing of principal loan. Mounting debts are also driving marginalized and landless peasants into agricultural labourers. Moreover, the governments had lifted all the quantitative restrictions over the imports including agricultural products. So, Indian market is flooded with foreign products. This has led to drastic squeeze of the market for the domestic farmer's produce. Unable to get remunerative price for many of agricultural products because the procurement machinery is controlled by an unholy nexus of dishonest administration-village touts-middlemen-ruling party leaders-planted agents of the MNC sharks with the government remaining as an indulgent onlooker, farmers are finding it hard to continue eking out a livelihood from farming any more. Even the local unscrupulous traders and the influential rural rich who lend money to small and marginal farmers to meet input costs and other farming expenses at the time of sowing or harvesting, often force the peasants to sell the crops to them at a price much below the market price. This deception or deprivation by the various groups of vested interest is a common phenomenon in rural economy. While the procurement price of agricultural products is drastically reduced at the time of harvesting, the retail price of the same produce shoots up several times in the local markets because of a slew of market manipulations by the agents of establishment and moneyed class. It is also a common feature that sometimes farmers just throw away the produce to waste since they even do not get transport or other miscellaneous expenses when they sell. So it is clear that apart from irregular rain fall, drought and other natural calamities which are causing crop failures, problems like rising input cost, indebtedness and lack of remunerative price are

pushing farmers to give up farming itself. A survey conducted by the Centre for Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) noted that 76% of the 5000 farm households across 18 states preferred to take up some other work than farming. This is in nutshell the root of crisis in agricultural sector in the capitalist economy of India.

Plethora of promises, pompous claims

When the entire farming population is faced with such an unprecedented disaster, any government worth the name should address the farmers' distress in a holistic manner with a comprehensive plan of resolving the deep rooted crisis. Instead, all the anti-people governments be it Congress-led UPA or BJP-led NDA adopted some populist schemes and left the farmers at the mercy of the corrupt market forces. The BJP's Manifesto of 2019 elections under title of so-called *Sankalp Patra*, dished out pompous claims such as doubling the income of farmers, 25 lakh crore investment in Agri-rural sector, interest-free Kisan Credit loans and so on and so forth. Not only now, even during the last 2014 elections, Mr. Narendra Modi led BJP made plethora of promises to address the agricultural crisis in the country. After riding over to power in 2014, Modi government launched with much fanfare the Prime Minister Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) as an ambitious scheme to help farmers cope with erratic monsoons or weather uncertainties. In a country where over half of the un-irrigated crop area is dependent on the vagaries of the four-month-long south-west monsoon, PMFBY promised increased cover for a variety of risks at a premium of just 2% (of sum assured) for kharif and 1.5% for winter or *rabi* crops. It was declared that the centre and states would equally share the cost of actuarial premium payable to the insurance companies.

This scheme is being described as the flagship programme of government. But its implementation has been marked by many flaws at all stages. Right from enrolment of farmers under the scheme, collection of premiums, assessment of crop loss and finally to settlement of claims, farmers are

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Crowning glory of Iswarchandra Vidyasagar's character was invincible manhood and imperishable humanness

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regarding Vidyasagar is – “The first modern man in this country”....

Ramendrasundar Tribedi, the eminent thinker of that era remarked about Vidyasagar – “In reality Iswarchandra Vidyasagar is so great and we are so small – he is so upright and we are so crooked that taking his name may be deemed utmost impudence on our part...”. He further said — “There is a kind of instrument called microscope which shows magnified images of small objects; even though physics specifies the means of making large things appear small, we do not usually use any apparatus designed for that purpose. But the biography of Vidyasagar is, as it were, a device for making big things look small. Those who are hailed as very big in our country suddenly find themselves dwarfed the moment a copy of that book is held before their gaze”... The question is where lies the source of such towering greatness in Vidyasagar — beside which the greatness of other acclaimed personalities becomes so small?

The most significant and extremely valuable observation about him was by *viswa-kabi* (poet of the world) Rabindranath. He said — “The people in our country in a way could not but pay their respects to him; however by projecting the fame of his kindness and charity, they try to hide the noble aspect of Vidyasagar's character by virtue of which he dauntlessly attacked the fortress of customs and traditions in our country. In other words, this is the greatest credential of Vidyasagar which is attempted to be hidden by his countrymen by raising a screen”. Rabindranath says — “Neither compassion, nor learning, but the crowning glory of Iswarchandra Vidyasagar's character was invincible manhood and imperishable humanness”. This observation by Rabindranath is truly appropriate and historical...

“... we will have to find out the source of inspiration behind the unique arduous and unflinching struggle of this noble character. The answer to this can be found in two historic statements by Vidyasagar – “How many have seen the unbearable suffering of the impoverished? How many have felt the writhing pain, the agony in their hearts.” He further said — “The true virtue and the most important task of a person is to attempt with

utmost care and to the best of his ability to bring about the welfare of the country where he is born.” These two extraordinary deep realizations constitute the guiding principle in Vidyasagar's life and this was the source of his quest for truth and devotion in his life-long struggle.

Throughout history, in different ages, all great men and pioneers of noble struggles who had appeared in different countries had carried the pain and sufferings of the oppressed of the period in their hearts; and then only they could illumine the road to the struggle for liberation of mankind in response to the necessity of a particular era. The eminent Marxist thinker of this era, my teacher and the great leader of the liberation struggle of the proletariat, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the successful heir of great men like Vidyasagar, gave expression to this : “Nobler is the feeling of heart that spurs on to revolutionary politics”. Such higher values and feelings for the exploited and oppressed people always draw great men into this struggle. Hence we find that during the time of Vidyasagar, a section of the educated and influential were infatuated by wealth, position, status, name and fame, reveling in luxury and pleasures, whereas Vidyasagar was completely the opposite. He himself had advanced by struggling against dire poverty and though he had succeeded in reaching the top in fame and standing, he never forgot for a single day the anguish of the poor. Rather, to him they were his very own. That is why, deeply pained by the conduct of the elite of the society he (Vidyasagar) said — “How many have seen the unbearable suffering of the impoverished? How many have felt the writhing pain, the agony in their hearts.”

Another great ideal to which he not only adhered himself throughout his life but left the message for everyone to be followed irrespective of time and place one lives in that the most important task and greatest virtue is not to seek fulfillment of one's own desires and comforts but to attempt with utmost care and effort to bring about the welfare of one's own country. These two were his guiding principles, the source of inspiration of his accomplishments in the entire period of his struggling life.

It must be remembered

however that the struggle in the right direction cannot be conducted only from a feeling of compassion for the poor or the desire of bringing about the welfare of the country unless the correct ideology is acquired in the search for truth, illumining the direction of struggle. In absence of the correct outlook, ideology and the correct road, simply with noble qualities like deep feelings for the people, honesty, dedication and sacrifice, the struggle will not only result in failure, but instead of bringing about the desired benefit it will cause harm.

Many important personalities in our country and outside have suffered this tragedy. However Vidyasagar was a unique exception to this. This became possible because he possessed a mind which intensely searched for truth and even though he was the son of a religious Brahmin family, well versed in the religious scriptures, he had succeeded through the medium of English language and literature in acquiring the then advanced ideas of science and knowledge of the West as a result of which he emerged as the towering pioneer in India in that era who tore the fetters of spiritualism and religious obscurantism and proclaimed the message of secular humanism in a resounding voice.

So, the great Marxist thinker of this era, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, in evaluating Vidyasagar said “In our country, Renaissance movement is deemed to have started with Raja Rammohan Roy. He initiated the Renaissance movement in our country by religious reformation, through fusion of the bourgeois humanist concepts and moral values of the European Renaissance with the main theme of religion. As a result, the Renaissance movement of this country proceeded along the course of religious reformation. The emergence of Vidyasagar thereafter was a landmark in the Renaissance movement, because, in my opinion, it was he who, for the first time, brought about a break with its religious orientation. He, for the first time on our soil, tried utmost to develop the humanist movement, as far as it was possible in the then condition, on the firm foundation of science, history and logic.... Our countrymen regard Vidyasagar as a great man and do respect him greatly no doubt, but how many of them could really understand him?

Most of the people take him for an orthodox Brahmin from his outward appearance and traditional

Brahmin dress. True, his dress and appearance made him look like a theologian and an orthodox Brahmin, but, in reality, he was a true humanist in the then social environment of our country. He wanted to bring about a rational integration of the Indian society with the scientific concepts of the West. So his firm opinion was : Teach the students English, teach them the 'logic' of Mill as it is not possible to make this crippled nation stand erect on its moral backbone through teaching Sanskrit. For the resurgence of this nation, our countrymen must be made conversant with the treasure-house of knowledge and science of the world. What is more, it is through the knowledge of English that our students and youth may be made acquainted with the history, logic and modern scientific ideas as well as with the materialist philosophy of Europe. Therefore opposing Ballantyne's view, he said that as Sankhya and Vedanta were false systems of philosophy, so also was the philosophy of Berkeley of Europe...In order to be free from the influence of such erroneous philosophies, our people should get acquainted with the knowledge of science and the materialist philosophy of Europe. Then and then only our countrymen, knowing the material world meticulously, would be able to grasp truth and on the basis of that alone could they evolve a new philosophy of life and a new sense of values. That is why he was vehemently opposed to teaching such inane idealist philosophies”. It is my considered opinion that such scientific evaluation of Vidyasagar has never been done before in India. It can well be understood that his intense compassion for the poor and oppressed and his endeavour to bring about the welfare of his country as the foremost task of his life along with the search for truth free from religious tutelage as a secular humanist by following the path of science and logic resulted in Vidyasagar possessing such a great character...

Another aspect was the introduction of English education in India based on British rule. In these conditions, a handful of people who had succeeded in acquiring English education in the newly growing towns of this country got influenced for the first time by the ideas of the European Renaissance. At that time the industrial capital of Europe had become strengthened and advancing rapidly it held aloft the banner of

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Vidyasagar proclaimed the message of secular humanism in a resounding voice

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Renaissance and humanism. It was these thoughts of Renaissance that had influenced the mind of a section of educated people of this country. It is in this context that we have to understand Vidyasagar. Shibdas Ghosh, in his evaluation of Vidyasagar, said that Vidyasagar was the first representative of secular humanism in India and a bold representative of the Renaissance. The analysis of Shibdas Ghosh is correct and in conformity with the tenets of Marxism. It is true that Raja Rammohan was the first to introduce the ideas of the European Renaissance in this country before Vidyasagar, and that he had given emphasis on English education in place of Sanskrit education. His role in this regard is historic. However he could not free himself completely from the influence of spiritualism and he reformed Hindu religion that led to the establishment of Brahma Samaj, just as Martin Luther in Germany had introduced the reformation of the Catholic system of Christianity and introduced Protestantism.

So, Rammohan's emergence in the history of the Renaissance movement of this country is like the early dawn – the darkness of the night waning, the sun not yet risen but the eastern horizon heralding its crimson appearance. And Vidyasagar is like a fiery red sunrise piercing the darkness of several thousand years.

A characteristic of Vidyasagar, with which few people in this country are acquainted — an aspect which has been less discussed, though most important — is his humanist outlook free from spiritualism. These secular humanist thoughts which constituted the most developed and progressive thoughts of that era served as his weapon in his lifelong struggle to seek truth. His forceful opinion that “The Vedanta and Sankhya are false systems of philosophy, is no more a matter of dispute” will be ever remembered. In an era submerged in and blinded by religious bigotry; how dedicated one has to be in the search for truth; how deep one must penetrate in the arduous struggle to acquire knowledge about philosophy and science so as to arrive at such a decision, and what boldness and courage is required so as to be able to publicly express this thought is difficult to grasp even today! In our country however, practically nobody gave much importance to this amazing aspect of Vidyasagar's

character in any discussion about him. A section of intellectuals, though aware of this aspect, have consciously avoided to highlight it, trying to narrow down his greatness by projecting him merely as ‘the ocean of knowledge’, ‘the ocean of compassion’, ‘propagator of widow remarriage’, ‘social reformer’, ‘reformer of education’ and such other attributes. As a result, the overwhelming majority of the people are not aware of this aspect.

The education movement, which he started, was intimately linked to the secular humanist ideas and acts free from religious superstitions and bigotry. Many of you are aware that Vidyasagar had established many schools in both villages and towns. He had even gone to the extent of personally collecting funds to establish schools. Yet this was not merely to provide some opportunity for the students to study in schools and colleges. Vidyasagar succeeded in assimilating the essence from the science and knowledge of the West, and merely at the age of about thirty-three came to the conclusion that ‘Vedas, Vedanta, Sankhya are false’. He introduced the study of modern English education in the Sanskrit College. He said that Sanskrit is to be studied only to that extent, which is necessary for the development of Bengali language — not more than that, and not merely to study Sanskrit scriptures. Hence, he gave the study of Sanskrit only that much importance which was necessary to develop Bengali language. He had contemplated that the student community in India, by learning English language would come in contact with the science and knowledge of the West, just as he

had come in close touch with the ideas of modern sciences; as a result of which they would free themselves from the influence of spiritualism of Vedas-Vedanta-Sankhya and based on this only, they would advance with modern scientific ideas.

This was his only objective at that time. Otherwise, he would not have rushed from one village to another in pursuit of building schools and colleges. He said — “Wherever the light of modern European science has penetrated and to whatever extent it has penetrated, to that extent, the influence of the religious scriptures of this country has diminished there. Therefore the expanse of this education has to be increased”.

Vidyasagar... did not merely want to reform the then prevailing education system in a conventional way. In order to introduce an education system and syllabus based on secular humanism and science to create new man in a new age, he desired and fought throughout his life to bring about a revolutionary change of the religious education, dominated and controlled by ancient scriptures, on the one hand, and the British-ruled education system which produced mere office-clerks and bureaucrats. So, it can be seen that Vidyasagar earnestly desired a revolutionary change in the education system,

This Vidyasagar whom I tried to acquaint you with was unknown to me also. Just as you had come to know about him from the school books or from popular tales, that is the way I, too, got to know about him. I gained the inspiration and outlook to

get to know Vidyasagar in a new way from the eminent Marxist thinker Shibdas Ghosh. He deeply revered Vidyasagar as the noblest character of the then era, and had repeatedly urged us to take lessons from the life-struggle of Vidyasagar along with other great characters, luminaries and revolutionary fighters of the past and to further advance devoted to the endeavour to cultivate and acquire the new revolutionary anti-capitalist ideals and character. I tried to discuss today with this approach and thus I could avail myself of the opportunity to learn again from this lofty character of the Indian Renaissance. For this, I am grateful to the organizers and also to you present.

Again, I like to repeat that judged from all aspects, it can doubtlessly be said that Vidyasagar possessed the greatest character in the era of Renaissance and freedom movement in our country. Even in the Renaissance of the West, a character comparable to him would be very difficult to find.

Finally, let me remind you once again Vidyasagar's historic remark — “A long time will be required for the emancipation of this country. The cultivation and harvesting of men with old habits and instincts should be stopped, the seven layers of thick soil should be removed and after that if cultivation of new men can be accomplished, then only will it be beneficial to the country.” In these dark days of all-out crisis, the truth of this observation is manifesting itself more and more. Can we not move ahead carrying the appeal of this historic observation in our heart?

Photographs of protests against vandalism of Vidyasagar statue on page 8

SUDAN IS IMPLODING AGAIN

U.S. imperialism, which exacerbated the conflict that split the African nation of Sudan in two with the objective of controlling the energy resources of that vast area, is now increasing its direct military intervention as instability grows.

A split within the ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) has grown into an armed conflict in the world's most recently recognized nation, South Sudan. Since 15 December 2008, fighting has erupted in South Sudan's capital of Juba and in the states of Jonglei, Warrap, Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria and Unity between forces loyal to

President Salva Kiir and ousted Vice President Riek Machar.

The Republic of South Sudan came into being in July 2011 after Africa's largest geographic nation-state, the Republic of Sudan, was broken up under the aegis of the U.S. government, which backed Juba in its two-decade armed and political struggle against Khartoum in the North. Since the breakup of the country, there have been ongoing conflicts between the governments in the two capitals over border demarcations, allegations of support for rebel groups within the respective states, and over the exploitation, export and

distribution of oil, the main foreign exchange generator for both countries.

Within South Sudan itself, problems have escalated since 2011 between various ethnic groups over allocations of governmental portfolios as well as allegations of widespread corruption and abuse of power. President Kiir accused the former vice president, who was sacked in July 2013, of attempting a coup against his government and proceeded to arrest some of the leading politicians in the country.

For more than a decade prior to the partition of Sudan, U.S. oil

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NATO, belligerent militarist combination of the imperialists, observes its seventy years

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a dreaded name of a belligerent imperialist combination to people of a number of countries, particularly of Europe as well as of Africa and Asia. While NATO is observing its 70th anniversary this year, 2019, on the contrary, peace-loving people of the world under the auspices of the World Peace Organization held a conference in America in March 2019 last to mobilize public opinion against the plan of war by NATO.

After the defeat of fascist Germany in World War II at the hands of the USSR under the leadership of great Stalin, and in the face of the growing socialist sentiment throughout the world, including Western Europe, the USA raised the plea that socialist Russia would establish communism in Europe using arms and it was necessary to form a military alliance of America and Europe to resist USSR. This propaganda against socialist USSR was absolutely baseless, as under the leadership of great Stalin, USSR had announced that they would not attack any country; rather they called for total disarmament in the world. But the imperialists did not pay heed to it and in April, 1949 the imperialist rulers of the USA, UK and Canada formed the NATO. Their stated principle was that “an attack against one ally is considered as an attack against all allies”: belligerence par excellence. NATO now encompasses 29 member states. Ever since its founding in 1949, NATO has served as the vehicle to spur the arms race in the name of ‘peace through strength’. In that very same year, the Truman Administration in the United States secretly developed “Operation Dropshot” to launch a devastating ‘first-strike’ against the former Soviet Union to completely obliterate that country. Throughout the ‘cold war’ years, the U.S. and its NATO allies always tried to maintain a military superiority over the USSR and the Warsaw Pact. Whether they could or not is a different point. But the fact they cynically concealed from public view at the time, but now readily admit.

During World War II, communists opposed Mussolini in Italy, fought the fascists in Greece and resisted the Nazi occupation of France. As a result, they had earned a great deal of prestige as against the rich, the capitalists and priests of

the churches who normally backed the fascists. If not for the US or the British interference, communists would probably have taken power in Greece and won the 1948 election in Italy, even without Moscow’s support. In France the Communist Party won 30 percent of the first post-war vote and occupied a number of ministries in a coalition government.

At the time of Italy’s first post-war election, prominent Canadian diplomat, Escott Reid, emerging as the spokesman of the imperialist world, explained that “the whole game of the Russians is obviously to conquer without armed attack.” For his part, Lester Pearson, External Affairs Minister, House of Commons, Canada decried an “attempt at a complete Russian conquest of Italy by constitutional or extra-constitutional means” and described class struggle by workers as a “new and sinister kind of danger, indirect aggression.” US officials were equally concerned. George Kennan, the top US government policy planner at the time of NATO’s formation, considered “the communist danger in its most threatening form as an internal problem that is of western society.” For his part NATO commander and American president Dwight D. Eisenhower explained: “One of the great and immediate uses of the [NATO] military forces we are developing is to convey a feeling of confidence to exposed populations, a confidence which will make them sturdier, politically, in their opposition to Communist inroads.”

NATO planners thus feared an erosion of self-confidence among Western Europe’s elite and the bourgeoisie due to the growing influence of the communists. Tens of thousands of North American troops were stationed in Western Europe to reinforce this sagging confidence. At the same time, blunting the European Left was an important agenda of the establishment of the NATO. It was born with obvious pro-capitalist, anti-democratic intent. It was created to manage “democracy” so that existing powers-that-be maintained their status.

Apparently, “Secret anti-Communist NATO protocols” committed alliance countries’ intelligence agencies to preventing communist parties from gaining power. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, information surfaced regarding

groups like the CIA, NATO and MI6 sponsored “stay-behind” networks in many European countries, intending to activate them in case a communist party came to power in a democratic election or in case of a Soviet invasion of Western Europe. No invasion took place, of course. According to Martin Packard the networks were “financed, armed, and trained in covert resistance activities, including assassination, political provocation and disinformation.” As brought out in the following quote on *NATO’s Secret Armies*: “The real and present danger in the eyes of the secret war strategists in Washington and London were the at-times numerically strong Communist parties in the democracies of Western Europe. Hence the network, in the total absence of a Soviet invasion took up arms in numerous countries and fought a secret war against the political forces of the left. The secret armies... were involved in a whole series of terrorist operations and human rights violations that they wrongly blamed on the Communists in order to discredit the left at the polls.” [On NATO’s 70th Anniversary Important to Remember Its Anti-democratic Roots: Yves Engler, Global Research, March 28, 2019] Blunting the European Left was an important part of the establishment of NATO. It was born with obvious pro-capitalist, anti-democratic intent. It was created to manage “democracy” so that existing powers-that-be maintained their status.

The year after NATO was established the Canadian government initiated PROFUNC (acronym of (PROminent FUNctionaries of the Communist Party), a top secret Government of Canada project to identify and observe suspected Canadian communists and crypto-communists during the height of the Cold War. In operation from 1950 to 1983, the goal of the program was to allow for quick internment (i.e., imprisonment of people, commonly in large groups, without charges) of known and suspected communist sympathizers in the event of war with the Soviet Union (USSR) or its allies.

NATO Operations

The NATO did not conduct any military operations during the life time of great Stalin and even before the capitalist counter-revolution in

the erstwhile USSR. Following the 1991 dissolution of the USSR, NATO – which hitherto professed itself as a ‘defensive shield’ – instead expanded its military reach right up to the borders of the Russian Federation, throughout Northern Africa and the Middle East, and elsewhere around the globe. The first operations by the NATO were prompted by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. In March 1999, the most powerful military force in history attacked tiny Yugoslavia and after seventy-nine days of flagrantly illegal bombing forced an occupation of Kosovo. Admitting its intention was to break Yugoslavia’s spirit, NATO targeted civilian structures, dropping over thousands of cluster bombs, Napalm bombs and cruise missiles and destroyed schools, hospitals, buildings, etc. It was such a horrific onslaught, that even Alexander Solzhenitsyn, described it as follows: “I don’t see any difference in the behaviour of NATO and of Hitler. NATO wants to erect its own order in the world and it needs Yugoslavia simply as an example: We’ll punish Yugoslavia and the whole rest of the planet will tremble.”

In an all-out effort to convince public opinion that Yugoslavia deserved the onslaught, Western politicians and media churned out endless accusations of Serb atrocities, while the proven and infinitely greater atrocities of NATO — launching an aggressive war, using internationally outlawed cluster bombs and firing depleted uranium ammunition into Yugoslavia — were buried.

In 1999, NATO admitted that Yugoslavia was attacked to force it to sign the Rambouillet “peace agreement”, which stipulated: “The economy of Kosovo shall function in accordance with free market principles” and “There shall be no impediments to the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital to and from Kosovo.” During the war, Bill Clinton elaborated: “If we’re going to have a strong economic relationship that includes our ability to sell around the world Europe has got to be the key; that’s what this Kosovo thing is all about... It’s globalism versus tribalism.” “Tribalism” was the word used by 19th century free trade liberals to describe nationalism. And this war was all about threatening any nation which might have ideas of independence. It is thus clear that in

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The NATO

Seventy years' history of rabid anti-communism, deception, conspiracy, finally aggression

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the name of "peace agreement" the US imperialists wanted to destroy the economy of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia had a domestically controlled economy, a strong publicly owned sector, a good (and free) health care system and its own defense industry. It had many employee owned factories — its population was resisting wholesale privatization. It produced its own pharmaceuticals, aircraft and Yugo automobile. It refused to allow U.S. military bases on its soil. According to the speaker of the Russian Duma: "Yugoslavia annoys NATO because it conducts an independent policy, does not want to join NATO and has an attractive geographic position." As NATO troops entered Kosovo, the New York Times announced Kosovo's new currency will be the U.S. dollar or German mark, currencies of the two countries most responsible for Yugoslavia's break-up. And after months of being told that Slobodan Milosevic was the problem, Washington Balkans expert, Daniel Serwer, said, "It's not a single person that's at issue, there's a regime in place in Belgrade that is incompatible with the kind of economy that the World Bank... has to insist on..." So, evidently the entire Yugoslavia operation was fraught with deception, rabid anti-communism, and unambiguous imperialist greed for capturing

market for profit.

The imperialist war and occupation of Afghanistan, began in 2001, undertaken under a NATO mandate. And the 2011 war on Libya — which was once again justified under the pretext of "humanitarian interventionism" — was likewise under the flag of NATO. In fact, NATO has now emerged as the primary military instrument of U.S. imperialist domination around the world.

NATO gears up aggressive role afresh : peace-loving people must step up resistance in demand of dismantling the NATO

At present the NATO and the USA are deploying lakhs of military personnel starting from the Nordic countries like Denmark, Sweden, etc. and in Baltic countries like Estonia, Latvia, etc. to Bulgaria. A march of 50 thousand men was held in Sweden and Norway last year. Missile defense system is being set up in Norway, Poland and Rumania. Middle East has now been the place of extreme war tension in the world. The imperialists are intervening in Syria, threatening Iran by cancelling nuclear pact. Palestinians are being murdered by Israel every day. Aggressions are being made in Syria and Iraq by Turkey, as well as in Yemen by Saudi Arabia.

Recently American President

has declared that the Golan Height region of Syria, which has been occupied by Israel for 52 years, will be handed over to the occupier Israel. Last February the defense ministers of the NATO states have decided in a meeting that they should be so prepared as to deploy 30 warships, 30 battalions of army and 30 fighter planes within 30 days in any places of the world.

Increasing its activity in the East and Middle Europe the NATO is trying to accumulate arms and ammunitions in at the border of Russia. Warships are being accumulated with an objective to establish a military base in South-East Europe. In Greece, the old military base is being modernized. Activities have been enhanced in the Balkan region by including North Macedonia as a member of NATO.

Even in Latin America, the US imperialists, are planning to include Colombia and Brazil, with two of the most right-wing governments in Latin America as the 'global partners' in the militarist combination of the NATO as also to increase pressures on the besieged legitimate Maduro government in Venezuela.

In a recent survey it has been stated that NATO is planning to increase its military power in Russia, South and North Korea areas on the pretext to prevent wars in future. With this objective all the member

states of NATO have been asked to increase their military budget. It has been stated that the requirement of NATO will be the requirement of the member states, there will be no need for separate defense of the countries.

It is thus observed that NATO is a totally anti-people alliance of belligerent imperialists, headed by the war-monger US imperialists. Undoubtedly it is a danger to mankind and humanity, an instrument in the hands of the imperialists and is protecting the interests of the world capitalist class. When there is any chance of resistance to the exploitation of the capitalists, NATO comes forward to protect the interest of the capitalists on the plea of human rights violation. In the world without the socialist camp, it is continuously trying to gear up its aggressive role. As NATO generals and their governments prepare to celebrate the 70th anniversary of this aggressive military alliance, it is high time for the peace-loving people throughout the world to demand the dismantling of NATO. The exploited people of the member- states of NATO should raise their voice against NATO and demand to their governments to withdraw from the NATO. The people of the world beyond the combination, should also raise the voice for the dissolution of this dangerous military pact.

US imperialist hand behind Sudan unrest

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companies were largely excluded from the production and distribution of oil in this African state, and the U.S. government was hostile to Khartoum. The bulk of the oil concessions in the Republic of Sudan was held by the People's Republic of China and other countries in the Middle East and Asia.

Since the breakup of Sudan, U.S. imperialism has been eager to re-enter the oil production process in South Sudan. Japanese imperialism has also expressed interest in building a pipeline to allow South Sudanese oil to flow through neighboring Kenya, in an effort to bypass the Khartoum government.

It is a humanitarian tragedy that Sudan had, over the years, become

synonymous with ethnic cleansing. Such tragedies shape history and deeply regrettable must be the fact that the persecution of the Rohingyas in Myanmar — reckoned by the UN as the worst ethnic cleansing since World War II — has overshadowed the hideous record of Omar al-Bashir in Sudan

Anger over the past 30 years against a brutal regime has imploded, coup of 11 April 2019 that ousted President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan ending the 30-year reign of the dictator, Omar al-Bashir, who is indicted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and genocide. That was not enough, however, to end the sit-in. In the weeks after Mr Bashir's ouster ordinary Sudanese kept up pressure on the junta to cede power.

Rejected too is the military's

contrived claim of takeover. The popular movement has for now come to its logical conclusion. The most recent protests began last December as economic conditions worsened, culminating in an almost weeklong sit-in outside the army headquarters.

But resistance to Bashir's regime dates back to the very day he seized power in a military coup in 1989. The seeds of resistance had, therefore, germinated at the threshold. Since then, successive waves of dissent have all been brutally quashed by Bashir and his coterie of Islamists and mercenaries.

Protest leaders in Sudan are urging their followers to continue a sit-in aimed at forcing the new military rulers to hand over power to a civilian government.

The Sudanese Professional Association, which is leading the mass protests, had called for a march in Khartoum, followed by a mass rally in April last.

The rallies saw protesters operating checkpoints on roads at their main protest site at Khartoum's military headquarters. Sudan's Transitional Military Council had called for "immediate opening of the roads and removal of the barricades" at the protest site.

The council's warning came a day after talks between the protesters and the military broke down because the military refused to transfer power to a civilian government.

Protesters have been demanding a change in regime since December 2018.

(Quoted and compiled from Workers' World 01-01-14, Statesman 13-04-19 and Al Jazeera 22-04-19 and The Economist 31-05-19)

Farce of Fasal Bima

Farmers' distress being made source of minting profit for corporate-capitalists- insurance companies

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facing many hurdles. Initially, when this scheme came into operation in 2016-17, there was a spurt in number of enrolment because of the fact that availing of bank loans was linked with the payment of premiums under this particular scheme. For farmers availing crop loans from the scheduled banks, the premium amount was deducted at source from the loan amount without even issuing a receipt for such deductions. But later on, this scheme failed to attract farmers anymore and enrolment fell drastically. The reality is that in the event of any crop damage, farmers are at a loss as to whom to reach out to since most of the insurance companies have not set up field offices to attend to customer complaints. There are many instances where assessment of crop losses is made, but payments are either delayed by months or not disbursed at all because the lending banks do not process data or states do not release their share of subsidy in time. This is catastrophic for the farmers who have suffered losses and desperately needed the money to start preparation for cultivation for the next season immediately. Any delay forces them into the clutching arms of money-lenders, who charge exorbitant rates. This has precisely been the reason behind the dire need for speedy compensation after crop losses. Yet, three years of implementing experience shows that this problem has not been resolved.

Because of all these factors, there is a steep decline in the number of farmers opting to join this scheme. Data from the agriculture ministry itself shows that enrolment (during the rain-fed kharif season) rose from 30.9 million farmers in 2015 to 40.3 million in 2016, an impressive 30% jump. But delayed assessment of crop loss and settlement of claims which took six to nine months led to farmers losing interest in the scheme. So, enrolment fell to 34.8 million in 2017 and further plunged to 33.3 million during *kharif* cultivation in 2018. According to the study made by the Delhi-based Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations in February 2018, "the litmus test of any crop insurance programme is quick assessment of crop damages

and payment of claims into farmers' accounts directly, and from that point of view, the first year of implementation of PMFBY (2016-17) has not been very successful."

Distress became source of minting profits

What Modi government did was to turn this scheme into a profit making enterprise for the insurance companies. As per media reports, there are 18 insurance companies that are involved in this crop insurance scheme. Of these, five are government owned and all the rest are private. According to the provisions of the PMFBY scheme, whoever would bid the lowest, would get the contract. So it is not mandatory to choose a government company if a private company makes a lower bid. So the private companies in connivance with the government administration secure major chunk of premium collections. It is known to all that farmers pay a part of amount to the insurance companies as premium. The rest is paid equally by the Central government and the various state governments. The total premium thus collected goes into the coffers of the insurance companies. In case a farmer suffers crop loss due to natural calamities, the company settles the claim from the gross premium that it had collected. It came out from the data collected by some RTI activists that for *kharif* 2016, *rabi* 2016-17 and *kharif* 2017, the total premium collected by all 18 insurance companies was a staggering Rs 42,114 crore. This amount includes both contribution of farmers (amounting to Rs. 7,255 crore or just over 17%) and government's share (Rs. 34,859 crore or nearly 83%). The governments' share is made up of equal contributions by the Central and state governments. Of this total amount, how much the insurance companies paid by way of compensation in all seasons? One would be astonished to know that the insurance companies paid out only Rs.32,912 crore as compensation. That means they were left with about Rs.8,713 crore as surplus. These companies have pocketed nearly 21% of the total amount. (Reply of the government in a starred question in parliament referred to in Newslick 27-12-18)

Another media report says that

"despite the fall in the number of farmers insured and coverage area, the total premium collected by insurance companies has not fallen. It has actually increased. In 2016-17, the total premium collected was Rs 22,362 crore. This went up to Rs 25,046 crore in 2017-18. In the two years that PMFBY has been in place, total claims paid to farmers have increased only marginally, despite the total premium having increased by more than 4.5 times. For the two years after PMFBY, the data provided by the ministry shows that total claims paid have only increased by 10% to Rs 31,613 crore as of October 10, 2018. Thus, the surplus for insurance companies till that date is Rs 15,795 crore, almost a third of the premiums collected. (The Wire-12-1-18)

It is the same money that suffering farmers had paid out as premium or the government's money which is in fact collected from the people by way of over taxation. Big corporates like Reliance, Essar have amassed huge sums in states like Maharashtra where the farmers' distress is in centre of focus. In Maharashtra, around 2.80 lakh farmers sowed soya in their farms. In a district, the farmers paid a premium of Rs 19.2 crore, the state government and the central governments paid Rs 77 crore each, amounting to a total of Rs 173 crore, which was paid to Reliance insurance. The entire crop failed and the insurance company paid out the claims. Reliance paid Rs 30 crore in that district, giving it a total net profit of Rs 143 crore without investing a single rupee. So making profits running into hundreds of crores of rupees out of farmers' distress is the hall mark of the PMFBY scheme. Modi led BJP government had facilitated this loot as a faithful and subservient political manager of big corporates. In fact, reaching out riches to the corporates through the conduit of the insurance companies owned by them has been a very convenient policy for the bourgeois governments. Through boastful announcement of insurance covers either in agriculture or health or any other sector, the government seeks to impress as if necessary security has been guaranteed to the marginalized section of the toiling masses. But, then in absence of

proper infrastructure as well as preponderance of a surfeit of loopholes, flawed operative machinery, rampant corruption, nepotism make such announcements a mockery. Fasal Bima is a glaring testimony of that. If one takes to go deep into the terms of the insurance, it would be evident that exclusions and non-claimable items are perhaps more than what are admissible as claims. Moreover, the entire mechanism acts in such a way that most of the benefits reach out only to a handful of rich peasants and their lackeys while the large number of real needy are conveniently left out.

Farmers' struggle needs to be oriented on working class approach

The above facts make it clear once again that every policy or a programme adopted by all successive governments intended not to protect the interests of common toiling masses but to fetch fabulous profits to their masters i.e. the ruling capitalists. The PMFBY is a classic example of the same. Really, the first term of Modi government did wonderful job of serving them in a most faithful manner and creating social and economic inequalities in an unimaginable dimensions. It is known to all that 73% of country's wealth has been concentrated in the hands of those 1% super rich. If this is the meaning of 'development' or 'prosperity' of the country, what can be expected more in the coming five years? So the suffering farming community must be mobilized through out the length and breadth of country on correct working class approach to force the reluctant governments to adopt a pro-peasant policy of resolving farm sector crisis by reducing prices of agricultural inputs, providing irrigation and institutional credit facilities, ensuring remunerative prices, curbing corrupt middlemen in the crop procurement market etc. Along with it there is a need to frame comprehensive and robust government run compensation scheme that has quick and simple method of assessing crop damage and free from corruption and hassles in claim settlement instead of allowing corporate companies which are out to suck the farmers blood and plunder public exchequer.

Countrywide protest against vandalism of Vidyasagar Statue



[From Top] Purba Medinipur — WB, Lucknow — UP, Bhopal — MP, Vizag — AP, Muzaffarpur — Bihar, Agartala — Tripura

Please ignore the word LITE inadvertently mentioned on p.2 of P Era dated 15 May 2019. Mistake regretted

Student Deaths in the Takshashila Fire Tragedy in Surat Mourned and Resented

In a Press statement on 25 May 2019, Comrade Ashok Mishra, General Secretary, AIDS0 and in a separate memorandum to the Chief Minister of Gujarat on the same date, Comrade Meenakshi Joshi, Secretary, Gujarat State Organizing Committee, SUCI (C), expressed deep anguish over the loss of life of 21 students in the horrible fire tragedy at the Takshashila Coaching Centre in Surat some of whom died in their frantic bid to escape the fire by jumping from the high rise, while many were seriously injured. They strongly condemned the inhuman condition at the coaching centre. It was brought to attention, that this was an inevitable outcome of unbridled privatisation-commercialisation of education which is not only affecting the quality of education but is giving birth to the recent extreme spurt in tuition classes throughout the state, despite a ban on these and despite occasional face-saving measures like inspection. The rat race for competitive examinations, entrance tests, summer vacation guidance, etc has made the tuition classes a very profitable business. In all major cities of the state there are hundreds of tuition classes going on. Most of the premises do not comply with fire-safety norms. In consequence, fire tragedies keep recurring: three in the last 6 months and eleven such incidents taking a toll of 27 lives in the last 2 years in Surat alone, which point to the alarming situation in so-called 'vibrant Gujarat'. The Black Day at Takshashila Centre when 21 innocent lives were snuffed out is a sort of culmination. It exposed the fact that even the state Fire Brigade does not have any safety nets. A few of the students jumping in panic from the top floor could be saved only by the brave citizens of the city. In the Press statement and memorandum, referred to above, in addition to expressing condolence, calls were issued to build up mighty student-cum-people's movement on demands to ensure free treatment for the injured, 25 lakh rupees of compensation to the bereaved families of deceased students, compulsory fire safety norms for buildings, removal of all illegal constructions, registering FIR against all officers engaged in fire safety auditing, stringent punishment to the culprits and putting a stop to the menace of commercialisation- privatisation to enhance quality of education.



A new Party office in Kottayam, Kerala, named after Comrade G S Padmakumar, departed Kerala State Secretariat Member, was inaugurated by Comrade K Radhakrishna, Polit Bureau member, SUCI(C) on 21May 2019. The State Party comrades provided all necessary manual labour to construct the building of the office.

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