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TELANGANA IMBROGLIO

Formation of separate or small states How far it addresses people's burning problems?

The demand for carving out a separate Telangana state from the existing state of Andhra Pradesh has again been brought to the fore. K Chandrasekhara Rao (KCR) the chief of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) started fast unto death since late November 2009, in demand of a separate Telangana state. Incidentally, his party TRS which he formed in 2001, was virtually driven to insignificance even in the Telangana region very recently in the last election. But since he started the fast, a large section of the media, specially the electronic one sponsored by the big industrialists, took it upon themselves to whip up a hype. Thus, when the overwhelming majority of people were not showing any keenness in favour of a separate Telangana state, the orchestrated media hype carried over a section of people creating, at least, some sensation among them. As Rao's condition became critical and the media raised their pitch, violent protests erupted at different places in the state by the pro-Telangana masses, including university students. The frenzy took its toll; several Telangana supporters committed suicide. The major bourgeois parliamentary parties, who at different times might have formed governments, were simply wrong-footed by the fast and the accompanying media hype. The BJP not only extended support to the demand of separate Telangana state, but also organized protests along with the TRS mainly involving the students; in this act of theirs, they even found matching action and approach in forces like some Naxalite parties. Congress, the party in power, both at the Centre

and the state, was pathetically in disarray. Within the party, demands were even there that 'should Telangana become a state', Andhra Pradesh will have to be divided into four, or five, even more states (e.g., Telangana, Greater Hyderabad, Rayalseema, Coastal Andhra, North Coastal Andhra (including Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam). Congress MPs and MLAs from their respective regions raised these separatist demands within the party and submitted their resignations.

Separatist demands for a Telangana state had already been there in Andhra Pradesh, raised or used by different parties on different occasions. But other than expressing some verbal oppositions, Congress, the party in power at the Centre or the state, never cared to face it politically. Let alone making people aware of the danger of such demands, Congress leaders and legislators themselves have joined the band of raising separatist demands. Even this time, instead of treading the right path, all on a sudden on 9 December 2009 the Union Home Minister Chidambaram, after consultation with the top Congress leaders, party president Sonia Gandhi, Prime Minister, senior Union ministers and AP Chief Minister Rosaiah, announced that the process of forming the state of Telangana would be initiated and an appropriate resolution would be moved in the state Assembly. There were immediate reactions of all sorts. While KCR withdrew fast and pro-Telangana masses rejoiced, scores of Congress and Opposition legislators from the regions of

Rayalaseema and Coastal Andhra (MLAs and MPs cutting across party lines) en masse submitted their resignation. Rosaiah ministry was pushed into a crisis. People in huge numbers came out in protest and demanded Samaikya Andhra Pradesh (United Andhra Pradesh). Many political leaders, students and ordinary people started hunger strikes in these regions. There was tremendous upsurge of the people demanding not to split the state. It was evident that people were not in favour of being carried away and were ready to come on to the streets expressing their desire to remain united. Thus in a united Andhra Pradesh, if KCR triggered the separatist move this time and the media whipped up the orchestration, it was the Congress governments at the Centre and the state that have stirred up the parochial separatist sentiments further. All this has brought the situation to such a condition, that people of the state have been divided into warring camps, pushed to war paths.

Congress played the separatist card laid on the table

In face of strong reaction to its 9 December announcement, the Union ministry of Congress made a U-turn and announced on 23 December, 2009, albeit without specifying any time frame, that it would hold wide-ranging consultations with all political parties and groups in the state and would take steps to involve all concerned in the process. But the damage has already been done. While the amended announcement pacified the movement in Coastal

and Rayalaseema regions, it added fresh fuel to the pro-Telangana forces of the Telangana region, triggering resignations from the MLAs and MPs from different parties of these regions in protest against the Centre's move to put statehood for Telangana on hold. Obviously that instigated people of that region to carry on their agitation for separate Telangana, in course of which there were even clashes between forces in favour and against a Telangana state. Apart from other aspects, the sequence of events including the reaction of the leaders and legislators of different parties including Congress, exposed the political bankruptcy of the parties, indicating that they had hardly any ideological influence either over their legislators, or over the masses they supposedly represent.

This attested to what we had often pointed out, that so-called electoral success of these bourgeois parties like Congress, BJP and such others and their power-greedy leaders does not result from politically conscious verdict of the people but principally hinges on the backing they receive from the ruling class or its appendages, money-media and mafia.

In addition to the turbulence in Andhra Pradesh, the issue, more so, the Union government announcement on Telangana on December 9, has sparked off demand for separate statehood from other states of the country. The Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha (GJMM) revived their call for Gorkhaland in West Bengal, in Maharashtra the BJP and the Congress demanded

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States on language basis, a genuine time-tested demand of people

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formation of separate Vidarbha state with Shiv Sena and MNS (led by Raj Thackeray) opposing it; in UP, Bundelkhand Mukti Morcha cried for Bundelkhand, Ajit Singh for Harit Pradesh, while Mayawati herself demanded UP to be divided into three states including a Poorvanchal state, so much so that even the bourgeois media, who hailed her on occasions and lent hands to her to rise to power, had to admit that it would only add to serve her petty party opportunism. There are still more fissiparous demands in the offing, including demands for a Kamtapur in the northern and a tribal state in the western part of West Bengal, a Koorg, a Sourashtra, a Mithilanchal, and a Tululand and others. One can never be sure where it will end.

While the country has thus been dragged into a turmoil, with people of even one and the same state being put at loggerheads, the governments, at the Centre as well as in states, were taking it as a boon to them. The unprecedented tremendous price hike has emerged as the most immediate burning problem in people's life. The vast masses of common people are simply devastated by the recent exorbitant rise in price of all essential commodities, particularly including the food materials. The situation demanded and there was a great possibility that united movement of people was launched and intensified countrywide to bring even the minimum relief to hapless poorer masses. The Telangana issue deals a deadly blow to this urgent need. The governments, the Union government in particular, which were acting with criminal apathy and were trying to pass on the responsibility to each other, the Centre to the states and vice versa, grabbed at this separatist issue as a respite, a temporary relief to divert people's attention. As stated, concerted propaganda was hyped by the bourgeois media, their analysts and experts. Separatist forces flexed muscles. Bourgeois politicians of different hues and slogans jumped into the arena to reap the maximum profit. Admittedly, on the question of forming separate or smaller states, there prevails considerable confusion in a section of people, even their knowledgeable sections. Orchestrated media hype like the

present one, also makes people tend to think that smaller states may solve their problems, which cannot be handled successfully in larger, highly populated states. Resting upon that, not just in Andhra, in different states too, separatist forces, clearly enemy of common people, have come up time and again to stoke the issue, now in the garb of national parties, or then some regional parties. It thus becomes imperative to see, why such parochial slogans are recurring in the country's political scenes, time and again. Earlier whenever and centring round whichever state the issue was brought to the fore, our party, SUCI(C) always presented our considered opinions as to how anti-people is the call for carving a separate, small state out of larger one, and how common exploited people should approach the problem. The latest of such views were on Andhra Pradesh presented in November 2005. Since the separatist forces have again stoked the issue there, in view of the confusions existing and the campaign being raised to aggravate them, we take up the issue once again. But before getting into the issue, a discussion on how linguistic provinces emerged in the country may prove relevant.

Linguistic states emerged in course of people's movement

As India was emerging as a nation during the British rule, the imperialist rulers, in pursuance of their divide and rule policy and with a view to carrying on their coercive rule smoothly, divided the country arbitrarily into provinces (or states). Even as far back as that time leaders of our freedom movement, as well as people at large, searched for a basis for demarcating provinces that would be, as far as possible, the best means for those provinces to develop in adequately cohesive way, as well as for preserving the unity and integrity of the emerging nation. In a multilingual, multiethnic, multireligion country like ours, language of the majority of people living in a geographical contiguity came out to be the available best possible basis. But it was also recognized that it is hardly ever possible to develop separate absolutely homogeneous linguistic provinces in any part of the country; always there would be people of

linguistic minorities living in harmony with the majority community in such states. Hence it was required that in any such linguistic state the political rights of linguistic minorities be constitutionally guaranteed, a fact that has ultimately been ensured in the Constitution of the country. Nevertheless there were massive popular movements in favour of such linguistic provinces in this or that part of the country even during the British rule. The Congress leadership, too, which was at the helm of the freedom movement had to take cognizance of this movement and mindset of people. But as and when the Congress leaders assumed governmental power after independence, they dithered on the issue. However, in face of strong people's opinion ultimately States Reorganization Commission was set up and linguistic provinces were formed, though the Commission could not live up to people's expectations and, to a large extent, had to go by the government's way. For instance, in place of granting a separate state for Telugu-speaking people, Madras state (or Presidency) inhabited by both Tamil- and Telugu-speaking communities was retained unchanged. Also Hyderabad dominions under the Nizam rule, in which Telugu-speaking communities formed a majority in many parts including the Telangana regions, were brought into a separate Hyderabad state. Strife between the two linguistic peoples, Tamil and Telugu, went on increasing and only when Potti Sreeramalu, a Gandhian, had died in December 1952 after a nearly two-month long hunger strike in Madras and a massive, militant movement for a separate Telugu-speaking state broke out, that the Congress government decided in 1953 to carve a separate province of Andhra out of Madras state, consisting of eleven districts of Rayalaseema and Coastal Andhra and with Kurnool as the capital. This added strength to the Telugu-speaking people of Hyderabad to revive their cherished urge for a greater Andhra (Visalandhra) state with Hyderabad and newly formed Andhra State merged into one. Finally greater Andhra Pradesh was ultimately established in November 1, 1956 with nine Telugu

speaking districts of Hyderabad and Telangana area (the rest of Nizam's kingdom was merged with Karnataka and Maharashtra, again on linguistic basis) and eleven districts of Rayalaseema and coastal Andhra of the then existing Andhra State. Thus the present state of Andhra Pradesh, basically a linguistic province, was formed only as an outcome of powerful united movement of people there.

In course of time, as inevitable result of capitalist exploitation, economic and social inequalities, regional imbalances, unjust discriminations went on increasing, instead of being eradicated, even within linguistic provinces. It was true for the whole of India, not excluding Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, in the main, was relatively backward compared to the districts of coastal region. What was required and a genuine Marxist leadership would have recognized that, was to build up massive and powerful united democratic movement of people cutting across language, religion, ethnicity and such others, against these maladies bred by capitalism. But in states like Andhra Pradesh or elsewhere, though there were parties like CPI, (later split into CPI and CPI (M)), they did not care to build up such movements. Instead power-hungry, ambitious, opportunist bourgeois leaders belonging to different bourgeois parties or their minor regional breakaways or counterparts, took the stage, cashed in on the increasing inequalities and discriminations and incited people with separatist slogans. The pseudo-Marxists did not and could not combat them. As a result, demands for separate and smaller states, primarily on linguistic or ethnic basis started coming up. For example, in Andhra Pradesh, separate Telangana was demanded in 1969-71, in Jai Telangana movement when 360 pro-Telangana supporters were killed in police firing. The movement, however, fizzled out after Marri Chenna Reddy merged his Telangana Praja Samithy Party with Congress and became the Chief Minister at the intervention of Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister. Immediately Chenna Reddy announced that separate Telangana was no longer an issue. The issue was, however, kept

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TELANGANA IMBROGLIO**Territorial reorganization of states does not touch capitalism, the evil at the root***Contd. from page 2*

alive and appeared a favourite to take resort to by almost all parliamentary parties, rightists, centrists or so-called leftists, who supported separate Telangana call in different elections, directly or indirectly, only to reap electoral dividend; it was no different even in the last 2009 polls when barring SUCI all parties supported that call, loud or silent. While CPI this time has directly supported separate Telangana call, the CPI(M) which today pretends to be so opposed to the call, it may be recalled, formed an electoral alliance with TRS and called it a combination of 'like-minded parties'.

Cry for separate, smaller states to be judged on its socio-economic background

On this issue of small and separate states, our party has, time and again, made it a point that correct decisions can never be reached without considering the issue in its socio-economic background. First, the very concept of a province (that is, state) entails that it cannot be extended down to the units like villages, blocks or even districts; there must be a limit. In that case, can one go to any extent to demand a separate or small state? Then again, once a province or state has been defined on a sound principle, does it leave any scope to change or reorganize it time and again in quick succession of a few years? Thus, can a state which has been set up on the strength of time-tested, widely acclaimed criteria of language and geographic contiguity and in response to people's genuine aspirations, be smashed or dissolved on this or that pretext? Does it not mean then, we revert to the pre-Independence days of the British imperialist rule in our country, where the foreign rulers divided the country arbitrarily only to their own benefit? Will it stand to reason?

Thus, what we repeatedly tried to emphasize, is that since independence India is existing as a capitalist state. The exploitative capitalist system of India, an inalienable part of the moribund world capitalism-imperialism, is creating a handful of fabulously

rich, even leading billionaires of the world on one hand and millions of abject poverty-stricken vast masses on the other. This shameless exploitation, as it increased with Indian capitalism consolidating itself, is robbing people of their purchasing power and hence is dragging the system itself into an unassailable market crisis. In their bid to avert the crisis, the capitalists are taking resort to closure, lock-out, retrenchment, thus shifting the burden of the crisis on to the people, but adding in the process to the already uncontrolled rise in unemployment, utter insecurity of jobs, wage freeze, minimization of work force with stoppage of recruitment and posts lying vacant in both private and public sectors and so on. All this coupled with unhindered price spiral is leading to further impoverishment of already fleeced poorer people. The vast masses of rural people are being plagued with abject poverty, crushing burden of indebtedness, joblessness for greater part of the year, exorbitant rise in the cost of seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, irrigation facilities and other requisites of farming over and above the general price rise. All this is forcing even the middle peasants to sell out their small uneconomic land holdings and join the ever-increasing number of landless peasants and agricultural labourers. Ravaged by poverty, debts and insecurity of life and livelihood, they are committing suicide in thousands, or uprooted from the villages, they are rushing to towns and cities in search of livelihood, only to add to the vast millions of unemployed there. Added to this, the present imperialist globalization, touted as the panacea but proved to be nothing but a hoax, is devastatingly taking toll in both industry and agriculture. While, in their pursuit for maximum profit, the monopolists are taking resort to capital-intensive industries in place of labour-intensive ones, thus further adding to the unemployment problem, in agriculture, inroad of multinational corporates, introduction of SEZ and such other projects that necessitate grabbing of farmland to make room for the corporates, their real estate business and industries, are driving the last nail into the coffin of the hapless

peasants, forcing them to part with their only lifetime means of livelihood, the land. But capitalist exploitation and oppression does not stop here. To continue its rule unchallenged, capitalism is suppressing any attempt at struggles against it. So, it is promulgating black acts, robbing people and workers of their hard-earned rights, enhancing the power of its mercenaries and arsenals, even manipulating democratic processes including parliamentary elections. By all overt and covert means, capitalism is promoting rampant corruption-criminalization to vitiate the entire arena of parliamentary politics. To people, particularly the youth with a bleak, even blank future staring in their face, capitalism is catering to unbridled flow of putrid culture through TV-films-hoardings-advertisements stinking of obscenity- sex-violence- self centredness-aimless desperation adding to the hopelessly degenerated ambience. Added to this, has come the role of the political parties, not only the major bourgeois parties like the Congress or the BJP, or their minor regional counterparts, but also even pseudo-Marxists like the CPI(M) that are making merry from the bourgeois parliamentary system of the country and are playing shameless subservient role to the ruling capitalist class, adopting policies to help them earn unlimited profits, all without effectively putting up any resistance against capitalism, the root of all evils.

So capitalism does not leave scope for even the minimum decent way of life for people to live. They stand completely shattered and devastated. There is hardly any democratic movement of worth across the country. And in such a situation, the separatist forces are raising their slogans and inciting people cunningly shielding the ruling capitalist system and its exploitation. Side by side, through all these years of independence people have found that elections and changes of governments thereupon, have failed to bring them any relief, any solution to their problems. What we as a genuine Marxist party always pointed out, people find it the hard way. We warned that there can never be any solution to

people's problems through elections in a capitalist set up, because a mere change in government through election does not leave any scratch whatsoever on the ruling capitalism and its exploitation. The solution can not be arrived at through formation of either new small states or separate states, whatever be their number. At most, new states will usher in some new administrations, some new police-bureaucracy and open up parliamentary fortunes for some of the ambitious political leaders riding on separatist-fissiparous frenzy. Can these smaller states thus be anything other than new means of exploitation and oppression, subservient to the ruling capitalism? What was, and is still, needed, even to wrest minimum demands from the governments, is sustained and massive democratic movements on burning problems of people's life invariably directed towards preparing for the overthrow of capitalism. And such movements can develop only on the united strength of people cutting across religion, language, caste, creed or ethnicity etc. built on the edifice of higher culture and ethics under a correct leadership.

While judging the question of formation of separate, small states carving them out of larger states, one must not lose sight of these facts. It must also be recognized that as, from unbearable deprivation and destitution, resentment against capitalism mounts among people, the capitalist rulers find out hundred and one divisive means to foment disunity among them, so that the united movement against capitalist exploitation and oppression does not develop, even crystallize. The spate of all kinds of fissiparous fratricidal traits of racism, communalism, separatism and such others, now and then leading to recurring spurts of the cry for separate small states, a veritable hindrance to people's united movements, need be judged on this socio-economic-political background prevailing in the capitalist society of India.

Do separate or small states, by any means, prove themselves as havens for people?

Moreover, a vital question to answer is how far separate small

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No cry for smaller states, build united movement against capitalism

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states help people? What is the stark reality in separate smaller states that are already there? With crisis-ridden capitalism, the root of all evils, still ruling, are, or rather, can small states be free from unemployment, retrenchment, closure, lay-off? Will price rise be checked there? Will not there be hoarding of essential commodities creating artificial crisis and thus adding to price rise? Will not there be rampant corruption? Will not the poverty-stricken peasants be forced to sell out their lands and join the hapless band of landless peasants and agricultural labourers? Will smaller states ensure that peasants will not have to commit suicide out of destitution, indebtedness? Will they get their seeds, fertilizers and all other requisites at low price and not be sucked to the blood by the corporate sharks of the land and abroad? Will they not be evicted from their land or not be bribed with a paltry compensation in lieu of their lifetime source of livelihood, to make room for a giant corporate to set up his real estate or industrial estate, whatever it be, on that land? Will there be free and fair election without shameless intervention of and rigging by the nexus of government, administration, money, media and mafia? And so on and so forth. The answers to all these questions are quite known to the countrymen. What is the experience of people of smaller states carved out of larger states in distant or recent past? For instance, how have people of Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh that were carved out of Greater Assam or the newly founded states of Uttaranchal, Chhattisgarh or Jharkhand, found their life changed and problems ameliorated in their small states? Are these states free from unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, insecurity of livelihood, be it in industries or in agriculture, free from abject cultural degeneration? Or rather, is not the capitalist exploitation in these states giving rise to deep and widespread resentment among people there? Is not such resentment proving to be fertile grounds for the ruling capitalists and their subservient separatist forces to play further and raise demands now for still smaller states, or then for so-called

regional autonomy only with a view to shielding the exploitative capitalist rule?

Rather, what happens with smaller states? Each new state with a new set of administration, bureaucracy, judiciary, a new Assembly and Secretariat, act as means for continuing the rule of capitalism there. In the present political scenario, it will breed corruption, equally, if not more devastatingly than its counterparts in larger states. It will create only a few jobs benefiting a handful of people. It will also mean a new set of industrialists-owners both of regional and national pedigree to utilise, read exploit, the resources of the states. Obviously these will create a creamy layer within each such state, as bootlickers of the ruling class, who will be placed at the helm of all 'developments', capable of making the best use of the new advantages that are presented to them. It will also mean a new coercive machinery with police, para-military and such other forces to protect this new set of privileged class and instruments of the coercive state. And from where would the entire burden of expenditure of this new top heavy administration be met with? Obviously from nowhere other than the public exchequer, that is the money of and for the common people. In a bid to confuse people, bourgeois apologists are trying to pose fast GDP growth rate of some of these newly formed poor small states, as remarkable turn-around for them, as evidence of efficacy of small states. They adopt this deceptive means only to cover up the real face of poverty prevailing in these states. GDP is calculated with both the few new corrupt rich and millions of 'bypassed' poor, clamped in the same brace. It is not that the same apologists do not know this fact; they themselves had to admit 'massive corruption' in those virgin lands, and 'bypassing' of millions of common people. Yet, to confuse people, separatists now harp on GDP, then on neglect and discrimination, disparity and differentiation, uneven development and backwardness as against highly developed areas, as justification for separate small states. If growth rate is a reality, these apologists shamelessly conceal that discrimination, worst form of

inequality, an abysmally skewed income distribution and other aberrations of a discriminatory economic system are also equally real. It is the same in larger states, in smaller separate states as well.

Unequal development, widening rich-poor gap inevitable outcome of capitalism

As discussed above, all these are inherent in capitalism, are inevitable outcome of capitalist exploitation. The bourgeoisie themselves cult these, live on these; their reactionary ideology itself gives birth to these, which assumes inequality to justify domination of one over another. These must be fought ideologically. Otherwise these will never be removed from the society. No amount or kind of structural changes can touch the fringe of these problems with the roots remaining in tact, with capitalism reigning supreme. And the only means to get relief from the maladies of neglect and discrimination lies in powerful united democratic movement, which musters strength from the iron-strong unity of oppressed people irrespective of religion, language, caste, ethnicity and so on. Only such a movement will bring exploited, neglected or discriminated people united face to face with the exploiting capitalists. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie takes resort to divisionary tactics, give calls for separate states with a view to destroying this united movement of people.

Another important point in this context is that separate or small states carved out of larger ones, are sure to weaken people's strength or potentiality to launch powerful movements against the reigning exploitative system. People of smaller states will be plagued with mutual suspicion and mistrust. Misgivings will raise their heads at the slightest possibility. It will only lead to disunity among them, which will be widened with time and petty attritions. At the same time such small states are hardly economically viable and are thus most likely to become economically-politically dependent, an appendage of the Centre. That will only help the capitalists to carry through their design of weakening people's united movement.

So, opposing the demand of small states we have always indicated that the root of the problem, lies in the capitalist system which hinders economic and social development. With that root intact, small, separate states will only bring worst ruination in the life of common people, without bringing any relief to them. The only path left to people is the course of building up a powerful, united movement of people embracing all sections of the toiling masses, irrespective of language, ethnicity or religion etc..

'Separate small state helps development': a falsehood to create confusion only

Cry for separate small states is one of the ploys which capitalists are constantly trying out to weaken oppressed people's unity. Wherever the separatist forces serving the ruling class fail to impress upon people with the slogan of linguistic basis for states, for instance in a largely unilingual state of Andhra Pradesh, the capitalists and their protagonists are now raising the bogey of development or lack of it in justification of the demand for separate small states. The media, too, sponsored by the big industrialists, are taking up the cue and raising the hype of backwardness, such as in the case of Telangana. These protagonists of development must answer why even if there were so many politicians like Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, PV Narasimha Rao, Dr M Chenna Reddy, J Vengala Rao hailing from Telangana and rising to prominence in the state or even national politics, Telangana continued to remain backward? What did these leaders or those like the present champion of separate Telangana, K Chandrasekhar Rao do for eradicating backwardness of Telangana, when they were in power? In fact, call for a separate state coming from these bourgeois politicians stands merely as a stepstone to power, while their real interest lies in fulfilling their self-interests and above all in serving the capitalists.

We have already discussed what has been the condition of new or old separate smaller states. The questions are: Small state or large, how is development related to

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Greetings from fraternal parties from abroad to the 2nd Party Congress

Communist Party of Venezuela

I sincerely regret that I shall not be able to attend the Second Party Congress of SUCI. Because of the election to the Presidium of the Latin American Parliament on November 15 where I am running for election as Vice-president for the Communist Party and because of the difficult political situation in Venezuela and Latin America and the advancing of the next General parliamentary election to early 2010, I cannot come. I send our solidarity for the success of your Congress.

Carolus Wimmer
Member, Polit Bureau
Communist Party of Venezuela

New Communist Party of The Netherlands

Dear Comrade Manik,
Dear members of the Central Committee of SUCI

The Central Committee of the New Communist Party of the Netherlands is sending the 2nd Congress of the Socialist Unity Centre of India warmest greetings, based on mutual respect.

We wish you very much wisdom to overcome the many problems to solve and also very much successes in your work to organize the working class for a decent, a Socialist India and the many daily results needed to improve the living conditions of the working class in your country.

Although the communist movement in the world needs better coordination, the NCPN thinks this will take a long time to establish and lot of patience and above all mutual respect to try to understand the many ideological, organizational and political differences.

We hope your 2nd Congress will be very fruitful,

Fraternally yours,
Wil van der Klift

International Secretary NCPN
New Communist Party of Britain

Central Committee
Dear Comrade Manik

The New Communist Party of Britain and its weekly, the New Worker, sends its warmest fraternal greetings to the comrades and supporters gathering for the Second Congress of the Socialist Unity Centre of India in New Delhi in November.

Your Party has followed the road charted by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh since 24th April 1948 in

defending the interests of working people and fighting for peace and socialism across India.

British and Indian workers shared a common oppressor and a common struggle during the shameful days of the British Indian Empire and like all communists we are united through proletarian internationalism — a unity that we share with the people's democracies and the struggling peoples on the front-line in the battle against world imperialism. The ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin are eternal. The experience of the Bolsheviks and that of millions of communists who have gone before us helps us chart the future with confidence.

Wherever there is oppression there is always resistance. We see it today in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine and amongst all the people fighting world imperialism. ... Now more than ever millions upon millions of working people are realising that capitalism cannot solve the problems of humanity. Only socialism and people's democracy can resolve the ecological and political crisis of our times.

The New Communist Party of Britain and its weekly, the New Worker, sends its warmest greetings to the comrades meeting to prepare SUCI's programme for a better tomorrow that will certainly come and like you we are certain that the 21st century will be the century of socialism.

With best wishes,
Yours fraternally,
Andy Brooks

General Secretary

Workers World Party, USA

On the occasion of the Socialist Unity Center of India - S.U.C.I.'s party congress..., Workers World Party in the United States would like to express our solidarity with the SUCI leadership and membership in our common effort to combat world imperialism and capitalism and to fight for a socialist future.

The ongoing worldwide capitalist crisis, which has shown its deepest and most significant collapse since the Great Depression of the 1930s, has exposed the failure of capitalism to resolve the problems of humanity....

Unfortunately bankruptcy alone is not enough to solve these contradictions in humanity's favor. It takes action by the oppressed classes—workers and farmers and

all those who earn their keep through selling their labor—on a world scale, and it can't be done without serious and disciplined political parties to offer leadership to these actions and direction to their struggles.

For this reason we salute the existence and hope for the continued growth in influence and numbers of the S.U.C.I. This organization has proven its willingness to confront imperialism on a world scale and to fight for the interests of the oppressed masses inside India from Nandigram to Kolkata to the Kashmir border against the local ruling class, which more and more has become an ally of U.S. imperialism.

We hope to continue our united work in confronting all imperialist offenses and to build for international solidarity between the working people of India and those of the United States, who these days more and more frequently have the same transnational corporation as their employer.

Only by forging this solidarity in struggle will victory be possible.

Long live anti-imperialist solidarity! Long live S.U.C.I.

Fight for a Socialist Future!

John Catalinotto, International
Department

Sara Flounders, Secretariat
Workers World Party

November 8, 2009

The Party of Labour of Iran (Toufan)

Dear Comrades of Socialist Unity Centre of India,

With great enthusiasm, we convey revolutionary greetings to you on the occasion of holding the 2nd Congress of your Party. The successful holding of the Congress of your Party is a great achievement for the struggle against imperialism, world reaction, and against the capitalist system of exploitation.

...World imperialism led by the US has committed hideous crimes against humanity... In the face of these crimes and in the present international situation, the solidarity between the communist, revolutionary, and democratic forces is a vital necessity. A coordinated struggle against imperialism will bring further blows to the presence of the warmongering forces in the Middle East and other regions.

...In Iran, the democratic movement against the murderous regime of the Islamic Republic is gaining momentum. The Iranian

labourers who have been living under a theocratic regime for 30 years are demanding their just rights for freedom and social justice. These demands of our people have the support of all progressive, revolutionary and communist forces of the world.

Dear Comrades, The Party of Labour of Iran (Toufan) wishes you further success in your struggle against imperialism, Zionism, and capitalist exploitation and for social justice, genuine democracy, and socialism.

Hail the 2nd Congress of SUCI
Long Live the Solidarity Between

Peoples!

Long Live Proletarian
Internationalism!

Long Live Socialism!

The Party of Labour of Iran
(Toufan)

November 2009

AUCP(B), Russia

Dear friends, our comrades in the joint fight!

The CC of AUCP (B) heartily welcomes the organizers and delegates of the Party Congress, as well as invited guests on the remarkable event in the life of the protest movement in India, with the beginning of the II Congress SUCI. The Socialist Unity Centre of India is a progressive political party uniting the workers in the struggle for their social rights. We consider as very important fact that the Socialist Unity Centre of India is working closely with the All-India Anti-imperialist Forum. This contributes to a closer alliance of the working people of India and unity in their struggle against imperialism.

In the crisis of world imperialism, the oppression on the part of employers is growing and living conditions of ordinary people are getting worse. There is need for joint struggle.

Our party supports all the protests in India organized by your Organization. We are closely following the developments in India over the Internet. ...

We wish the II Congress of the Party successful work towards further consolidation of forces opposed to imperialism for improving the lives of working people.

With communist greetings,
Andreeva
Secretary General of the Central
Committee, AUCP(B)

TELANGANA IMBROGLIO**Telangana people must preserve unity with entire Andhra people like the apple of one's eye***Contd. from page 4*

territorial size of the state? Or, what hampers development, rather development of common poorer people, whereas the rich develop in every aspect of life? If there is no development, who, other than the governments, is to be held responsible for it? Why are the governments not taking up measures for bringing about development of their people? Is it not because they prefer to serve the capitalists-monopolists and ensure their staying in power with the blessings of their master, the ruling class?

If development means a decent, prosperous living for everybody, it presupposes all-out industrialization. Only that can open up newer and newer jobs, newer channels of employment to provide decent means of livelihood to people. That, in turn, draws people from the rural hinterlands stuck up in agriculture as small land holders, share croppers or agricultural labourers. Mechanization of agriculture for enhanced productivity can only be possible in such a situation where the surplus work force from agriculture

is absorbed in industries continuously. Now what holds back materialization of this intricately interlinked process? The answer is capitalism, for capitalism facing intense market crisis cannot undertake all-out industrialization, hence cannot touch the veritable problem of unemployment, nor can undertake mechanization of agriculture as that would simply lead to a severe political crisis with uncontrollable rise in unemployment. It is thus clear as daylight that the more people are jobless, the more impoverished they become, the more slashed is their purchasing power only to add to the crisis of market for the capitalists. So this is a vicious cycle, in which capitalism is plunged into, with no respite for the people, though there is no dearth of fabulous maximum profit for monopolists.

For common toiling people there is only one way left. They will have to launch massive united movement in demand of even whatever development possible, may be piecemeal, in this set up. It is already apparent that in different states whatever developmental

activities has been undertaken, it is the people's united movements that always force the governments and capitalists to accept people's demands. And now, the separatist forces are raising the slogan of development only to destroy these movements. What else could be more dangerous to the cause of people?

With all these considerations, common people of India must firmly spurn the demands for separate small states. People of Andhra Pradesh once fought valiantly for a separate state for the Telugu-speaking people. Now, if some power-hungry, opportunist separatist forces try to sneak into their unity and disrupt it, should they succumb to their design? We would appeal to people of Telangana to realize that their just demand for equal and unhindered development is linked with the democratic movement of people of the entire Andhra Pradesh, for which they once fought. Now, will not any attempt at disrupting unity of people of the entire state be suicidal for all of them? We would

also like to draw attention of people elsewhere, be it in Gorkhaland, or in Vidarbha, or Bundelkhand or Poorvanchal or elsewhere: will they allow themselves to be swept away by a heinous design of the ruling capitalist class given vent through a hundred and one cunning means? Will they not ponder very deeply over what problems they face and what would be the best way to meet them? Is it not high time that they realize that if they allow themselves to fall into the trap the capitalists are laying for them, they may have to lose their unity with their brethren, oppressed people of other parts of the state from which they seek separation? Is it not much dearer than what they may ultimately get, if at all? In any case, in any state of India, common toiling people must realize it as early as possible, that it is the unity of people, fraternity of different linguistic, ethnic, religious communities that need to be preserved as the apple of one's eye and united, they should stand face to take with the deadly enemy, moribund, decadent, ruthlessly oppressive capitalism.

Tamilnadu State Convention

The Tamilnadu State Organising Committee (SOC) held the Tamilnadu State Convention on November 1 and 2, 2009 in Chennai. The Delegate Session of the Convention was held at MGM Hall, West Mambalam on 1st November and at the Jeevana Jyothi ICSA Hall, Egmore on 2nd November.

The Convention began with Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, Member, Central Committee and Convenor and State In-charge of the Tamilnadu SOC, and conductor of the Delegate Session, laying a floral tribute at the Martyrs Column and thereafter garlanding the portrait of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. The members of the SOC, representatives of the different District Party organizations, and state level mass front in-charges also paid floral tribute to Comrade Shibdas Ghosh.

Revolutionary tribute was paid to departed Central Committee

members, Comrades Prithish Chanda, Asutosh Banerjee and Tapas Dutta, to comrades in the state who had passed away after the First Party Congress, and to all the martyrs in the country and in other countries who had given their lives fighting against capitalist and imperialist attacks, by observing a minute's silence.

Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, in his inaugural speech explained why the party was holding the Second Congress of our Party, how the international and national situations and organisational tasks necessitated it

The *'Draft Thesis on International Situation'* was placed before the house by Comrade R Jeyapaul, member, SOC, while the *'Draft Thesis on National Situation'* was placed by Comrade A

Rengasamy.

After lively discussions, in which many comrades actively participated, both the Theses were passed by the delegates. The delegates unanimously passed these draft documents with suggested amendments.

On behalf of Comrade Chakraborty, Comrade A



A. Rengasamy
Secretary, Tamilnadu

Anavarathan, member of the Tamilnadu State Organizing Committee placed the political-organizational report before the house. After examining the report and proposing some amendments to it, the house accepted the report.

Comrade Krishna Chakraborty announced on behalf of the Central Committee the new 4-member State Organizing Committee led by Comrade A Rengasamy as the State Secretary.

He also named the 4 delegates and 4 observer delegates to the Second Party Congress.

Totally, 88 delegates from 7 districts participated in the State Convention.

In his concluding address, Comrade Krishna Chakraborty urged upon the comrades the need for them to intensify the struggles in their personal lives, to take up the tasks of revitalization and consolidation of the Party with all fervour, to go out to the people, take up the task of building up movements, and thus strengthening the Party. What was urgently needed now in India was for our Party to gain that organisational strength and the confidence of the masses to meet the challenge of carrying through anti-capitalist, socialist revolution, objective conditions for which had long since matured, and which had fallen on the shoulders of our Party to accomplish.

The Convention ended with rendering of the *Internationale* and the enthusiastic slogans raised by the delegates.

Red Salute Comrade Siddheswar Sharma

Comrade Siddheswar Sharma, veteran member of Assam State Committee, SUCI and President of Assam State Committee of AIUTUC breathed his last on 21 November, 2009, at 6-30 in the evening. He was suffering from cancer. He was 80.

Coming of a very poor family, Comrade Sharma was compelled to eke out a living at a very early age. Even deprived thus of formal education, he set up a glaring example by the way he engaged himself in the quest for knowledge in course of his search for the path to emancipation of exploited people of his country. It was during this endeavour, that he got in touch in 1966 with the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the founder General Secretary of SUCI and one of the eminent Marxist thinkers of this age. It was his search for truth that made him realize the genuine communist character of the SUCI and invincibility of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought. Once this realization dawned upon him, he devoted himself with all sincerity to the revolutionary struggle to build up the Party and trade union movements in the state of Assam. Comrade Siddheswar Sharma who braving all odds played a key role in forming the Assam Tribune Employees' Union that played a pioneering role in advancing the cause of working class movement in Assam. He also played a leading role in the formation of several workers unions affiliated to AIUTUC in the Industrial Estate of Guwahati. It was his tenacious struggle for upholding the cause of the working class that led him to be elected uncontested for 11 years as Secretary of the Assam Tribune Employees Union. His simple nature was the great attraction of his character. Because of this he could very easily endear himself to all sections of the workers and employees of the Assam Tribune. There were enormous difficulties and hurdles in pursuing any revolutionary activities in the then atmosphere of Assam. From 1979 onwards, centring round the deceptive slogan of driving out "foreign nationals", a highly reactionary movement developed in Assam. The whole of Assam was plunged into the disastrous parochial frenzy. As a result, the situation in the state turned most virulent and adverse for building up desired people's democratic movement. Despite pressing need being felt to develop revolutionary working class movement there, it proved to be extremely difficult in that parochially surcharged situation. Even in such a difficult situation Comrade Sharma carried Party's ideology among the workers and tried to organize them on correct base political line. His firm commitment to revolution was eloquently testified during this trying situation. Almost no people of the state were left out of the vile influence of this venomous parochial movement that was led by the extreme right reactionary forces aided and abetted by the lackeys of the capitalist class and under the slogan of driving out of "foreign nationals", was essentially directed towards destruction of the left

movement wholly. People got benumbed failing to judge the class character of the leadership of the movement. The way the media was presenting the movement, the mind of the Assamese-speaking people got badly inclined towards it, however temporarily. Staying away from or opposing the movement by any Assamese in that situation was deemed to be an act of 'stabbing on the mother's heart'. Guided by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought and based on unstinted class consciousness, Comrade Sharma remained unwavering, steadfastly held his belief and defied all odds and set up brilliant instance of leading masses along the correct revolutionary path. Till his last days, even struck with fatal disease, he constantly kept himself abreast of the latest party activities, particularly the preparation for the Assam State Conference and Second Party Congress. He was one of the representatives of AIUTUC who visited erstwhile Soviet Russia to take part in seminars on fraternity between Indian and Soviet working people.



The Party was overwhelmed with grief at the demise of Comrade Sharma. Led by Assam State Committee members Comrades Kantimoy Deb and Chandralekha Das, Party comrades reached Comrade Sharma's house at Nalbari and placed floral tributes on his body and delivered to his family members the condolence message from Comrade Kalyan Chowdhury, Assam State Secretary. In respectful memory of Comrade Sharma, the Red Flag was kept half-mast at all the offices of the party for three days and the comrades wore black badge.

In his memorial meeting held on 5 December last at Bishnu Nirmala Bhawan, Guwahati and presided over by Comrade Minhar Ali Mandal, Member, Assam State Committee, Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, Member, Polit Bureau of the Party, while highlighting the above revolutionary qualities and high cultural standard of his character, pointed out his indifferent attitude towards the worldly aspiration. Having been born in an indigent family he had to undergo extreme sufferings. But, for that he bore no grievance or anguishes in mind. He was always in cheerful mood. Although all the leaders and cadres of the Party were ready to help him in his terminally dreaded disease like cancer, Comrade Sharma never allowed the Party to be perturbed or to bear the financial burden for him. Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya urged all the leaders and cadres present at the meeting to cultivate all these qualities of Comrade Siddheswar Sharma for enriching their character.

Red Salute Comrade Siddheswar Sharma !

Massive Protest demonstration before West Bengal Assembly on 16 December against pernicious 'Rural Health Practitioners' Bill by AIDYO, AIDSO, AIMSS members brutally lathi-charged by police and RAF



Police's obscene torture on women protester in which several women protestors were severely injured. Police arrested altogether 45, including 19 women.

HISTORIC CONVENTION IN BANGALORE**Thousands of 'ASHA' workers raise voice for regularization of services**

"We should be absorbed in government services as 'D' group employees!", "We shall be treated with dignity we deserve!", "Ensure minimum wages to us!" were the slogans that rent the air in Bangalore on December 22, 2009. These slogans were raised by thousands of women who came from 20 districts of the state— from far-flung Belgaum Tumkur to the neighbouring Bidar Chikballapur—and marched in an endless stream in the streets holding placards, festoons and banners before participating in a state-level convention organized by the Karnataka State Committee of All India UTUC to highlight the plight of over 22,000 ASHA workers and chalk out programme of sustained movement to uphold their cause. The massive procession started from Chikballapur to Banappa Park, the venue of the convention. People thronged on either side to view this large gathering. In preparation for this historic convention, State unit of All India UTUC organized many district level meetings at Yadgir, Gulbarga, Haveri, Bijapur, Bellary, Raichur, Chikballapur, Chamarajnagar and other places.

ASHA is the creditworthy name by which they are called – which means Accredited Social Health Activist. It is their task to act as bridges between the public health system viz., Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres and taluka and district hospitals and the patients. They tend to these patients with lot of concern and affection. Not only do they accompany the needy to the hospitals but whenever required themselves transport medicines from dispensaries to the sick. What is more, many a time these women themselves donate blood to the patients whom they carry to the hospitals and thus save their lives.

These ASHAs are appointed under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) programme. One ASHA is appointed for every 1000 population. But it is not a regular employment and hence neither there is monthly salary nor any other benefit enjoyed by regular employees. They are paid on case to case basis – a lump sum amount

depending on the ailment or service rendered. NRHM manual offers amounts ranging anywhere from Rs.50 to Rs.450 for the service, the latter amount being offered to an ASHA who not only accompanies a pregnant woman to the hospital but also stays with her for at least 48 hours after the delivery. If after taking care for months together, for



A section of the huge gathering at ASHA workers' Convention

some unavoidable reason she cannot accompany the patient to the hospital at the time of delivery she will be denied payment of the entire amount! Many a times their payment is held up for months together. Naturally they are also at the receiving end of curses at home since they don't even get back the amount they have spent already. They were feeling utterly helpless – they had sought a dignified way of life. They had tended the patients with lots of affection and concern. Yet they were made to feel miserable now. They had no where to go. Finally they found a ray of hope in the Karnataka Rajya Samyuktha ASHA Workers' Union affiliated to the All India UTUC came forward to articulate their voice of protest and resolve to realize their just demands through movement.

Comrade Somashekar Yadgir, Executive Committee Member of Karnataka Unit of All India UTUC presided over the convention. Comrade K Radhakrishna president of the State unit was the inaugurator. Comrade H G Jayalakshmi, All India General Secretary of All India Mahila Samskruthik Sangathan (AIMSS) addressed the convention as a guest speaker.

Inaugurating the convention,

Comrade K. Radhakrishna pointed out that NRHM is the brain child of national and foreign capitalists who are out to privatize healthcare system. Hence NRHM is finally aiming at dismantling of government health services and opening the doors for 5 star hospitals where only the rich can gain access. Giant MNC insurance companies also will enter

end, the ASHA workers' Union should be strengthened at gross root levels. In her speech, Comrade Jayalakshmi gave a clarion call to build up powerful women's movement to protect the right of working women for dignified livelihood. Also speaking on the occasion were Comrades Prem Chand, All India Joint Secretary of Joint Platform of Action (JPA) and K. Somashekar.

When the Convention was in progress, the all through neglected and ignored ASHA workers were in for a pleasant surprise. Their voice was heard in the corridors of power – Vidhana Soudha. Shri Sriramulu, the State Health Minister suddenly arrived at the convention and straight away climbed to the dais and listened to all the demands one by one. After listening to the demands, he assured the convention that all these including granting of Group 'D' status, release of pending dues etc. would be sympathetically considered. That the voice of their united struggle had to be heard by the powers be itself has generated great enthusiasm among the workers. But at the same time they resolved to be alert and vigilant so as to get the demands fulfilled. The Convention ended with great enthusiasm. All workers returned to their districts bubbling with confidence and optimism.

Massive protest movement in Kerala against Price Rise

Comrade C. K. Lukose, Member, Central Committee and State Secretary, Kerala, is being arrested by the police during the movement

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