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**LONG LIVE COMRADE RANJIT DHAR
A LIFE-LONG REVOLUTIONARY**

HOMAGE OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

At last, the prolonged excruciatingly painful suffering came to an end. Calcutta Heart Clinic and Hospital in Kolkata had already informed that demise of Comrade Ranjit Dhar was only a matter of time. The news came on 13 June afternoon that he had breathed his last at 4 pm. With that, his long revolutionary life ended at an age of 90. But the memory of Comrade Ranjit Dhar, veteran Polit Bureau member of the SUCI(C), would remain ever-living in the hearts of the innumerable Party leaders and workers throughout the country.

Comrade Ranjit Dhar was suffering from hypertension, urinary track problem and malfunctioning of kidney for a long time. At the later period, he had to be put on dialysis. His condition began to deteriorate for quite a few days before he passed away. He developed acute breathing trouble alongwith other such.

After passing Intermediate examination from Mymensingh district of East Bengal (now Bangladesh), he came down to Kolkata before partition of the country. Helpless and wretched, he spent his early life in abject poverty and destitution. He worked as a waiter in a food stall outside Ujjala cinema in South Kolkata and spent night after night on the footpath. Since he had some academic qualification, he later managed to earn a little through private tuition.

At that time, he was acquainted with Sukumar Banerjee, brother of Comrade Sudhir Banerjee, the then South 24 Parganas District Secretary of West Bengal Party. Through him, he became associated with 'Culture Club' in South Kolkata. There Comrade Ranjit Dhar came in contact with the great leader Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. Life-struggle and teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh brought a new awakening in him, made him aware of the correct ideology for and correct objective of life. Recalling this vital phase of turnaround, he himself said that had he not received association of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and be connected with the SUCI(C), he would have lost his way and driven towards an uncertain unknown directionless future.

Comrade Ranjit Dhar could easily mix with people particularly the downtrodden and toiling masses and soon become most endearing to them. He had a close association with the common people particularly the poor and destitute of the Kalighat area of South Kolkata where he conducted Party activities in the early period of his revolutionary life. Because of that, he was elected councillor of Kolkata Municipal Corporation from the then ward number 87 of Kalighat area in 1969. He also efficiently discharged his responsibility as the then Chairman of the Town Planning Committee of Kolkata Municipal Corporation. At that time, flash flood in the Ganga river submerged a large area of Kalighat. Comrade Ranjit Dhar played an exemplary role in rescuing and providing relief to the flood-affected people with the help of the Party comrades. Sarat Pathagar (library) in Kalighat was founded by him only. It continues till to date. He actively participated, first as a worker and later as a leader, in all the left-democratic movements which surged forth in the state from 1950 onwards.

Comrade Ranjit Dhar had a powerful pen. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh himself used to assign him the responsibility of editing many of his own works. He was a member of the Editorial Board of *Proletarian Era*, the English organ of the Central Committee. He wrote many articles in *Ganadabi*, Bengali organ of the Party. After publication of *Ganadabi*



Comrade Provas Ghosh paying floral tribute

was made weekly, he was assigned the responsibility of its Chief Editor. For a long time, he was member of the West Bengal State Secretariat. At that time, he travelled to many districts of the state and helped developing Party organization there. In the Second Party Congress held in Delhi in 2009, he was elected to the Central Committee and the Polit Bureau. He was also elected as the Chairman of the Control Commission. He was an important member of the International Wing of the Party. As a member of the Executive Committee of the International Anti-Imperialist Committee, he participated in the anti-imperialist conferences held in the Philippines, Belgium, Bangladesh and other countries. He also represented the Party at the international seminar in Brussels.

On being assigned the responsibility of overseeing Party organizations in Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh by the Central Committee, he also ably shouldered that responsibility ignoring his falling health. He spent his life in the Party centres, first at Akhil Mistry Lane of Central Kolkata, then at Hatibagan in North Kolkata and finally at Salt Lake in the satellite city of Kolkata. His relationship with the leaders and workers of all levels of the Party was of a close friend. He had immense love for children. In fact, spurred on by the revolutionary ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought, he devoted his entire life to uphold the cause of revolution and the toiling masses and remained a steadfast life-long revolutionary.

On receiving the news of his demise, the Central Committee decided to observe mourning for three days. Accordingly, the Red Flag was kept half-mast at all the Party offices including at the Central Party Office as well as the Party centres. The leaders and workers wore black badges.

At the death of this life-long revolutionary, the Party has lost a committed revolutionary leader. His demise has caused immense harm not only to revolutionary movement as well as to SUCI(Communist), the genuine communist party in India, but also to the left-democratic movement of the country.

**LONG LIVE COMRADE RANJIT DHAR
A LIFE- LONG REVOLUTIONARY**



Polit Bureau members Comrade Manik Mukherjee and Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya paying tribute to their departed revolutionary compatriot



Floral tributes from Comrade Saumen Basu, Comrade Sankar Saha and Comrade Gopal Kundu, all Polit Bureau members

Bidding adieu to Comrade Ranjit Dhar with tearful eyes and pledge to fulfil the revolutionary mission he identified himself with

Silence prevailed on that stretch of the road and, for a while, all movements were hushed as the moment arrived for the last journey to begin. At the far-away front of the long column in which his comrades stood at attention, a huge red banner spread across the road, paying tribute to the great revolutionary life of the departed leader: 'RED SALUTE, COMRADE RANJIT DHAR'. Lined up behind this banner were the flagbearers drawn from the ranks of the party's KOMSOMOL and the AIDS, the student front—ninety red flags lowered to half-mast and dipped forward in tribute to a life span of ninety years laid down for the cause of the toiling

millions of the country. In a flower-bedecked truck behind, with white wreaths all over his body, he lay on a raised platform—the valiant fighter for the cause of the toiling masses of India, an ardent student of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat, and a truly steadfast communist character who stood out as one bright example for the party and the country to emulate, being bidden farewell by his comrades, his countrymen, from the doorsteps of 48 Lenin Sarani in Kolkata, the Party headquarters. The leaders of the Party and the hundreds of Party workers, supporters and sympathizers stood over there following him in profound grief and pain and vowing in that

silence to be equal to the task his living memory now adjured them to fulfil.

For quite some time, Comrade Ranjit Dhar, whom the comrades found to be ever agile and active braving his growing age, was not keeping good health due to age-related ailments. Gradually, his health condition deteriorated and he was admitted at the Calcutta Heart Clinic and Hospital where a team of leading doctors treated him and monitored his condition round the clock. But then after severe hematuria, he developed symptoms of multi-organ failure with bladder-related problems, bronchial attack, neurological disorder, high diabetes and renal failure. He was put on

dialysis but subsequently he could not even accept that after some days. So, the attending doctors informed the Party leadership to be mentally prepared for the worst. And the curtain was drawn in the afternoon of 14 June 2019, to be exact at 04.10 pm. Comrade Ranjit Dhar, endeared to all comrades as Ranjitda, departed for ever with the memory deeply etched in everyone's heart. The Party leadership announced that his mortal remains would be kept in a mortuary that night and brought to the Central Office of the Party at 3 pm on 14 June for comrades to pay their revolutionary tribute.

Ranjitda, lying lifeless on the bier bedecked with flower and draped in the red flag, reached the Party Central Office he used to enter all the time in bold strides, around 3.30 pm. Hundreds of comrades had already thronged there to have a glimpse of the departed leader; the hundreds who deemed it a glory to be showered with his boundless love for them and the toiling people; the unyielding strength of his character and the irresistible force of the manner he spoke to them with wit, humour and affection. With tears rolling down their eyes, they recalled the invaluable teaching of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh: "Politics calls for noble feelings of heart. Nobler still is the feeling that spurs on to revolutionary politics. Tender as it is in one way, inherent in it are stern reality, strict discipline, and steadfast sense of duty. Our work cannot suffer because of our grief. Outwardly, the conduct of this



The last Journey

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Bidding adieu to Comrade Ranjit Dhar

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politics appears so heartless. But it is here, in what appears so heartless, that the significance of true realization of grief lies. That is why, big revolutionaries, even in the midst of most profound grief, unwaveringly pursue their revolutionary work... So I said, revolutionary politics comes from nobler feelings... In this commitment to duty is revealed the true nature of the tender heart of the revolutionary. The pain and sorrow of the entire society together with the revolutionary transformation they underwent in the realm of values made such a penetrating impact on the revolutionaries that they have become steeled in their resolve to make revolution a concrete reality. That is why, the revolutionaries never neglect their duty. Even death of the most beloved, a profound loss, or an event leading to deep emotional upsurge cannot make them oblivious of their duty."

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary of the Party was first to place a wreath, red roses stitched in a huge thick ring, on Comrade Ranjit Dhar's body to pay his homage to the departed veteran Polit Bureau member, his senior revolutionary compatriot for decades. Then floral tribute was paid by Comrade Fakruddin Kabir Atik on behalf of Mubinul Haider Chowdhury, General Secretary, Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (Marxist). After that, Comrades Manik Mukherjee, Asit Bhattacharyya, Sankar Saha, Gopal Kundo and Saumen Basu, all Polit Bureau members and Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, former Polit Bureau and Central Committee member placed floral wreaths in sequence on his body silenced forever. Then floral tribute was offered by the available Central Committee members—Comrades Swapan Ghosh, Manab Bera, Chhaya Mukherjee, Amitava Chatterjee, Shankar Ghosh, Asok Samanta, Swapan Chatterjee and Subhas Dasgupta. Floral tribute was also paid on behalf of Comrades Chandidas Bhattacharjee, Rabin Samajpati and Arun Singh, all Central Committee members and State Secretaries of West Bengal, Jharkhand and Bihar respectively. With the mark of respectful fraternity, senior leaders of the CPI, RSP, Forward Bloc and CPI (ML)-Liberation also placed floral tribute to the deceased leader. Tributes were also paid on behalf of Proletarian Era and



Bier carrying Comrade Ranjit Dhar accompanied by the central leaders in the last journey

Ganadabi, English and Bengali organs of the Party respectively with which Comrade Ranjit Dhar was closely associated as well as the mass and class organizations of the Party — AIUTUC, AIKKMS, AIDSO, AIDYO, AIMSS — and other mass organizations. Then, one by one these grief stricken comrades from West Bengal as well as Bihar and Jharkhand filed past the body, some offering flowers, some a garland, some a wreath. Some of them broke down in tears, some quietly wiped off the tears rolling down their cheeks. Everywhere around including the rooftop of the Central Office building, the red flag fluttered at half-mast in a slow breeze.

At the stroke of 17.30 hours, the journey began, his last on the streets where he had fought many a battle of democratic mass movement along with compatriots and comrades, his last from 48 Lenin Sarani, his work centre for

many years. In the front were volunteers from Komsomol, the young communist wing of the Party, and AIDSO carrying 90 red-flags dipped low to mark the 90 years of age of Comrade Ranjit Dhar. Now slogans rose from the depths of heart: 'Red Salute, Comrade Ranjit Dhar'. Comrade Provash Ghosh along with other Polit Bureau and Central Committee members joined the mourning procession. The marchers whom grief had steeled into a single resolve slowly moved on maintaining revolutionary discipline towards the Keoratala Electric Crematorium of South Kolkata where he spent a good number of days carrying out the responsibilities entrusted by the Party and in course of that became virtually a member of so many families resident there. The procession turned round to Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road and then treaded along S.N. Banerjee Road towards Rani Rashmoni Road and

then took left towards the crematorium. Only refrains of the Internationale and the song on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh rose from that vast silence of a moving human stream. At 19.30 hours, the procession reached the Keoratala Crematorium. A large gathering of people and workers who could not join the procession early had assembled on its premises. His body was kept on the altar and the thousands of comrades who had trekked the route following the bier now filed past the leader's body with tearful eyes, paying tribute in red salute. The Komsomol presented him the last guard of honour. The members of the Polit Bureau and Central Committee as well as the State-level leaders led by Comrade Provash Ghosh, paid homage in Red Salute. Slogans reverberated around: 'Red Salute, Comrade Ranjit Dhar'. We'll not forget you comrade, we won't.' The body was consigned to flames.

MEMORIAL MEETING of Comrade Ranjit Dhar

21 June, 9.30 a.m. at Sarat Sadan Hall, Howrah, West Bengal

Speaker: Comrade Provash Ghosh

President : Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya

Glorification of Sati and maligning of Raja Rammohan Roy

An Indian actress by name Payal Rohatgi recently tweeted a video in which she called Raja Rammohan Roy, pioneer of Indian Renaissance, a “chamcha” (lackey) of the British rulers and alleged that the British used him to defame the ‘Sati’ tradition so that the colonial power could prove their moral superiority. Of course she was criticized by a majority of twitter users who praised the role of Raja Rammohan Roy in getting the inhuman practice of ‘Sati’ (burning the wife alive alongwith her dead husband) abolished. Nevertheless, given the present situation when the BJP-led government is attempting to distort Indian history and accordingly bring about changes in the field of education, her comments are bothersome and significant. If one is not vigilant against the rampant fascization of culture going on today across the imperialist capitalist world, including our country, one is vulnerable to be carried away by false propaganda.

Connecting Sati with Jauhar

Payal’s utterances are irrational and can incite bigotry. Even on the recent floods that struck Kerala she has indicated in a series of tweets that the suffering is God’s way of punishing the state for not banning cow slaughter and hurting Hindu sentiments. Now she is trying to glorify ‘Sati’ saying that it was a voluntary practice by Hindu widows expressing their love and devotion to their deceased husbands. She also said that the ‘Sati’ tradition was introduced to protect the chastity of Hindu wives from the hands of Muslim invaders. She cites the example of *Jauhar* (mass self-immolation) by Rajput women as portrayed in the 2018 fictional Hindi film ‘Padmaavat’. It was shown in the film that queen Padmavati leads a *Jauhar* to escape from the invader Allauddin Khilji.

Jauhar is believed to be performed by the women, young children, and other dependants of a besieged fort when holding out against the enemy was no longer possible and that death appeared the only honourable way. Then the surviving fighting men of that fort would charge defiantly onto the battlefield and embrace death in battle as befitting a warrior in an act known as “*shaka*”. Actually the mention of Padmavati is found only in 1540 in Sufi poet Malik Muhammad Jayasi’s poem Padmavat, written in Awadhi, 224

years after the death of Alauddin Khilji, the Delhi sultan who ruled from 1296 to 1316. She is the heroine in that poem. It was later on made into a film. The incident of Padmavati’s *Jauhar* is thus recognized more as folklore than fact. Even a section of the modern historians claim that there is little historical evidence of the legend of Padmini and her embracing *Jauhar*.

Anyway, there are indications that collective self-immolations were practised in the distant past and these were not limited only to Rajputs. Muslim chiefs are also recorded to have their women killed in order to prevent any further degradation of their honour during a battle. Such practices were prevalent even before Muslim conquests in India and some historians say that the Greek conquerors who captured Indian women, might have pushed them to *Jauhar* in the BC era.

There is a clear distinction between *Jauhar* and *Sati*. *Jauhar* was principally motivated by a desire to avoid being captured by the invaders, while *sati* was a forced ‘suicide’ of a so called ‘devoted’ widow. *Jauhar* was practised even if it wasn’t known whether the husband died in the war or not. It is also said that *Jauhar* was a custom for which special combustible rooms called *Lakshagri* has made of lacquer and other inflammable substances were built within the forts. In the medieval period these *Jauhar* was extolled and praised by all sides. While *Jauhar* was a voluntary sacrifice out of a feeling of insecurity and fear of having modesty outraged, *Sati* was mostly an imposition by the then Brahminical Hindu society on the widows who were made to believe that once they accompanied their dead husbands to “heaven”, they would enjoy glorification of being ‘saint women’. A widow who agreed to self-immolate herself on the funeral pyre of her husband was considered to be very virtuous and worshipped as *Sati Mata* by those sects. We can still find Temples of *Sati Mata* in some States of India such as in Rajasthan and M P.

Mythological background of Sati

The story about the origin of *Sati* in Hindu mythology is that *Sati* was the wife of Lord Shiva and she self-immolated herself in protest against her father who had disrespected Shiva. Though in this

story, *Sati* immolated herself even while her husband, Shiva was alive, the practice took a different form, if not suitably twisted by the then self-appointed ‘guardians of the society’, and women were being forced to die on their husband’s funeral pyre. The earliest Hindu literature such as *the Vedas* do not have any mention of the practice of *Sati*. In the Ramayana, when Dasarath died, none of his three widows jumped onto his pyre. In the Mahabharata, Madri the wife of Pandu was burnt with the husband. But Kunti another wife of Pandu continued to live. Buddha and Mahavira also did not mention anything at all of this practice nor has any of the ancient Buddhist or Jain scriptures mention of this. Same is with Adi Sankara and other reformers. May be *Sati* was not rampant in that period and this practice was introduced much later in the tyrannical Hindu society dominated by Brahmanical fiat and dictates.

Another sociological angle of Sati

As we know, in a patriarchal society women are considered as subservient and inferior to men. Needless to mention that widow re-marriage was also not an acceptable practice in Hindu society in those days and for widows to live after the death of their husbands was considered inauspicious. So, she was burned either with her tacit consent or most of the times forcefully by her in-laws after the death of her husband. In many parts of the country, where men were permitted to have many wives, even octogenarian or nonagenarian men married young girls in twenties or even less. The families of the latter were circum-scribed, if not forced to agree to the marriage,

for otherwise with a girl of marriageable age in the house, they would be ostracized. These young girls could hardly get any chance of their conjugal life, as their husband, busy in attending his multiple wives from village to village, could meet each wife only once in a while. But when the old man died, the girl was compelled by the scripture, and if unwilling or resisting, by force to die on the same pyre alongwith her dead husband. Her frantic appeal and wails to live were suppressed with loud play of *dhaks* (loud drumbeats) etc., that were usually played during worships. So it was out and out an inhuman torture upon young girls.

Maligning Raja Rammohan is criminal

The point is not whether ancient Hindu scriptures prescribed *Sati* or not. The issue is that Hindu zealots glorified the practice of *Sati* to the extent of building temples for *Satis*.

In the past some enlightened Indian rulers had taken steps to curb

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Thousands of people protested at Trafalgar Square in central London on 4 June last against US President Donald Trump’s pomp-laden state visit to Britain. Protesters shouted, banged drums and waved placards at what organizers called a “Carnival of Resistance” ,while Prime Minister Theresa May held talks with Trump a short distance away at her Downing Street residence. “People are realising that what Trump stands for needs to be challenged, both in this country and in the US, otherwise there really is a loss of rights which start off slowly and then become much greater”, commented one protestor.

Glorification of Sati and maligning of Raja Rammohan Roy

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the cruel practice; for instance, Akbar attempted to restrict it, the Marathas had forbidden it in their dominions. However, the East India Company adhered to a policy of non-interference into the socio-religious customs of the people of India. Later, when the British rulers wanted to get a moral sanction of their colonizing India by showing that it was white man's moral duty to civilize the uncivilized people of the country, they began to depart from their earlier stand of non-interference.

It is at that point of time that Raja Rammohan Roy, spurred on by the enlightenment of Renaissance, first came forward to fight for the cause of these unfortunate widows and urged the Governor-General, Lord Bentinck to stop this cruel murder of Hindu-widows. Due to his great efforts and work through publication of pamphlets and newspaper reports etc., he was able to awaken the conscience of the masses. In spite of strong opposition from the orthodox Hindus the cruel practice of *Sati* was abolished ultimately by an ordinance on December 4, 1829. The Regulation of 1829 was initially applicable to Bengal Presidency alone but in 1830 it was extended in different forms to Madras and Bombay Presidencies also. Incidentally, Raja Rammohan Roy is acknowledged by all as the pioneer of the Indian Renaissance in the early nineteenth century not just because of he fought to abolish *Sati*, but also because of his progressive humanist thinking in different social fields, including modern scientific education. Calling him a lackey of the British, is not only audacious, it is gross distortion of historical facts as well as a criminal maligning of a legendary personality who augured the crumbling of age-old feudal inertia. Thus, after the Regulation of 1829, the inhuman practice of *Sati* was more or less abolished from the customary practices of Hindu society.

Revival of *Sati* glorification

Still, in post-independent India in September 1987, in Rajasthan village of Deorala, 17-year-old Roop Kanwar, a bride of eight months immolated herself on her husband's funeral pyre in front of thousands of people. This shocking incident indicates that a section of people still glorify the practice of *Sati* and some motivated forces are engaged in reviving obscurantism and bigotry, as

some kind of a virtuous act. So, the enlightened and cultured people of India were greatly shocked and protested. Under pressure of powerful people's protest, the Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 was enacted by Government of Rajasthan in 1987. Later, it became an Act of the Parliament of India with the enactment of The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987 in 1988. The Act seeks to prevent *Sati* practice or the voluntary or forced burning or burying alive of widows, and to prohibit glorification of this action through the observance of any ceremony, the participation in any procession, the creation of a financial trust, the construction of a temple, or any actions to commemorate or honor the memory of a widow who committed *sati*. But due to lack of a powerful democratic mass movement in the country support for this retrograde and reactionary phenomenon is raising its ugly head again and again with the instigation and backing of the vested interest.

In 2018, over 500 Rajasthan's Rajput women, brandished swords raising '*Jai Jauhar, Jai Bhawani*' slogans, and held a '*Chetavani Rally*' (warning march) in Rajasthan's Chittorgarh town demanding to stop the release of the movie '*Padmaavat*'. They threatened that they were prepared for committing '*Jauhar*' if their demand is not met with. However, quickly changing stance, the Shatrani Manch, the Rajput womens' body said they have dropped the idea of *Jauhar*, instead they would file a petition at the Supreme Court to commit mass suicide. Over 2,000 Karni Sena (2) women have already registered for performing '*Jauhar*' in Chittorgarh. Was it any sign of women's liberty? They were surely misled. The government was hesitant to take these Karni Sena activists into protective custody and ensure peace and security. Such incidents are indicative of how the retrograde thinking in favour of evil customs of the past is being patterned and encouraged. Instead of fighting in support of such evil practices, our women should be fighting against dowry, female foeticide and crimes on women etc.'

Root cause behind such religious revivalism

The root cause of this appalling condition lies in the limitation of our freedom struggle namely Hindu

revivalism acting as the dominant trend. Even today it is haunting the Indian society. This phenomenon was explained by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, Founder General Secretary, SUCI(C) and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era, in his writing on "Communal Problem" in 1964. He said: "Indian nationalism, therefore, was basically religion-oriented. This religion-oriented nationalism manifested itself in the form of Hindu religious revivalism...The present rulers of our country, in place of carrying out the tasks of social and cultural revolutions, are only aiding more enthusiastically, in the name of secularism, the anti-secular forces and tendencies by encouraging all sorts of religious customs, conventions and prejudices, which have increased several times compared to the pre-independence days. It is no wonder that in the circumstances the slogan of Hindu revivalism is finding a strong foothold now. It should be realized that true secularism does not mean encouraging the individual to profess, practise and propagate his religious faith. Nor does it presuppose state patronage to every religious faith so as to widen the influence of religion over the masses of the people. Far less does it aim at giving some premium to a given community professing a particular faith by offering it special privileges on religious consideration alone. A really secular state considers religion the private affair of its citizens and does not, therefore, interfere, either by encouragement or by opposition, in the profession, practice and propagation of religion by the individual. On the contrary, it guarantees full freedom to the believers to profess any faith as well as to the non-believers. By carrying out the tasks of social and cultural revolutions, it democratizes the society and takes the wind out of the sail of religion, in so far as its influence on the social activities of the individual and on the state is concerned. As a result of the strong Hindu revivalist tendencies of the present ruling bourgeoisie of our country, even today the Indian people are a conglomeration of socially and culturally different communities distracted by language, religion, caste and race."

The point to be noted is that the religious customs and traditions keep changing with time though belief in religion continues. They do not remain the same for all times.

Comrade Ghosh further said: "It may be argued that if religion continues to exist, it is bound to influence social activities of the individual. I do not find any tangible ground for this apprehension. In my opinion, this apprehension arises out of confusion between religion and religious or social customs. Religion and religious customs are two different things. Customs had changed in the past and will change in future as well to fit in with changed social conditions. So, anyone fighting for a change in the existing religious customs cannot be accused of hostility to or renunciation of religion. Did not Kemal Ataturk, even remaining a true Muslim, fight against the Islamic religious customs which were retarding the democratic process of Turkey? Is not Nasser, a Muslim, even though he is liquidating many of the Islamic religious customs and institutions in his country? Will any Muslim brand Jinnah, a non-Muslim for his non-observance of practically all Islamic religious customs? Have not the Hindus given up many religious customs which they used to observe earlier? The democratic movement will certainly wage relentless struggle against all sorts of religious customs, inconsistent with present social requirements but not against religion as such." (3)

In a true democratic society which allows women to enjoy as much rights as men do, this practice of '*Sati*' is really incongruous and unthinkable. But wrong ideas can surreptitiously get planted in the psyche of the nation unless the right thinking people stand up and fight unitedly to stop glorification of this cruel custom.

References:

- (1) Fascism and Moral Ethical Crisis in Left, Democratic Movement — Shibdas Ghosh, First published : May 30, 1973
- (2) Karni Sena: The organisation was formed on 23 September 2006 in Jhotwara locality of Jaipur, primarily by unemployed Rajput youth. Karni sena claimed to fight for rajput honour and pride. The central aim of this organisation was to demand caste-based reservation for Rajputs in government jobs and education. Its other objectives included ending the alleged "sidelining of Rajput figures in textbooks" and help elect Rajput legislators in the government.
- (3) On Communal Problems - Shibdas Ghosh, First published : Nov, 1964

Tragic suicide of a young doctor in Mumbai

How continuously fomented casteist-religious discriminations have been polluting social mind-set and fabric

Does anybody have any control on his or her birth? Has social stratification been divinely ordained? If not, why should worth and competence of a person, his or her very right to pursue any profession, his or her very right to live, be decided based on which community he or she belongs to by birth, in which caste he or she is having his or her place, which religion he or she professes should decide and govern his or her life? Should a person be judged by all these factors or by judgment based on human values, ethics, culture, conduct and moral standard? Which one is civility and which is bestiality?

All these questions have once again surfaced following the tragic death of Dr Payel Salman Tadvi, a bright young doctor of just 26 years of age. She was found hanging on the premises of the BYL Nair Hospital, Mumbai on 22 May last. As usual, the concerned investigating agencies are busy ascertaining if it is a suicide or murder. Even if it is a suicide, was it instigated or abetted by anyone? Three absconding senior lady doctors have so far been arrested in this connection and suspended by Maharashtra Association of Resident Doctors (MARD). The head of the gynaecology department where Payel was a post graduate student has been suspended till further notice for not taking steps when the young doctor's family approached her alleging months of unceasing mental and physical torture by the three arrested doctors because Payel belonged to a backward adivasi community professing Islam religion. All these definitely indicate foul play.

Payel's dream was to be a doctor, the first one in their family. Crossing so many hurdles and hassles including acute pecuniary condition, her family managed to get her educated. She, by sheer dint of merit education, could join a hospital as a professional doctor and that too in the city of Mumbai. Those aware of the socio-economic scenario of our country are aware how difficult the struggle has been. But, after reaching a commendable level in medical education the bright young doctor ceased to live. What did the society gain other than a stigma of inhumanity!

In fact, the ruthlessly exploitative Indian ruling bourgeoisie and its servitors have been motivatedly fomenting and sustaining casteist-

communal-ethnic divides to disrupt unity of the toiling masses so that no struggle based on higher values and human essence could crystallize and surge forth against the oppressive capitalist rule. This is permeating even among the educated section. Another ploy is to play the reservation card for pitting one section of the oppressed masses against the other. While jobs are steadily dwindling and unemployment mounting — inevitable in decadent moribund reactionary capitalist system—the Indian rulers and their political managers are dangling the carrot of reservation to shield the real issue. At the time of gaining political independence from the British rulers, there was legitimate accumulated grievance in the minds of the utterly disadvantaged dalit people and there was public pressure on the authors of the Constitution to frame some remedial measures. Thus a special provision of reservation for the SCs and STs in job and education found berth in the Constitution. This reservation was applicable in the government schools, colleges, offices and public sector units and the percentage was decided based on the proportion of these sections of the people to the total population. But, the authors of the Constitution were aware that this provision of reservation cannot be perennial since that would mean indirect acknowledgment of perpetual backwardness of the *dalit* population and obstruct the process of uplifting them to a level-playing field with others. For adequate development and flourishing of merit, there ought to be a healthy competition among all, just like the way a good student sharpens his skill when competing with a host of other meritorious students. So they stipulated this reservation would be there for 10 years and thereafter a review should be undertaken as to how far this reservation for a limited period had met with its objective. But even after 72 years, no concrete step has been taken by the Indian ruling dispensation to ensure due development of the backward segments of toiling population and to bring them to a sound level in the mainstream of the society on a par with the developed segment in every respect. A small fraction, hardly 3%, of those belonging to the *dalit* community, usurped all opportunities and benefits to emerge as a 'creamy layer', a tiny group of affluent 'elites' enjoying all privileges and clout as part of the

handful of dominating rich in the society, being totally callous and indifferent to the rapid degeneration of the livelihood of the lower caste populace. Thus they have practically become an appendage to the ruling bourgeoisie. This emergence of a 'creamy layer' within the *dalits* has once again attracted pointed attention to the fact that in capitalism class division is becoming sharper every moment; the yawning gap between the haves and have-nots is making social stratification more pronounced and vivid. In a crafty move, the ruling class carved out a privileged group from the most oppressed section of the masses to be pliable to its class interest and projected as proof of prosperity (!) of the *dalit* populace. The result is constant division and contradiction among the oppressed people who are divided into lower and upper caste. Thereby much blood has flown and many lives gone and are still going.

Each and every parliamentary political party is engaged in this ghastly game while they shed crocodile tears for the unfortunate millions. But the BJP, grateful to the ruling monopolists for backing to wholeheartedly for both its first and second term in the government, is now at the top discharging this duty to its employer-master. So by spreading the venom of casteism-communalism, the BJP ensures that people constantly go for one another's throat, shed blood and destroy their own very precious unity.

As part of the exploited people let us pause and ponder over a few important points in this connection. No truly civilized mind accepts the death of the young Doctor Payel. No death caused by hatred, no humiliation, no suppression is acceptable to a man who has grown up in democratic ethos. A man or a woman who is free from blindness and brutality of the Dark Age, who has learnt to consider every human being on equal honourable grounds, cannot hurt any single man, any woman or a child. This lofty ideal no more do the heads of the present

society tolerate who fear the possible system change by revolution. So they spread, either openly or secretly, animosity and antagonism. This poison has not only enraged one community against another, it has come down to the individual level, grassroots level where even within the same community a son does not spare father, brother sister, husband wife. Since capitalism in its present dying stage cannot provide extra lease to its life without stripping human beings of human essence, all human qualities, finer feelings, moral values and ethical conduct, the whole society is submerged in utter self-centredness; people of all contending communities are condemned to disaster. Decadence pardons none. So one presumes a fellow citizen as privileged and often as root of his or her misery and deprivation, which triggers mutual hate, distrust and animosity. Thus ruling capitalism has been pitting one section against the other by pulling the strings from behind and thriving on this orchestrated divide. So, the tragic death of Dr. Payel is not an isolated phenomenon but a spectacle of how sullied has become the soil.

While sharing the grief and agony of the family of the deceased, toiling millions irrespective of caste, creed, religion, region or language must grasp this objective truth which the ruling class cunningly hides from them. They need to identify their enemy, the capitalist system, the source of all crises, maladies and aberrations rattling their life. Internecine conflicts and clashes would only be self-defeating. This system must be confronted with mighty mass movements and for that our unity must be protected at all costs. It is possible only when the toiling masses unite on the platform of organized sustained democratic movement on the burning problems of life, rising above all divides, embracing higher proletarian culture and ethics and above all are guided by the genuine Marxist revolutionary party of the soil.

Victorious struggle of students led by AIDSO Karnataka

This academic year college students of Karnataka had to face problem due to governments delay in issuing bus passes. Due to this students, particularly those coming from economically poor sections had to face immense economic hardship of having to daily pay Rs 80-100 for travelling to colleges. Responding to the situation, AIDSO took to the streets and instantly held Protests in Bangalore, Gulbarga, Yadgiri and several other Districts forcing the authorities to concede students' demand.

AIUTUC denounces sinister anti-labour pro-capitalist policies announced by Niti Ayog and calls for united sustained movement to forestall the heinous move

Reacting sharply to the latest announcement made by NITI AYOOG on behalf of the Government of India in regard to either closing down or privatizing 42 public sector units even by way of removing the ceiling of FDI within no time, Comrade Sankar Saha, General Secretary, AIUTUC, stated on 2 June 2019 that this clearly signals complete destruction of the public sector units created after independence in the crucial sectors as labour-intensive industries under public pressure and using funds from public exchequer.

Similarly, as declared, completion of process of legislation of 4 Codes replacing 44 existing labour laws incorporating pro-employer amendments, defying united opposition of entire labour movement of the country would empower the domestic and foreign monopolists to snatch away whatever little hard-won rights of the working class still exist. Also would be disabled the statutory restrictions on closure, lay-off and retrenchment.

It may be recalled that BJP Government tactically retreated from implementing the aforesaid anti-labour pro-capitalist measures in the face of nation-wide protest reflected in the united trade union movement, including two general strikes which saw participation by over two hundred million workers throughout the country. Now, after being saddled in power for a second time with full backing of the ruling monopolists, the BJP government is paying its gratitude to the ruling class by implementing the unfinished agenda of its first term without wasting even a single day. In this circumstance, we call upon the working people across the country to take to the street immediately and build up united sustained movement to force this audacious fascist government to retreat in real term from operationalizing its sinister agenda.



On behalf of Bala Vikasa Vedika, our children's organization in Telangana, 10th Children's summer camp was held successfully in Hyderabad from 24 to 26 May last with participation of nearly 100 children. In the camp, moral classes, sports, art and craft, movie shows etc. were organized.

Appeal of the West Bengal State Secretary, SUCI (C) to the agitating junior doctors

My dear agitating junior doctor friends,

Despite being repeatedly attacked by criminals, and yet again being assaulted recently, you have been compelled to join the movement demanding security and upgradation of necessary infrastructure. Despite the ongoing stalemate at the hospitals throughout the state, people of all walks of life have sympathised with your cause.

It is regretful that the state government has taken a rigid approach and along with it, its nasty comments have made you further emotionally injured. Under the circumstances, a few hundred senior doctors at government hospitals have tendered resignation in fraternity with your righteous cause. In different states of India and even in other countries, there has been immense response in support of your movement.

It is a matter of hope that some eminent respected physicians led by Dr Sukumar Mukherjee have voluntarily taken initiative to properly resolve this stalemate by convening a meeting of the chief minister and the representatives of the agitating doctors.

We consider that giving preference to people's interest, the junior doctors should respond favourably to this notable initiative, sit with the chief minister and take to resolve the matter based on realization of the legitimate demands. Despite genuine reasons for agitation and pain, the place of meeting should not be made the bone of contention.

With thanks and congratulating you with struggling greetings,

Yours truly
Chandidas Bhattacharya
Secretary, West Bengal State Committee
SUCI(Communist)

16 June 2019



Massive demonstration by SUCI (C) Odisha State Committee led by Comrade Dhurjati Das, Central Committee member and Odisha State Secretary, in front of state secretariat in Bhubaneswar on 7 June 2019 demanding proper relief for and rehabilitation of 'Fani' affected people.

STOP POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND KILLINGS

LETTER TO THE STATE PRESIDENTS OF BJP AND TMC FROM WEST BENGAL STATE SECRETARY OF SUCI(C)

Shri Dilip Ghosh,
President, West Bengal State Committee, Bharatiya Janata Party

Shri Subrata Bakshi,
President, West Bengal State Committee, All India Trinamool Congress

Respected Sir,

The people of the entire state are gravely concerned at the way armed attacks, torching of houses and shops, vandalism and even killings are taking place relentlessly centring on the clashes between the BJP and the TMC just after conclusion of the parliament election. After each incident of such political killings, the leaders pay visits to the bereaved families to convey their condolence. But does such sympathy fill up the void created in the hearts of the mother who loses her son or the wife who loses her husband forever? Does it in any way lessen their haplessness? Does it help reducing their grief and wailing? We do not like to enter into the details as to which one of the two warring parties has suffered more casualties. Our

appeal: As leaders of the two parties engaged in such gory clashes and scuffles, please take due cognizance of the serious concern of the people of the state and immediately put an end to such ongoing bloodbath. There are political differences among the various political parties and those would continue to remain. Despite such political differences, every party should have the right to propagate its ideology and opinions in a democratic way. But instead of that, driven by an aggressive mentality against each other, the ongoing politics of precipitating terror and engineering killings just for establishing territorial domination ought to be stopped immediately.

We hope that the considerate leaderships of both the parties would value our earnest appeal.

Thanking you

Chandidas Bhattacharjee
Secretary, West Bengal State Committee
SUCI(Communist)

09-06-2019

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