

Proletarian Era

Volume 53 No. 2 Organ of the SOCIALIST UNITY CENTRE OF INDIA (COMMUNIST)
SEPTEMBER 1, 2019 Founder Editor-in-Chief : COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

8 Pages

Price : Rs. 2.00



26 December 1893 – 9 September 1976

LONG LIVE MAO ZEDONG THOUGHT

"Western parliamentary democracy... ask(s) for a two-party system as in the West, with one party in office and the other in opposition. But this so-called two-party system is nothing but a device for maintaining the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; it can never guarantee freedoms to the working people. As a matter of fact, freedom and democracy exist not in the abstract, but only in the concrete. In a society where class struggle exists, if there is freedom for the exploiting classes to exploit the working people, there is no freedom for the working people not to be exploited. If there is democracy for the bourgeoisie, there is no democracy for the proletariat and other working people." (On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People)

RSS-BJP WANT TO DESTROY SCIENTIFIC AND RATIONAL MINDSET IN THE COUNTRY

Comrade Provash Ghosh at the 5 August Memorial Meeting in Kolkata

[This is the text of the speech delivered in Bengali by Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), at the 44th Memorial Meeting of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our leader, teacher and guide and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era, held on 5 August 2019, at Netaji Indoor Stadium, Kolkata, West Bengal. Comrade Chandidas Bhattacharyya, Central Committee Member and West Bengal State Secretary presided. In his speech, Comrade Provash Ghosh dwelt on various important aspects of present political situation. The first portion of the speech is published in this issue. The second part will be in next issue. Before publication, Comrade Provash Ghosh has elaborated a few points and added some new points. For translation error or incorrect expression, if any, the Editorial Board of Proletarian Era stands responsible.]

Comrade President and Comrades,

It does not require mentioning that this Day is steeped in deep pain, emotion and memory in our life. None of our programmes is a ritual, not to speak of observance of the Memorial Day of our great leader, teacher and guide, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. Some of the griefs subside and die out with the passage of time. On the contrary, there is another kind of grief which, as the days and years roll by, continues to make so deep an appeal to our consciousness and realization, amidst the cross-currents of events, that our conscience and sense of responsibility are stimulated and revitalized more and more.

Today, our Party has grown much bigger. This memorial meeting is being observed in 23 states of the country. Now many students, boys and girls from the workers', peasants' and middle class families have joined the Party. Many of them are not aware in what adverse a situation and in course of conducting what an arduous all-embracing struggle Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, as the worthy continuer of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin-Mao Zedong, had built up this Party with just six of his revolutionary compatriots. I shall discuss this aspect later.

Parliamentary Democracy did not emerge from the Vedas, the Quran or the Bible

First of all, I shall place before this meeting the analysis of our Party based on

Marxism-Leninism -Shibdas Ghosh Thought in regard to the recently concluded parliamentary election and its result. I want to remind you at the outset that parliamentary democracy did not exist in history since antiquity. Nor had it emerged from the gospels of the Veda-Vedanta, the Quran or the Bible. Parliament, parliamentary democracy, individual liberty, right of an individual to protest and agitate, secular humanism or humanism free from the influence of religion, scientific rational bent of mind, democratic society—everything appeared in history in course of accomplishment of bourgeois democratic revolution by waging blood-wrenching struggle against feudalism and monarchical rule. These were all declarations and endowments of this evolution. Industrial capital born in the womb of mercantile capital then at the stage of small industry. In the interest of development of industrial capital and widespread industrialization, capitalism in its rising period fought against religion-based monarchy. At that period, under the leadership of the progressive bourgeoisie, the serfs were freed from the tentacles of feudalism, and parliamentary democracy or democratic republic was set up by abolishing religion-based feudal-monarchical system. It was decided that governance would no more be based on the precepts of any scripture including the Bible, but would be conducted according to the constitution framed by the elected representatives of the

people. There was free and wide competition among the small industries. Based on this multi-industry emerged the multi-party democracy. Its declaration was of equality-fraternity-liberty and establishing a governing system 'by the people, of the people and for the people'. Though at its initial stage of development, capitalism could honour this declaration to some extent, the moment transformation of small capital into big capital and then big capital into monopoly capital began to take place, capitalism threw into dust the banner of progress and turned reactionary. From then onwards, the lofty slogan of equality-liberty-fraternity began to be trampled underfoot. Democracy began to be subverted. Uttering a crammed speech of parliamentary democracy, monopoly capital and the bourgeois rulers who had attained imperialist character not only ruthlessly exploited the working classes of their respective own countries, but also made to prostrate at their feet the undeveloped countries, unleashed colonial and semi-colonial plunder and oppression there and ruthlessly suppressed the national liberation struggles surging forth in these victim countries. Twice the imperialists generated world wars centring on grab of market. In 1917, when capitalism had attained monopoly stage and acquired imperialist character, Lenin said about election: "To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress

Contd. on page 2

Comrade Provash Ghosh at the 5 August Memorial Meeting in Kolkata

BJP has been brought to power by the big moneybags

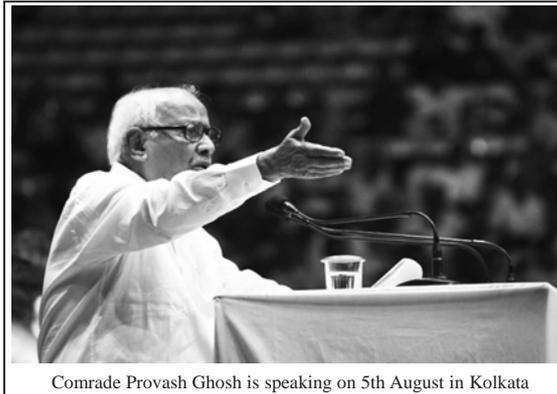
Contd. from page 1

and crush the people through parliament — such is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics”¹ And Comrade Shibdas Ghosh said in 1969 that “*Election is a bourgeois politics. If the masses do not have revolutionary consciousness, if the working class has no class organization and is not in class struggle, if there is no mass movement and if the people are not armed with the strength of a conscious organization, the big industrialists, big business and reactionaries create such a hype with the help of money and media power that the common masses get swayed like straw.*”² Please have a look at the election in our country. Who decides who would win the election? Is it the people? So there is nothing as ‘by the people, of the people, for the people’. Now it is “by the bourgeoisie, of the bourgeoisie, for the bourgeoisie”. The bourgeoisie only decides who would win the elections. So election results no more reflect people’s opinion. It is the verdict of the bourgeoisie which is determining everything. Even if I leave out all other questions, one aspect needs to be pondered over. Nowadays, to contest in the parliament election, one has to deposit Rs 25,000. For contesting an assembly seat, deposit amount stipulated is Rs 10,000. Can any ordinary worker or peasant dream of contesting in any election? But, it is they who constitute the bulk of the voters. Besides, crores of poor people labour all day long just to eke out a bare living, move from one place to another in search for job and have no access to education. Where is the scope for such toiling millions to cultivate politics unless the revolutionary party of the proletariat organizes them, makes them politically conscious and morally strong? So these downtrodden people presume that politics is for the rich and not the poor. So, during the election time, they sell their conscience in lure of whatever little money is thrown at them as crumbs by the big capitalists and businessmen and are swayed by media propaganda just like a straw in wind.

Election has become a game of money

Millions and millions are unemployed in the country. These unemployed millions, mostly the youths, wait for election to come. Then they work for the party which pays them the most. During the election time, the vote-based political parties employ them to do anything and everything in exchange of money, liquor and food. Another feature is also indeed very sad. A thought has gripped the impoverished countrymen that since there is no chance for them to get anything in normal course from these parties, at least they would get something during poll time. Likewise, the poverty-stricken people sell their votes. The bourgeois parties spend huge sum of money to purchase votes like this. Common people tell us: “How would your party win election? Others give money for votes. But you ask for both money as

well as votes from us. You are insane. It is not possible for you to win election.” Our reply has been that we do not want to win in that unprincipled unscrupulous manner. Because, if we are to purchase votes with money, we shall have to sell our Party to Tata, Ambani, Adani and ilk. The BJP has received Rs 210 crores from them through electoral bonds. The Congress has got Rs 5 crores. Even the CPI (M) has got Rs 2 crores. All these parties are nurtured and kept alive by the corporate sector in its own interest. What has happened in the last parliament election? Before elections of 2014, the BJP promised to usher in “achhe din” for the people, credit Rs 15 lakhs to each one’s bank account by unearthing black money, provide 2 crores of jobs every year, waive the outstanding loans of the peasants, bring down the price line and thwart corruption. ‘*Na khaunga na khane dunga*’ (neither shall we indulge in embezzlement of money nor shall we allow anyone to do so) — such was their pre-election declaration. Disgusted with the misrule of the Congress, the people thought perhaps the BJP would do something



Comrade Provash Ghosh is speaking on 5th August in Kolkata

positive. But all these were bluffs. The BJP President had himself admitted candidly that ‘all these promises were ‘Chunavijumla’ (electoral rhetoric). In the BJP rule also, people’s misery soared further. So the accumulated grievances were also immense. Taking advantage of that, the Congress almost won the Gujarat assembly election. In the states like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh which were long known as the BJP’s strongholds, the Congress emerged victorious. In the bye-election of Gorakhpur parliamentary seat, the BJP faced defeat. From all these, the opposition camp assumed that they would win this time. So the opposition parties continued last minute bargaining over seat adjustment based on their respective calculations of electoral arithmetic. It was much like the proverbial saying: “To count one’s chickens before they are hatched”. No one was prepared to surrender an inch to the other. Despite several rounds of meetings, the national and regional non-BJP parties could not achieve unity. All their efforts became abortive. There were five to six contenders for the prime ministerial seat. On the other hand, the monopoly

houses, corporate giants and multi-nationals who are the real determiners of the election results found that the service they received from the BJP in last five years of the BJP rule had surpassed the record of the Congress. Secondly, when there was so much of conflict and disunity over seat adjustment and prime ministership, any coalition government after election would not be a stable one. Conflicts and quarrels would be more. So they decided to make the BJP victorious once again. In order to achieve that objective, they ensured that 95% of the corporate funding through electoral bonds goes to the BJP. The BJP is reported to have spent Rs 27,000 crores in the election. But this is the published figure. The actual figure would be much more. Who has supplied this huge sum of money? This money has been given by those for whom the BJP brought in “achhe din”.

During the last tenure of the BJP, 73% of the country’s wealth has become concentrated in the hands of 1% of the super-rich. This 1% super-rich or corporate barons have increased their wealth by Rs 20,913 crores in 2017-18. So, obviously, they were to back the BJP. Mukesh Ambani, the industrial tycoon, earns Rs 300 crore a day on average. In the last three years, his wealth has increased by 66%. Net worth of Gautam Adani, another monopolist, rose by 124.6 in 2017. Saffron-clad Ramdev has augmented his income by 173%. Now Ramdev has extended his business to almost all sectors. The income of the BJP President himself has swelled by 300% whereas the income of his son has gone up by a whopping 16,000%. The BJP government has waived their bank loan worth of Rs 1,56,702 crores. Bank fund means public fund. The total tax concession and exemptions granted to the industrial houses and corporates have been around Rs 13,00,000 crore. This has been an additional windfall to the monopolists. All of them have indulged in reckless corruption, stashed away thousands and thousands crores of rupees in safe havens overseas. Who accumulate black money? The small shop-owners and traders or these corporate tycoons? So, the BJP could not find any black money. Even they have not been able to trace any black-money holder. How could they? Because all the black-money holders and shady businessmen are bosom friends of the BJP and moving with the ruling party leaders and ministers. They are now the financiers of the BJP as they had once been of the Congress.

Election situation made favourable by using Balakot incident

You have all seen how low the contesting vote-based parties stooped during the election period.

Contd. on page 6

\$5 TRILLION ECONOMY-- MYTH AWAITING TO BUST

Correctness of GDP figures doubted even by professional economists and commentators

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has said during budget presentation in July last that his government has laid down a roadmap for taking country's \$2.8 trillion economy, to reach the \$5 trillion mark by 2024. One trillion means 1 lakh crore. Shri Modi reiterated the same once again in his address to the nation on the 73rd Independence Day on 15 August last. "Size of the cake matters. The larger the cake, larger pieces are what people will get. So we have set a target of making India a USD 5-trillion economy. Larger the size of the economy will be, the larger prosperity will it bring for the country," he said. The Prime Minister has also hastened to add that those who have been critics of this targeted ambition are "professional pessimists" and "detached from the common man". Now his claim has three aspects. First of all, even in the perspective of current performance of the country's capitalist economy as represented by the textbook parameters, is it an achievable target? Secondly, is it a fact that in capitalism, "the size of the cake" matters for people at large? Finally, what is meant by 'economic growth' in the truest sense of the term, "size of the cake" or "the manner of distribution of the cake"?

Controversy over computation of GDP growth figures

We take the first point to start with. What is meant by economic growth? It means increase of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) figure. GDP, in the conventional sense of the term, is defined as the "measure of all the goods and services produced inside a country". But even the bourgeois economists agree that such a simplified statement is misleading. They point out that GDP in fact measures the movement of money from one hand to the other (meaning economic activity) through economy and hence can be thought of as a measure not so much of size. To become a \$5 trillion economy by 2024, GDP would require a nominal growth in dollar terms of over 12% a year. Here is a catch. 'Nominal GDP' measures the value of all finished goods and services produced by a country at their current market prices whereas 'Real GDP' is a measurement of economic output that accounts for the effects of inflation or deflation. Without real GDP, it could seem like a country is producing more when the fact is that prices have gone up and not production volume. When a country does not specify the type of GDP growth, it is likely to be nominal GDP. Nominal GDP includes both prices and growth, while real GDP is pure growth. It is what nominal GDP would have been if there were no price changes from the base year. As a result, nominal GDP is always higher. The GDP growth during January to March 2019 slowed down to 5.8%. Looking at the snail pace of economic activity in the period April to June 2019, it is safe to say that the GDP growth would have slowed down further during the period. Moreover, India's nominal dollar GDP growth rate fell from 15.8% in 2017 to 2.4% in 2018. Why so? Because, economic activity has been slowing down in India. If the GDP is adjusted to inflation, dip in figure would be much

more. In the last quarter for which data is available, India grew at around 5.8% in real terms and looking at economic activity in the period April to June 2019, it is safe to say that the GDP growth would have slowed down further during the period. Even the top-notch economists including the former chief economic advisor of Modi government pointed out that data is flawed and India may well be growing a few percentage points less than that.

Why do they say so? Because, the very method of calculating GDP after a slew of changes brought in by the Modi government has been under controversy for last 4-5 years. In *Proletarian Era* dated 1 August 2015, taking into account all the available facts and logical fallacies put forth from the ruling quarters, we had shown how by a sleight of hand and riding on fabricated theories and statistics, the 'manipulation brigade' assigned the task of anyhow inflate the GDP figures, GDP could be shown to have grown by 6.9 per cent in 2013-14, as against 4.7 per cent calculated per older method. This pegged the economy to grow by a solid 7.4 per cent in the 2014-15 fiscal year and indicate turnaround of economy. Moreover, the GDP which used to be calculated based on the wholesale prices is now measured based on the market prices paid by consumers. Subsequent developments have proved our analysis to be correct. Of late, even economists who till the other day held key posts in deciding the country's economic policies also apprehended that GDP growth rate is overestimated by about 2.5 % annually following changes in the methodology of calculation. While official estimates put it at 7%, the "actual growth" is envisaged to be belly-crawling at 4.5%. So, there is reignited concerns about the credibility of India's economic growth data. This is not the first time that the government has been questioned over data collection. A study by the statistics ministry found that in the fiscal year which ended June 2016, 36% of companies in the database used for calculating India's GDP could not be traced or were wrongly classified. The government itself had admitted that there were deficiencies in the way it collected and used to collect data.

Other parameters of determining growth of economy

Outlining Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision to make India a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25, Krishnamurthy Subramanian, present Chief Economic Advisor to the government, during the presentation of Economic Survey 2019, said that India needed to sustain a real GDP growth of 8 per cent by a 'virtuous cycle' of saving, investment and exports. The classical formula of estimating GDP broadly lies in summing up private consumption expenditure, investment, government expenditure and net exports (exports minus imports).

Investment scenario

What is the investment scenario? When we speak of investment, we mean productive investment which is contingent upon rising

demand of industrial goods and essential utility items. All media reports and studies clearly reveal that productive investment is at its historic low, if not has come to naught. On 1 July 2019, it was stated in Parliament by the government that as high as 6.8 lakh establishments have closed down in the country. To the Registrar of Companies, this is 36.07% of the total registered companies. Despite changing base year as well as compilation methodology, Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is on a continuous dip. In May last, it fell to 3.1% driven by an across-the-board deceleration, especially in the consumer durables sector, according to official data. In June, it slipped to 2%. Four years back, Economic Survey of 2015 admitted that projects worth 8.3 per cent of the GDP are investment in "suspended animation" meaning that roll out was held back because of absence of market. Neither Prime Minister nor the Finance Minister have so far informed in the five consequent budgets thereafter (including the interim budget in February 2019) if any of these projects has seen light of the day. On the contrary, the analyses published in the media say "private investment is constrained by insufficient demand caused by fall in the purchasing power due to persisting pauperization of much of India's population. So there is virtually no market for industrial goods and despite several rounds of lowering of bank interest rates, there is virtually no fresh credit off-take from the banks by the industry." Chairman of State Bank of India said on 18 August last that credit demand (meaning off take of bank loans) continue to remain subdued. Media reports also reveal that "India's domestic private investors have got cold feet since 2011-12" because "consumer demand in India is not mass-based — with bulk of the expenditures coming from a small category of the rich — and therefore not beneficial for industries that want to gain from economies of scale." The government is, therefore, maintaining eerie silence on the much-trumpeted slogan of 'Make in India' slogan which prompts to lend credence to the fact it has been a super-flop. Constant rise in Non-Performing Assets (NPAs or defaulted loans) by the industrial houses on the plea of slump and loss is another proof of sluggish demand and consequent lack in productive investment. As high as two-third of the NPAs, now estimated to have crossed 14 lakh crores, relates to just 24 big companies. Even government is not making any productive investment. The value of new projects announced during April to June 2019 fell by 79.5% year on year. Paradoxically, though the government pretends to give so much emphasis on capital expenditure to fund growth in infrastructure, the allocation towards the same was brought down in last budget from Rs 9.2 lakh crore in 2018-19 to Rs 8.7 lakh crore in nominal terms for the current fiscal. Perhaps for that reason, the government avoided mention of any 'industrial policy' in the last budget. All these facts clearly show that there has hardly been any productive investment.

\$5 Trillion Economy

Rising recession, unemployment and job loss indicate economic downturn and not growth

Contd. from page 3

Consumption Position

Next is consumption expenditure which is linked again to the buying capacity of the common people. There is a contraction in virtually all parameters which measure consumption in different ways. The consumption of finished steel grew by 6.6% between April and June 2019, in comparison to the same period during the last year, when it had grown by 8.8%. This was the slowest in two years. The volume growth or the number packs sold, of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies has slowed down over the last one year. If we look at Hindustan Unilever Ltd, the volume growth between April and June 2019 was at 5%. It was 12% during the same period last year. Dabur India posted a volume growth of 6% during April and June 2019, against 21% last year. Britannia was down to 6% against 13% last year. What does it show? It shows that let alone the poor who do not earn to have even one square meal a day, even relatively better-off middle class people are going slow on making everyday purchases. While income is dipping, prices are rising not only following general laws of capitalism but also on account of a plethora of manipulations through hoarding, black-marketing and wide speculation over crop prices in the capital market by the punters.

If consumption which forms around three-fifths of the Indian economy, is plummeting so vividly, slowdown of overall economy is bound to happen. Even frantic attempt to artificially stimulate demand by liberalizing rules of availing consumer loan from banks is proving futile. Interestingly, the Prime minister in his observation on last budget claimed that economy would be developed by way of, among other things, rising per capita income. What is per capita income? Total income of people divided by total number of population. Is rise in per capita income any remedy to falling market demand? In India, 1% super-rich own 73% of wealth. Weighed in terms of calorie consumption (i.e. minimum food intake which is dependent on earning level), 67% of Indians are poor. 230 million (23 crore) people go hungry every day. Unable to bear the brunt of hunger and poverty, about 5 peasants and manual workers, in average, commit suicide in India every hour. On the contrary, Mukesh Ambani, the richest Indian, earns Rs 300 crores a day. Then is not per capita income a meaningless statistical construct to distort reality? Will a common Indian then revel over the fact that the country's economy is going to touch \$5 trillion or ask what would be his or her purchasing power in terms of rupees as that matters for the life prospects of his or her as well as their families. And if people have no money to eke out a bare living, could there be any household savings which, as the bourgeois economists say, necessary for capital formation?

Allied to the question of consumption expenditure is generation of adequate income through proper remunerative employment. What is the scenario there? Already it is revealed that employment has reached a 45 year low in the current year. Five years back, the President of India pegged down the number of unemployed at 67 crores. If the unemployment is now lowest of last 45 years, one can easily understand what is the number of unemployed now. The extent of unemployment could be gauged from the fact that 23 lakh graduates, post-graduates and doctorates applied for 368 posts of peons in UP, 4,600 applicants including rank-holder engineers and MBAs applied for 14 sweepers' job in Tamil Nadu assembly and 25 lakh candidates filed applications for 6,000 Group-D posts in West Bengal. It is not only unemployment. Job loss is rising in tandem horrifically. At least five million Indians lost their jobs between 2016 and 2018, a survey said. The state-run BSNL is slated to retrench 54,000 employees as well as 30% of the contractual workers. Around two lakh jobs have been cut across automobile dealerships. India's auto parts industry is mulling slash workforce by 10 lakhs. Railways are reported to be considering a cut of 3 lakh jobs. Spinning mills are apprehending retrenchment. So, Indian rulers are celebrating not just a 'jobless growth' but a 'job-loss growth'. Every day, thousands of jobless rural poor mostly belonging to peasant families are migrating to towns in search of jobs. Even Raghuram Rajan, former governor of Reserve Bank of India has expressed doubts over the growth trajectory of GDP given the high rate of joblessness. If such is the job scenario, who would pull the country's economy to \$5 trillion and what for? Nobody knows if the government has any concrete plan to create permanent gainful jobs and if so, how? Hollow claims and weird presumptions of job creation would not fill up the bucket.

Government Expenditure

After investment and consumption, the third component of GDP is government expenditure. The budget estimated to 13.4% more than the revised estimate of 2018-19 in 2019-20. But, a close scrutiny reveals that total expenditure last year was actually lower than the revised estimate by as much as 13.4%. Another calculation by a noted economist in the media showed that as against the need to boost demand by increasing the capital expenditure, there has been a cut from Rs 9,29,000 crore to Rs 8,76,000 crore. (Arun Kumar in *The Wire* dated 05-07-19).

Net Exports or widening trade deficit?

Finally about net exports (meaning exports more than imports). India's trade deficit (difference between imports and exports) reached a record high of \$176 billion in 2018-19. Latest data show that this deficit was USD 13.43 billion (Rs 9,40,000 crores) in July 2019. In fact, India's trade deficit has widened during the past

three years with as many as 25 major countries despite continuous fall in rupee (a fall in currency normally boosts export because the domestic goods become cheaper in foreign currency and so importing countries pay less to acquire more goods valued in rupee term). Rupee is stated to be worst performing currency in Asia indicating weak economic fundamentals such as chronic current account deficits (trade deficit). Is not dreaming of net exports in near future a wild dream?

Published data show that after 2011, investment has collapsed from 3% average growth to 2%, loans to industry actually shrank 1%, exports crawled at 3%, imports fell by less than 1% and overall loan growth crashed to 3%. Yet, the policy makers boast of being chugged along at 7% average GDP growth. Is it a credible claim even going by the yardstick of bourgeois economics? Published reports and surveys unequivocally indicate that the ongoing slowdown is nothing but a worth recession the economy is plunged in.

Imperatives to achieve \$5 trillion economy

Let us proceed to focus on the imperatives to achieve the targeted growth even if one goes by the prescripts of bourgeois economy. Let us presume that GDP in dollar terms is 100. If our economy is to grow by 8%, then GDP should be 108 dollars next year. Professional economists following textbook principles have shown that to achieve that growth rate, a fresh investment of \$35 would be needed. If this investment needs to be funded by savings in banks and government papers, to that extent consumption would go down (because spending power depletes if money is saved) whereas goods worth Rs 108 would have to be sold. If targeted 8% growth is not achieved in next year, the required growth rate would go up further. This is the enigma even from the point of textbook bourgeois economy. Given the spiralling rise in unemployment and rapid job loss, would the dream of reaching \$5 trillion GDP be achieved simply based on 'ifs and buts' and 'tall claims'?

Secondly, when targeted GDP is in dollar terms, it implies real and not nominal growth. If inflation is to be used to achieve this target along with a real rate of growth of 8%, then the rupee would devalue and the target would not be fulfilled by nominal growth. In that event, the asking rate would jump to 11.5% on average over five years. The GDP growth during January to March 2019 slowed down to 5.8%. Starting with 5.8% currently, one has to go then to 17% growth at the end of the five year period. When even 8% rate of growth looks difficult now, is achievement of 17% growth a realistic projection even by any stretch of imagination?

Who are wealth-creators and who are benefitting?

Contd. on page 5

\$5 Trillion Economy

Drum-beating of spectacular economic growth target is aimed at hoodwinking suffering countrymen

Contd. from page 4

As is proved by all facts collated from various sources, more is the drumbeats of spectacular growth and Indian economy poised to emerge as the 5th largest in the world, more the few super-rich are stockpiling mammoth wealth while common toiling masses are baring their rickety skeleton. Our Prime Minister is well aware of that and finds it impossible to suppress this stark reality either by riding on the success of 'mission to moon' or taking pride in putting Pakistan on tenterhooks. So, he said in his Independence Day speech that "Wealth creation is a great national service. Let us never see wealth creators with suspicion. Only when wealth is created, wealth will be distributed. Those who create wealth are India's wealth and we respect them". Yes, wealth creation is necessary. But whom the Prime Minister meant by "wealth creators"? The top monopolists who are making fabulous fortunes, fleeing the country by embezzling public fund and concentrating bulk of country's wealth in their hands? Is their personal wealth by any logic be called country's wealth? We have already shown more there is bragging of 'spectacular' economic growth, richer are the rich and poorer the poor. Number of times we have mentioned in *Proletarian Era* that GDP reflects sum total of created wealth but not the pattern of distribution of that. So GDP growth is no indicator of true economic growth. True economic growth is proved when the general standard of life of the people at large is found to be improving with rising income, increasing affordability to acquire items of utility including food-clothing-shelter and easy access to all other necessities of life like healthcare and proper education. As Marxists, we also know that capitalism is based on inequality including economic inequality which is embedded in the very law of capitalist economy. So when the Prime Minister says that creation of wealth will *ipso facto* ensure its distribution, he, we are sorry to say, misguides the nation. What he does is expressing approval of the so called 'trickle down economics' which Ronald Regan, former US President, advocated in the 1980s to justify his decision to cut corporate tax by 25% and government spending on the pretext that it would give more incentives to work and hence the best way to grow economy. In simple term, if huge wealth is accumulated at the top, some of it would 'trickle down' to the poor and working class. But what happened? So called 'trickle down' economics sparked a deep recession in US in 1981 and 1982. Even many of the bourgeois economists of the Western world as well as other parts of the globe have already dismissed this theory as "pure nonsense". They showed that every time this formula was applied in the US, "deficits ballooned, rich folks hoarded their wealth at the top, and average Americans suffered." The present union government of our country is also traversing that way. In the last budget, tax on corporates having a turnover of upto Rs 400 crores has been slashed from beyond

30% to 25%. The Finance minister has said on 19 August last that corporate tax rate for even companies having turnover more than Rs 400 crore turnover will be gradually cut to 25 per cent. It reaffirmed that the super-rich and corporate behemoths were branded as 'wealth creators' by the Prime Minister. Incidentally, in between 2003-04 and 2016-17, as high as 50 lakh crores of rupees worth of tax concessions and waivers are reportedly have been granted to the industrial houses and corporate sector. Every hour the government waives Rs 7 crores of corporate tax and everyday exempts Rs 168 crores towards that. Still, the industrialist lobbies are asking for more economic packages.

But when it comes to the question of providing some relief to the poverty-stricken misery-ridden toiling people, either pinchpenny or plea of fund shortage surfaces as a ready-made excuse. Just the other day, the government gave us a fine display of the arbitrariness of the executive when it announced a Rs 2 increase in the National Floor-level Minimum Wage from Rs 176 to Rs 178 per day despite an internal labour ministry committee recommending a much higher amount of Rs 375 based on consumption of 2,400 calories per day. Not only that. Pay scale of Manipur School Teachers has been slashed from Rs 9,300 to Rs 5,200. Budget has also inexplicably reduced allocation towards Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme" from Rs 61,084 crores to Rs 60,000 crores while independent activists, researchers and organisations working on the scheme have repeatedly claimed with rationales that the scheme cannot function properly with anything less than Rs 88,000 crore. The government thus denies 13 crore job card holders under the scheme even the guaranteed work for 100 days. Incredible indeed!

Reality suppressed

But fact is that it is the workers who create wealth and the capitalists who own the means of production appropriate their surplus labour to fill up their coffer. Even capital, an in-depth analysis based on the scientific laws of political economy would reveal, is nothing but appropriated labour power of the workers. But our government calls for "respecting" the expropriators and exploiters while pillorying the workers and peasants, the real creators of wealth. The truth the Prime Minister, his cabinet colleagues and the government as well as economists-columnists subservient to ruling capitalism shrewdly seek to hide is that in capitalist economic law, the entire production system is run from the standpoint of the interest of the capital or capitalists. Maximization of profit and not meeting the needs of the society is the motive of production. And this maximum profit accrues in the hands of the few owners of the means of production (industry or land) only by ruthlessly exploiting the working people, denying them their legitimate due and squeezing out even the last drop of their blood. Wealth accumulates

only from this profit. Globalization, free market economy or trickle-down economics, whatever renaming takes place —capitalism remains capitalism. So, remain operative its basic operative laws. And the more capitalism, thrashing in its death throes, prolongs its moribund existence, the more it breeds crisis, seeks to pass on the entire burden of the crisis on the common people including the working class and peasantry in the form of various stifling economic and fiscal policies, number of manipulations, vending spurious dreams like begetting "acchhedin", "sabhkasaath, sabkavikas" and now "reaching \$5 trillion economy".

Toiling wretched millions must imbibe the truth

Let us conclude with the assertion that so called goal of achieving "5 Trillion economy" which, as we have shown above, is highly doubted, if not negated, even by the bourgeois economists of repute based on textbook parameters of measuring economic growth, means nothing for the impoverished countrymen pressed under the grinding wheel of ruthless capitalist exploitation. As the experience of all toiling people show, lack of jobs, rising prices and growing agrarian crisis gripping them are weighing down the much-trumpeted economic growth and turning it into a damp squib. Even if we assume that by a sleight of hand, the \$5 trillion economy is reached by 2024, who would gain from it? Evidently, the monopoly houses, large Indian multinational firms, or high net-worth individuals looking to invest abroad, or deep-pocketed foreigners looking to invest in India might benefit from this larger aggregate dollar footprint of India. None of this is of any concern even to a figment of well-being of the vast multitudes of toiling oppressed progressively pauperized Indians. Rightly, a section of the right-thinking persons have been opining that this \$5 trillion episode like the much-hyped moon voyage and calculated precipitation of a war psychosis is also an attempt to deflect people's attention from the burning issues of life, turning them away from the path of righteous struggle and keeping them arrested in the blind alley of building castles in the air. And going by the facts and objective analyses, it is hardly possible to disagree with them. Imperative is that the oppressed wretched countrymen imbibe this truth in right earnest.

Corrigendum:

Page 5, 15 AUGUST 2019 issue

Observance of Memorial Meeting on 5 August:

Column 1, third from top Caption: Hyderabad, Telangana, should be read as Bangalore, Karnataka

Column 1, bottommost Caption: Srinagar, Uttarakhand should be read Dehra Dun, Uttarakhand

Column 2, second from top: Bangalore, Karnataka should be read as Palghat, Kerala

Column 3, fifth from top: Ahmedabad, Gujrat should be read as Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Comrade Provash Ghosh at the 5 August Memorial Meeting in Kolkata

BJP leaders themselves admitted that their pre-electoral promises were mere rhetoric

Contd. from page 2

how they have indulged in mudslinging and trading charges against each other in the filthiest possible language. The bourgeois politicians have crossed all limits of indecency and uncivility. They are capable of doing anything and everything for ministership and power. In such a situation, the Congress accused the BJP of indulging in corruption while inking the Rafael deal with France. The then French President himself admitted that at the request of the BJP prime minister, the bulk of the order had to be channelled through Anil Ambani's Reliance Aerostructure, which was not commissioned even, let alone having any past experience and expertise of manufacturing aerospace and defence equipment. It was revealed in the media with documentary evidence that as per allegations of the defence ministry officials, the prime minister's office had interfered in this deal of procedure. Unable to rebut these allegations, the BJP raked up the issue of Bofors scam against the Congress. This scam is still under the carpet. Now after the election, the Congress is maintaining an eerie silence over the Rafael deal. It might again be dug out of the grave when another election would be forthcoming. Both the parties are aware of the history of scams and scandals of each other. They rake up such issues when necessary and then again put them on the backburner. Have you ever heard of any big industrialist, minister or bureaucrat having been punished for corruption? Only the petty thieves face conviction. This is the underbelly of Modi's proclamation: '*Na khaunga na khane dunga*'. There is no proper answer yet to the question as to who helped fugitive scamsters like Nirav Modi, Mehul Choksi and Vijay Mallya to flee abroad after fleecing the banks of thousands of crores of rupees. In such a milieu when election fever was slowly rising and people were confused about what would bethe shape of things to come, suddenly there was a terrorist attack in Pulwama in Kashmir. Many army jawans were killed. Not that such an incident was anything new. Earlier also, many jawans lost their lives in encounters with the terrorists. The government itself stated that for killing two terrorists, the life of one jawan is sacrificed. 2:1 is the rate. This sad incident of Pulwama was immediately made an election issue by the BJP. In a stated retaliatory action, Indian government conducted air strikes in Balakot of Pakistan. Within no time, there was a countrywide propaganda, what a heroic person the prime minister was and how he had taught Pakistan a lesson. Earlier, the Congress also similarly used Kargil war, the liberation struggle of Bangladesh and the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965 to clinch electoral victory. Thus, the BJP raised a storm in the media over the Balakot strike which became its trump card in the election.

Politics of the Congress is no different

Apart from this, the Election Commission had nakedly worked for the BJP. Nowadays, elections

are rigged in many ways. A probe is going on as to how even the last US presidential election was rigged in favour of Donald Trump. During the last phase of election, the BJP prime minister went to Kedarnath, wore a saffron dress and was engrossed in meditation. Prior to that, he did everything to secure Hindu vote by inciting religious passion. The Congress now a close 'secular' ally of the CPI (M) had also never lagged behind in doing so. In order to compete with the BJP in wooing Hindu sentiment, the Congress leaders also indulged in temple-hopping and securing divine blessing in this or that shrine. Even it tried to outsmart the BJP by being first to offer prayers in certain well-known temples. But the Kedarnath visit escaped the itinerary of the Congress. Whatever it might be, it was the bourgeoisie who had actually decided the 'Kedarnath prayer' to ensure victory of the BJP once more and they did so. So you have seen who were present during the oath taking ceremony of Narendra Modi. All the top monopolists and corporate barons. It was in fact their victory celebration. Please keep in mind that now-a-days, there is no king but there are kingdoms. The bourgeoisie runs their empire under the camouflage of democracy. And the cabinet ministers are the political managers of and subservient to the ruling bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, after the electoral reverse, the Congress, the main bourgeois opposition at the national level and the other regional parties are in a precarious state. All are suffering from frustration. However, when in future the BJP, like the Congress, would become extremely unpopular, the bourgeoisie in its class interest would again resurrect these parties and project the Congress as the 'saviour'. Such alternating of power between two parties or combinations in accordance with the proposition of '2-party democracy' is happening in Europe, USA as well as our country.

Condition of both CPI (M) and CPI is equally perilous. Undivided CPI [within which were then the present CPI, CPI (M) and the various Naxalite groups] emerged as the second largest party in terms of seats in the first parliament election of 1952 and thus emerged as the biggest opposition party. But thereafter the various factions of the undivided CPI had practised such a 'leftism' that in the last election, the CPI (M) could bag only one seat based on its own strength. With the backing of the DMK-Congress combination, the CPI (M) and CPI could manage to win 2 seats and one seat respectively in Tamil Nadu. Such is their success! The leadership of the parties made frantic efforts to reap electoral benefits and to secure a few seats by uniting with the Congress and other regional parties. For that purpose, they even did not hesitate to project the Congress as well as other casteist-parochial-provincial parties as 'secular' and 'democratic'. But the fact is that the Congress during the freedom movement openly compromised with

religion. After riding to power, it also, like the BJP, engineered communal riots in places like Bhagalpur in Bihar, Rourkela in Odisha, Nellie in Assam by fomenting religious blindness. Similarly, the Congress orchestrated anti-Sikh carnage in Delhi. Do all these acts indicate professing of 'secularism'? Essence of secularism is that religion would have no connection with or say in politics, education or socio-cultural affairs. Religion would entirely be a matter of personal belief. This is the concept of secularism which the European renaissance and bourgeois democratic revolution espoused for. In our country, Netaji Subhaschandra, Bhagat Singh as well as Rabindranath-Saratchandra-Nazrul-Premchand-Subramania Bharati- Jyotiprosad Agarwal and such other revered personalities had upheld this very concept of secularism. But the way Indian national bourgeoisie and the Congress, their political representative, haunted by the fear-complex of anti-capitalist socialist revolution, had politically opposed the revolutionary trend within the freedom movement, in the same manner they compromised with religion in the socio-cultural arena to prevent growth of scientific rational mindset. As a result, the religious minorities as well as most of the so called lower caste populace considered the Congress leadership to be that of upper caste Hindus and hence stayed out of the freedom movement. Seizing that opportunity, the British imperialists engineered communal riot and partitioned the country with the approval of the National Congress, Hindu Mahasabha, Muslim League and RSS.

During its rule in independent India, the Congress had not only clamped emergency but also enacted a slew of black acts like TADA, MISA, AFSPA and UAPA. They have also killed hundreds of workers-peasants-students-youths to suppress democratic mass movements. The same Congress is called 'democratic' by the CPI (M) and CPI. Almost all the regional parties are practising casteist-provincial as well as religion-based politics. While in power, they all, like the Congress and the BJP, followed the policy of forcibly crushing legitimate mass struggles. Just from the lure of a few seats, the CPI (M) and CPI leaders tried to forge unity with these parties by labelling them as 'secular' and 'scientific'. But despite their frantic efforts, no one other than the DMK else had responded.

In this connection, we would like to mention further that when the workers-peasants-students-youths were spontaneously bursting forth in protest against the misrule of the erstwhile BJP government, we wanted that the leftists unitedly provide leadership to these protest movements. In that case, class and mass struggles would have intensified, and united powerful left-democratic movement would have surged forth. But instead of responding to our call, they remained absorbed in working out an understanding with the Congress. In absence of leadership, the spontaneously developed movements had fizzled

Contd. on page 7

Comrade Provash Ghosh at the 5 August Memorial Meeting in Kolkata

Congress who brought black acts, imposed emergency, engineered communal riot and compromised with religion is now 'secular democratic' ally of CPI (M)

Contd. from page 6

out. In the past also, the CPI supported Indira Congress by calling it 'secular' and 'democratic' and entered into an understanding with them in the name of fighting communalism. Similarly, they did not join the countrywide mass movement that grew in 1974 under the leadership of Jayprakash Narayan. That gave opportunity to the RSS-Jan Singh to sneak into the movement, reap political benefits and increase their strength. Again during the 1977 election, the CPI (M), raising the bogey of fighting autocracy of the Indira Congress, combined with the Janata Party which had the RSS-BJP in its fold. On the same logic, the CPI (M) and the BJP jointly supported VP Singh government in 1989. Jyoti Basu and Atal Behari Vajpayee addressed a joint rally in Kolkata Maidan. The CPI (M) also ran Kolkata corporation with the support of the BJP. The CPI (M) leaders repeatedly practised such opportunistic politics for the sake of votes.

SUCI(C) always fight election based on revolutionary line

You are aware that in such a situation, as the genuine Marxist party on the soil, the SUCI(C) singularly fought the election in many states based on the distinct revolutionary line enunciated by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. We knew very well that given the way elections are conducted today, we would not win a single seat. We would also not receive that many votes in the backdrop of sharp polarization and huge money-spilling. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had taught us that "*So long as revolution is not accomplished, whether people want elections or not, like it or not, they get dragged into it, involved in it. Revolution means that people have realized that there is no need for elections, when they are all organized and boycotting elections in an organized manner; not negatively but have positively reached the stage of seizure of power and are saying: 'No more election; capture power.' Only at that point does taking part in the election become infructuous, unnecessary. Or else the people do get time and again enmeshed in the election. And in order to stay with the masses, both revolutionaries as well as non-revolutionaries — all have to participate in the election. ...The genuine revolutionaries too have to do that...when the party of the proletariat participates in the election with the object of revolutionary purposiveness, being compelled by the necessity to remain with the people, it does so on the basis of mass revolutionary political line. It also tries utmost to win seats. But the essence of its objective is never to anyhow grab maximum seats. The revolutionary party's focal point is to educate the people as to how to fight the election on the basis of a mass revolutionary line and in doing so, if we can win maximum seats; all the better. If we cannot, not even a single seat, so be it. ...But the central, the focal point can never be to anyhow grab some seats. ... But*

*instead if you raise this bogey 'do anything and everything to defeat the enemy', then you, too, on the pretext of fighting the enemy and by donning revolutionary mask, would be trying to retain the very same method and tactics used by the bourgeoisie to fight election. Of course, you would do all these in the name of revolution. Is this the way to become a revolutionary? Does this advance the revolutionary task? No, in this way no one can become a revolutionary, nor does this advance the revolutionary task."*³

Spurred on by this teaching, several thousands of our Party workers and supporters have worked in the election. They have reached out to several lakhs of people round the country with this revolutionary thought of the Party. It is true that many have not cast vote in our favour because they thought that we would not win. But they have provided moral support to us. It is the common people who have contributed liberally to our election fund so that we could meet all the election expenditures including nomination fees. Our workers have collected funds in the streets, by knocking at door to door and the people wholeheartedly responded because they know that ours is a Party of the poor.

It is known to all that armed with the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our Party has never sold itself to the big industrialists and businessmen, never asked for money from them. In order to meet the day to day expenditures of the Party, to conduct movements or for organizing any programme, we seek donations from the common people. They also liberally donate out of love and affection for us. Rather many of them cut jokes with a tinge of affection saying that we are mad and that is why, we are unable to win election. Other parties give money and gifts, make many other promises and then seek vote in exchange for all these. It is a kind of *quid pro quo*. They receive so much of publicity in the media. On the other hand, there is a complete media blackout of your Party. You ask for donations as well as vote. In today's context, can anyone dream of winning election solely based on ideology, principles and scruples? Reminding them of the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our comrades tell them: "we may get or may not get votes. But our strength lies in your affection and ardent support. We shall not run after the media for publicity to secure votes. Likewise, as a revolutionary party, we are growing and would continue to grow." Though we did not win any seat in the last election, we have received many new workers and supporters. We have established contacts and connections with many honest left-minded people. These new recruits, supporters and sympathizers comprise all sections of toiling people like the workers-peasants-students-youths as well as middle class intelligentsia. We have received contacts in hitherto unexplored areas and warm affection from many. Repeatedly they have said that while all others have become rotten, ours is

the only Party they repose confidence in. They sincerely desire speediest growth of our Party. Our workers are highly inspired and revitalized at this overflowing support during the electioneering period. There is not even an iota of frustration among them. Because they know from the teachings of great Lenin-Stalin-Mao Zedong-Shibdas Ghosh that nowhere revolution was accomplished by winning election or based on the number of seats captured. Success of revolution was driven by the strength of people's power—people who were educated in revolutionary ideology, well organized and possessing high ethical-moral standard.

Cause behind increase in strength of the BJP

As a preparation for revolution, it is necessary to develop working class struggles and mass movements extensively. Parliamentary democracy has now turned into parliamentary fascist autocracy notwithstanding maintenance of all outward shows of it. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh sounded caution way back in 1948 that though the fascist axis of Germany-Italy-Japan was defeated in the Second World War, fascism has appeared as a general feature in various forms in both developed as well as developing capitalist countries. He also pointed out that fascism kills the very process of developing man worth the name. It is fascism which is fostering blindness, conservatism, irrationality, ultra-nationalism and traditionalism. The Congress had established the base of fascism in our country. After ascending to power, the BJP is further intensifying all these fascist measures. You need to understand how could the BJP emerge so strongly? It is true that it has been receiving all-out backing of the ruling capitalist class. The Congress too had enjoyed the same earlier. Apart from this, there have been three main reasons behind surge of the BJP. First of all, out of the fear of anti-capitalist proletarian revolution, the national Congress right from the days of freedom movement did not fulfil the task of democratization of the society. Instead, it compromised with religion, casteism, provincialism, regionalism, traditionalism, and such other decadent medieval thoughts. As a result, scientific process of thinking, democratic thoughts and true secularism could not develop on the soil. United CPI also did not build up any effective movement to counter such compromising and regressive thoughts. As a fallout of this, religious sentiment particularly Hindu religious sentiment as well as hatred centered on religion-caste-ethnic-nationality-language continued to exist in our society. During the freedom movement, there was a kind of unity based on the urge for freeing the country from the alien rule. But in post-independence period, the RSS, the Jan Sangh and later the BJP used that very Hindu sentiment and traditionalism to raise their ugly heads. Secondly, absence of a united powerful left-democratic movement contributed to their menacing rise. Not only the

Contd. on page 8

Comrade Provash Ghosh at the 5 August Memorial Meeting in Kolkata Vote-oriented politics of CPI (M) is the main obstacle before Left movement

Contd. from page 7

big left parties like the CPI, CPI (M) did not develop any socio-cultural movement based on scientific outlook and true secular democratic principles free from any religious influence against all such medieval obsolete feudal thoughts and ideas, undivided CPI had joined the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League in supporting the bizarre concept that the Hindus and the Muslims constitute two different nations. So the leaders of undivided CPI gave a seal of approval to the partition of the country based on the strange and most unscientific theory of religion-based nationalism. All these paved the way for the RSS-BJP to gain strength.

There is a third and important factor which you need to take into cognition as well. So long the mighty socialist camp led by great Stalin and Mao Zedong against the imperialist-capitalist world was in existence, it inspired the anti-imperialist liberation struggles in the colonial and semi-

colonial countries as well as the working class struggles and democratic mass movements in various countries to intensify. Anti-war militant peace movement also gained tremendous momentum. In such a world situation, despite imperialism-capitalism having attained a reactionary character, there was a dominance of democratic values, scientific rational thought process and progressive mindset throughout the globe. But after sad dismantling of socialism due to capitalist counter-revolution propelled by defeated bourgeoisie from within and aided and abetted by imperialist conspiracy from outside, there is a gushing wave of religious fundamentalism, racial hatred, reactionary medieval obscurantism, blind irrational thoughts bereft of scientific outlook sweeping across the world. This world situation is also helping the RSS-BJP to become powerful. In this connection, I would read out a warning of Romain Rolland

which he gave way back in 1931. He said: "a formidable coalition of imperialist powers is being formed in the world against the Union of Soviet Republics...If it is crushed, it would no longer be the proletariat of the world alone who would be enslaved, but all liberty, social and individual; ...The world will be thrown back, several stages behind"⁴ If you look around the world today, you would find such indeed is happening.

[To be continued in the next issue]

Source of Quotations:

1. State and Revolution
2. From an unpublished speech of 1969
3. SW Vol. IV pp. 540-42
4. I will not rest

OBSERVANCE OF 44TH MEMORIAL DAY OF COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

(17 States covered in the last issue; here we include 5 more)



Jharkhand : Main Speaker Com Saumen Basu*



Tamilnadu :
Main Speaker
Com K Sridhar**



Punjab :
Com
Aminderpal
Singh***



Andhra Pradesh : Main Speaker Com K Uma**



Puducherry :
Main Speaker
Com K Sridhar**

* Polit Bureau Member ** CC Member *** Punjab State Incharge

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : PROVASH GHOSH