

# Proletarian Era

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The only way of wresting concession from the bourgeoisie is not by “bargaining” with it, not by “adapting” ourselves to its interests or prejudices, but by preparing the revolutionary forces of masses against it.

– Lenin (CW, Vol-28, p-141)

The 81st death anniversary of great Lenin was observed befittingly throughout the country on 21 January last. At the central party office in Calcutta Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, member, Central Committee, garlanded the portrait of Lenin on this day. Thereafter Comrades Bhattacharyya and Manik Mukherjee, member, West Bengal State Secretariat, placed wreaths at Lenin statue at Esplanade in Calcutta.

GODHRA

## SUCI on Banerjee Committee Report

Reacting to the interim report of the Banerjee Committee on Godhra incident which ruled out the possibility of miscreants setting fire to the coach No. S-6 of Sabarmati Express from outside on February 27, 2002 as was alleged by the Narendra Modi government and the RSS-BJP, and instead held that it was an accidental fire originating inside which set the compartment ablaze, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in a statement issued on 18 January, 2005 said that this lends evidence to the opinion being expressed from the beginning in various quarters including our party and the media about the fire having been from inside and not outside, contrary to the contention of Modi and the RSS-BJP, in absence of any prima facie circumstantial evidence.

This also glaringly exposes the heinous crime of the RSS-BJP in using the Godhra incident as a plea to let loose one of the worst anti-Muslim pogroms, hush up evidences and communalize the atmosphere.

Comrade Mukherjee further said that since doubts and apprehensions are also being expressed about the impartiality, terms of reference etc. of the Nanavati Commission appointed by the Modi government to look into the Godhra episode, there should be immediate constitution of a neutral high-powered judicial enquiry to go through the entire gamut of the incident, find out the cause behind and give exemplary punishment to the culprits.

apathy. An intensive drive was launched, wherever we are organizationally active, to collect money, medicines and relief materials for the tsunami-affected people; fact-finding teams were sent to the worst-affected areas to make on-the-spot assessment of the situation. The government response has been heartless and callous. The government relief effort is totally inadequate to meet the requirement and mismanaged; in many places, relief materials lie heaped up without being distributed; many of the poor affected people, going without food and shelterless, having lost their

means of livelihood and everything, have found no place in the government relief camps; the local big-wigs in many areas who have suffered no loss in the disaster, are usurping the relief materials. The bourgeois parliamentary parties, instead of rushing to provide adequate relief to the affected people, are making use of this hour of natural calamity in a scramble for expanding their respective spheres of influence with an eye to catching votes in the coming days. In the midst of this, the SUCI has engaged itself in a comprehensive effort in almost all states of

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TSUNAMI

## SUCI plunges into relief activities

The Tsunami onslaught caused by a severe sub-sea earthquake off Sumatra coast in Indonesia in the early hours of 26 December last resulted in unprecedented devastation along the coastlines of the Indian Ocean, including the Indian coastlines. In India, the Andaman off Nicobar group of islands, the Tamil Nadu and Kerala coastlines were the worst hit. In our last issue, we pointed out that much of the loss of lives could have been averted if early warning system had been operative in the region. But that was not there because two tsunami detecting meters, recommended by the scientists to be placed in the Indian Ocean including one near Indonesia, each costing only about Rs.10 crore,

could not be installed under the US tsunami early warning system scheme because of lack of funding and because the Indian Government, despite the caution sounded by the UN Inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission in June, 2004, that ‘Indian Ocean has a significant threat from both local and distant tsunamis’ on account of, particularly, the Indonesian to the Andaman belt being highly earthquake-prone, did not invest in an international tsunami-warning system!

So, the gigantic tsunami onslaught caught the Indian people in the affected areas unawares like a bolt from the blue, allowing them no time to run to high grounds for saving their lives. Thus the tsunami took a heavy

toll of lives — those actually physically verified and counted as dead and those “missing”. The tsunami disaster in its trail left a multitude of dead, missing and injured, people affected by diseases and psychological trauma, homeless people who have lost their all, and devastation of a vast magnitude. The survivors face continued malnutrition, threat of spread of infection and outbreak of epidemic diseases through contamination of drinking water and putrefying bodies left by receding water.

Our party, the SUCI, true to its principle of always staying by the side of the people, at once plunged into relief work with all its strength, braving all odds and governmental

## Tsunami relief operations

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India to collect money, medicines and relief materials. With the help of voluntary organizations like the Medical Service Centre, the Breakthrough Science Society and voluntary workers from different states, the SUCI has been distributing relief materials, organizing medical camps and helping to rehabilitate the many thousands who have lost their near and dear ones, homes and all belongings.

### TAMIL NADU & PONDICERRY

Base camp hospitals are being run in Pudukkuppam and Chinnur in Cuddalore district, in Akkarapettai in Nagapathinum district. 30 mobile camps are in

people themselves, students, youth, professional persons, local clubs and social organizations. The SUCI medical teams comprise about 35 doctors and surgeons, 60 health workers and 100 social volunteers from West Bengal, Kerala, Karnataka, Gujarat and Delhi working round the clock. More than 15,000 patients have been treated for orthopaedic and soft tissue injuries, blunt trauma, cuts, psychological trauma, insomnia, anxiety, depression, hysteria, respiratory tract infections, gastrointestinal diseases, etc. Medicines and baby food worth Rs.45 lacs have been distributed.

But voluntary efforts can only supplement government effort and not be a substitute for it. A very



At a SUCI relief camp in Andaman

operation in above districts of Tamil Nadu and in Pondicherry.

### KERALA

Main helpline camps were set up in Karumagappally town and in Pullukulangara from where the relief activities are coordinated. Relief camps were started at Valiazhikkal and Perumpally. Ambulance service was operated for a week in Aleppy district. Our volunteers and medical teams are regularly visiting around 30 relief camps sheltering homeless people.

### ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS

A medical team and volunteers started relief work at Choul Dari, Vathu Basti, School Line, Loknath Pahar, Badmas Pahar, Lal Pahar, Hasmatabad and Hut Bay. 23 relief camps were visited by the team.

The SUCI relief activities are conducted everywhere with the participation and cooperation of the

large number of people in the tsunami-affected areas need food, clothing, shelter and medical attention. Medical facilities available are negligible compared to the requirement. Pregnant women are not getting proper ante-natal care. Cases of malnutrition and anaemia abound, affecting the women and the children more. Sanitation facilities are poor. Common toilets are not yet installed. Risk of break-out of epidemics is high. Many are affected with psychological trauma. A huge, co-ordinated programme on war footing is needed for quick physical and mental rehabilitation of the tsunami-affected people, and the main thrust in this sphere must come from the government. There is the urgent necessity to force the hands of the Central and state governments through the pressure of public opinion so that they take up this task in right earnest. The matter brooks no delay.

## Resolution on Bandh in West Bengal Assembly

### CPI(M)'s hypocrisy exposed

Military, police and bureaucracy, judiciary and legislature are the four pillars of a bourgeois state, India being no exception. So, whatever different role they might play in their respective areas, they readily come forward to the rescue of this bourgeois state and its ruling class, the capitalists-monopolists at times of its crisis. This is exactly what is being experienced in India insofar as the role played by the judiciary at the present moment is concerned. The Indian ruling capitalist class while implementing the imperialist-designed globalization-liberalization-privatization policy has brought down severe attack on the lives of the common people particularly the toiling millions. In result, the capitalist class and its government have been more and more facing discontent and resentment of the people. This has led them to take resort to means to suppress such discontent and resentment. First, they have been clamping down ruthless repression on people with the help of the police and administration. Second, they are snatching away the democratic rights by enacting draconian Acts using the legislatures on the one hand, and on the other, by getting the judiciary involved to endorse it.

In fact, such attacks by the judiciary on the democratic rights of people are conspicuous in its occurrence particularly in a series of recent cases in this country. First, the Kerala High Court in 1997 declared the 'bandh' illegal. The Supreme Court instantly endorsed it. Secondly, the Madras High Court banned the Tamil Nadu

Government employees' strike in 2002, which the apex court endorsed by announcing the strike by the government staff illegal. Third was the ban on procession and demonstration by the Calcutta High Court in 2003; and the latest is the ruling against the 'bandh' called by SUCI on the 17th November last in West Bengal, declaring it as unlawful by the same Calcutta High Court. To foil this 'bandh' the Calcutta High Court even instructed the West Bengal government to deduct salary of the absenting employees on that day. Still the 'bandh' was overwhelmingly successful, people defying such ruling of the High Court and repressions by the CPI(M)-led Front government of the state. In reaction to banning of this 'bandh' and thereafter, there developed a strong condemnation and resentment against the judiciary, for its uncalled for 'legal' intervention in the democratic movement of the people. This worried the CPI(M) leadership. They did not move an inch against this role of the judiciary towards banning 'bandh'; rather they implemented the instruction of the court in toto by sending salary-deduction circulars to the government departments instantly.

At the same time sensing the strong resentment in people against the judiciary's proactive role, the CPI(M) resorted to tricks to befool people. The state Assembly being in session, they moved a resolution there on 21st December last. While the issue was 'bandh' and the judiciary's verdict against it, on

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## Sikkim State Organising Committee of AIDS delegation meets Governor

On the occasion of the All India Right to Education Day called by the All India Committee of AIDS, the newly formed Sikkim State Organising Committee, AIDS, submitted a memorandum to the Governor of Sikkim on January 24, 2005. A 4-member delegation team comprising Comrade Ramesh Sharma, Secretary, Comrade Dipak Sharma, member of the State Secretariat, Comrade Sontosh Chhetry, treasurer and Comrade Krishna Duary, member, Sikkim State Organizing Committee met the Governor V. Rama Rao at his

residence in Rangphu and submitted a memorandum opposing fee hike, privatization and commercialization of education, demanding at the same time, secular, scientific and democratic education, establishment of a government aided university in Sikkim, retaining the system of free distribution of text books upto class XII, which the government has recently withdrawn, etc. Until and unless the above demands are fulfilled, the state committee pledged to develop protracted students' movement throughout the state.

## PRE-BUDGET MEET

## UTUC-LS meets Union Finance Minister

In the pre-budget consultation meeting of the central trade unions with the union finance minister that took place on January 12, 2005, Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, Vice-President, UTUC-Lenin Sarani and member, Central Committee, SUCI handed over a written memorandum where he, inter alia, showed that the policies of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation which have been implemented quite consistently since 1991, the result is before us all during this period, particularly during the last few years. Several thousands of farmers of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and even of Kerala and Punjab have committed suicide while lakhs of industrial workers have lost their jobs and several lakhs of employees from Banks and other public sector undertakings have been subjected to VRS. Being unable to compete with the giant multinationals of the advanced capitalist countries, thousands of small-scale industries

of our country had to be closed down throwing lakhs of workers out of job. The concept of job with a definite scale of pay, DA, annual increment and retirement benefits like pension, gratuity, provident fund etc. has been the casualty of these policies. Contract labour has become the norm of the day. Even the governments — both Central and States — are reducing the number of their employees drastically and most of them have put moratorium on further recruitment and if they make fresh recruitment at all, they make it on contract basis on consolidated salary with no other benefits whatsoever. And in most of the cases minimum wage is a mere talk, nowhere it is paid.

Continuous fall in the purchasing power of vast masses of the working people is further squeezing the market of the country. This stark reality cannot be veiled by colourfully projecting the growth of a few corporate houses. Raising the FDI cap — in the telecom, life

insurance, civil aviation and the non-Nationalised Banks — will only open the gate for the giant foreign capital to enter the market of the country throwing the people on the mercy of these corporations. All this is being done to benefit a handful of domestic monopoly houses who aspire to get some share in the world market somewhere in return. Tax concessions given to corporate houses have resulted in increased revenue deficit and in turn increased fiscal deficit. The burden of this is being put on the shoulder of the common people through increased inflation, repeated price-rise of petroleum products and other essential commodities. Very regretfully the Congress-led government, like the previous BJP-led NDA government is again planning to reduce expenditure in essential services like health, education, public transport etc. in the name of curtailing so-called wasteful subsidies. It is reported that the government is planning to

disinvest its stakes in the most profitable PSUs like Maruti and BHEL merely to reduce the fiscal deficit. Even a minimal social security programme like the planned Employment Guarantee Act which had been announced with great fanfare under the Common Minimum Programme of your government has now been diluted to such an extent as to render it meaningless.

Hence the policy of globalisation which was formulated in the form of GATT in 1948 itself by the imperialists to give lease of life to the dying world capitalist system and is, therefore, out and out anti-people in nature and hence can never be given a human face.

In order to come out of the present crisis and making the budget truly pro-people and not corporate-friendly, the budget should be employment and social security-oriented, for which a 19-point demand was appended to the memorandum.

## SUCI launches anti-bus fare hike movement in Guwahati

Congress(I)-led Assam State Government, once more, decided to increase bus fares steeply in all categories of public buses conceding to the unjust demand of private bus owners. Accordingly, increased fare hikes of 25%, 40% and 50% for general buses, long-distance buses and night service buses respectively are to be effected with immediate effect. Without caring a whit for the unbearable condition of the people who are on the verge of ruination being afflicted with ever rising unemployment, soaring prices of essential goods, non-availability of remunerative prices of agricultural produces, yearly flood havocs, etc. the state government took to the easy course of increasing transport fare abnormally enabling the private bus

owners to mint fabulous profit. As a result, for general buses, fare will go up by 50P/ km while for long distance route buses it will go up by as much as 68% per km surpassing all previous record of hikes in transport fares.

Our party, the SUCI single-handedly plunged into protest movement against this record fare hikes to lift it to resistance movement through sustained campaign and on January 12, laid road blockade before A.S.T. office at Paltan Bazar, the all-time busy center at Guwahati. Public at large, on either side of thoroughfares, including hawkers on the pavements, who are fuming with anger, burst forth to join spontaneously to give the blockade a bigger dimension. Shortly, the traffic

surrounding the area came to a halt. By 1 p.m. baton wielding posse of police intervened to forcibly break open the blockade. After half-an-hour's scuffle with police personnel, the police could break open forcibly the blockade taking in its trail, into custody, Comrades Bimal Nandy, Chandralekha Das and other state leaders who were spearheading the battle.

While congratulating for conducting such a heroic street battle against the transport fare hikes, Comrade Kalyan Chowdhury, Assam State Secretary, SUCI called upon the people to build up powerful movement to compel the government to retrace its retrograde fare-hikes.

## Goalpara

The crying demand for repairs and construction of roads fit for plying public transport at West Goalpara and Jaleswar Assembly segments of Goalpara district is long over due. In large areas commanded by these two assembly segments, quite a number of roads and bridges, big or small, are closed to public transport due to administrative callousness for timely repairs and maintenance. This apart, breaching of embankments by floods year after year, crops worth thousands of

bighas of land get destroyed, hearth and home demolished thus rendering thousands of people utterly ruined. Repeated public demands led by Goalpara District Committee of the SUCI for addressing the peoples' genuine demands affecting their life and living, fell on deaf years of the government. Left with no other alternative than to mobilize people against the criminal apathy of the administration, Goalpara district SUCI led a massive protest demonstration on January 10 last before the district headquarters. Addressing the protest gathering, district leaders demanded of (i) repairs and strengthening of quite a number of roads and bridges so that public transport can move safely over it; (ii) withdrawal of increased bus fares immediately; (iii) effective lasting measures to protect river banks from breaches/erosion; and (iv) inclusion of all genuine Indian citizens marked 'D' (meaning doubtful) into Electoral Rolls, etc. The memorandum of charter of demands, later on, was submitted in a mass deputation to the District Magistrate, Goalpara, led by Comrades Chandralekha Das, Nazmul Haq, former MLA, and Ina Hussain, Abdul Hamid, Osman Gani Molla, the district leaders, SUCI.



Road blockade in Guwahati on 12.1.05

# Massive Rally in Calcutta on January 28

How massive, how long, who will gauge it? It adds and adds as it advances; waves of people with fists clasped in resolve ambling down the streets of Calcutta, waves synchronised and organized, harmonized in rhythm with revolutionary dare. Slogans of protests, fulminating voice of cavalier rage and outrage against the ruinous anti-people policies of the central and state governments, subserving the exploiting ruling bourgeoisie, rending the sky, reverberating to rouse the millions, wretched and distressed, shattered and deprived, to pierce through the haze that enshrouds to obfuscate the path of emancipation from the slavery of capitalism. Footsteps in history often go unheard but not on this occasion, the historic day of January 28, 2005, when over a lakh of marchers, the advanced vanguards of the Indian masses, persecuted by the ruling capitalist class and its political agents as well as governments and treacherously deceived by the social democrats, led this procession to convey to the power that be that it is no more a depiction of the jeremiad but a conscious, politically conscious expression of the people's wrath, a display of firm determination to wrest their legitimate demands.

## DAYS OF PREPARATION

Preparations for this mammoth rally over a 19-point charter of demand as a part of the ongoing movement against the pernicious policies of the central and state governments, had begun long back. The rally, originally scheduled on September 29, 2004 and then rescheduled on October 6, could not take place because of continuing inclement weather accompanied by torrential rain. To create awareness among the people backbroken by the ruthless onslaught of capitalism through its servitor governments and enlist their support in favour of the 19 demands, the SUCI volunteers undertook a target to secure 2 crore signatures. They knocked at every household, organized camps at various important localities and took out propaganda squads throughout the state to collect the signatures simultaneously conveying the message of the movement, the imperativeness to rise in protest against wrong and injustice to keep the essence of humanity aglow in the heart. The common people who are being increasingly drawn towards the SUCI, shedding off all hesitations and despair, to usher in a new era of valorous mass movement on the edifice of higher culture, ethics, morality and character, came forward enthusiastically to register their support, to reaffirm their solidarity, to contribute generously for strengthening the fighting fund. In the meanwhile, the Congress led CPI(M)-backed central government declared a steep hike in the prices of petrol-diesel and LPG cylinders. The people burst forth in anger, looked up to the SUCI for resistance. The historic Bangla Bandh on November 17, braving all

odds including court order banning the bandh call, proved once again what is people's power and in what esteem they hold the politics of the SUCI when the filthy vote-politics rots the polity. But the governments, both central and state, refused to honour the verdict of the people.

## COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH THOUGHTS ILLUMINE PATH

So graffitis adorned the walls of the state in announcement of this mammoth rally at the call of the SUCI, the party of the proletariat, founded, reared and steered by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era. Great ideals, epoch-making thoughts, path-breaking ideas elicit response from the people and people's acceptance follows the trail. It is the illumining thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the revolutionary politics of the SUCI, that is stirring the toiling millions, inspiring them to take up cudgels against the oppressive capitalist rule, imbueing them with the indomitable spirit and courage to protest and resist, making them conscious of the imperativeness to build up united, organized democratic movement on the burning problems of life conducive to anti-capitalist proletarian revolution. The overwhelming support the party is receiving from the common people, the impressive participation of the toiling masses in the movements led by the party, bear eloquent testimony to this fact. It is in this perspective that this gigantic rally of January 28, in Calcutta carves out a distinct space in the annals of the history of democratic mass movement of the country.

## ATTACK FROM CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

More it is mired in insoluble crisis, more ruthless is capitalism in its exploitative rampage, passing on the burden of its crisis on the common people through fiscal savagery, promulgation of draconian legislations and ordinances, impost of tax and cess, curbing job opportunity, curtailment of civic and democratic rights, regimenting the thought process by encouraging vile cultural invasion and unethical livelihood and thus squeezing more profit out of their labour power, forcing them to sub-human living condition and muzzling the voice of protest. The 19-point demand of the historic rally has been against such attacks from both the central and state governments. The people's movement demanded of the central government, run by a Congress-led coalition with committed backing of the CPI(M)-CPI, to immediately repeal the Electricity Act, 2003, roll back the hike in power-tariff, bring

back old slab system and supply free power to the peasants. It also wanted the Centre to immediately withdraw the increase in the prices of petrol, diesel, coal and cooking gas. Central government must also, demanded the rally, guarantee subsistence-level wage and work for the agricultural workers and rural labours throughout the year and

also provide employment or in its absence, unemployment allowance to the vast multitude of unemployed youth. It must also desist from commercialization of education and healthcare, bring down the prices of life saving drugs. Initiative ought to be taken to forthwith open all closed factories including the jute mills and tea gardens and reinstate all retrenched workers. Centre has to protect the rights of the tribal people and forest dwellers over the forest, adopt and implement comprehensive programme for development of these poor backward people.

## PERFIDY OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

The historic mass rally demanded of the West Bengal government to immediately

withdraw the hikes in hospital charges, power tariff, capitation fee, transport fare, state imposed tax and cess on petrol-diesel-LPG, all kinds of taxes on poor peasants, stop liberal grant of liquor licences and ban online lottery. While the Congress or the BJP and their ilk, as faithful servitors of the moribund ruling capitalism, we all know, would engage themselves to carry out the nefarious class-design of their masters to torment the life of the common people beyond tolerance limit, most disquieting and perfidious has been the role of the CPI(M), CPI calling themselves lefts. A CPI(M)-led government has been in power in West Bengal for last 27 years. But the people's lot has been no better but yet more worse. Under the garb of leftist vocabulary, the same pro-capitalist anti-people policies also fill the agenda of this state government. While feigning opposition to the devastating doctrine of capitalist globalization-liberalization, the



Vehicle carrying charter of demands signed by over two crores of people

CPI(M)-led West Bengal government is also on a spree to implement almost all the prescriptions of this latest formulation. The CPI(M)-led government is merrily privatizing education and healthcare, gallopingly raising the fees of education, introducing capitation fee in higher education, escalating the charges in government run hospitals. People were witness to how the CPI(M)-led government, exhibiting rare aerobatics of deceit, deprived eligible candidates from the joint entrance examination (JEE) list from enrolment in medical course and instead sold out the seats at hefty price to NRI-sponsored students by even misdirecting the court through suppression of facts. No other state government, not even

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# Calcutta reverberates with call of struggle

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Lalu's Bihar or Modi's Gujarat could dare to do so. Similarly, West Bengal was the first state to pass the anti-people Electricity Regulatory (Amendment) Bill in the state assembly much before the central legislation was made. The West Bengal government, instead of nullifying the recommendations of the State Electricity Regulatory Commission (SERC) for substantial tariff hike by invoking relevant clause in the Electricity Act, 2003, showed extreme urgency for implementing the same and has been excessively generous to Goenka-owned CESC Ltd. in waiving tax arrears running into hundreds of crores. While Congress governments in Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, under people's pressure, have been compelled to provide free electricity to the farmers, the CPI(M) government of West Bengal, pretending to be so concerned about the rural poor, feels no obligation to consider any such proposal. Instead, it has adopted a new agricultural policy, as per recommendations of the McKinsey Consultants working for world imperialism, that is going to deprive the peasants of their essential rights. Coupled with this, increasing dose of land revenue, irrigation cess, panchayat tax and so forth is being imposed. West Bengal is the only state where fresh taxes have been levied even on crematories in rural areas and small animal husbandry keeping.

## STATE REELS UNDER SURFEIT OF ANTI-PEOPLE POLICIES

Likewise, while the central government is committing a fraud on the people by periodically escalating fuel price under the pretext of rise in international tariff while its own minister-in-charge of petroleum admits that more than sixty per cent of the scheduled price is on account of heavy dose of tax, the West Bengal government imposes not only the highest rate of sales tax on petrol-diesel-LPG but levies an additional cess on diesel to inflate coffer. And justifying the plea of the central government as well as its decision to impose such high rates of tax and cess, the West Bengal government takes hurried initiative to raise fare of public transport to appease the private bus-taxi owners. While in many states the minimum bus fare is Rs.2/- it is

Rs.3.50 in West Bengal. Seven times in last four years has it revised the fare chart to almost double the rate. It is the "difficulty" of the private owners, their profit margins, whether of electricity companies or transport vehicles, that moves the government, not the inconvenience or affordability constraint of the common masses bleeding white under capitalist assault. Likewise, while innocent children die in hundreds in remote villages or in Calcutta government hospitals for want of minimal medical attention, people beg of the government run hospitals for even simple treatments, the West Bengal government, in cahoot with the proponents of imperialist globalization, is pompously handing over healthcare to private monopolists for running on commercial scale. Leave apart any true leftist government, would any civilized government having least concern for the people do all these?

The story does not end here. In order to raise resources, the CPI(M) government is now extending licenses liberally to open liquor shops, introducing "Ready to Drink" staff, to be sold even from local shops, allowing on-line lottery along with existing paper lottery and other gambling dens to flourish. So efficient is the police administration in the state for whom the government goes on increasing budgetary allocation every year curtailing allotment for essential services, that incidents of rape, murder, women trafficking, child abuse are alarmingly on the rise. While the CPI(M) chief minister inaugurates book fairs, film or drama festivals and talks of cultural progress, crime against women mounts, caste and religious divides surface with all virulence over mid-day meal in the schools to denote the rapidly falling cultural standard in the state. Unabashedly goes the policy of appeasing the monopoly capital, both foreign and domestic. The CPI(M) whose party programme says that people have rejected "the tortuous path of capitalist development which is historically outmoded", is, in an act of somersault, offering red carpet welcome to capitalist investment, providing all concessions to them including opening of "special economic zones" where no labour law will operate, assuring the owners of containing labour

movement, rationalizing lay off and retrenchment policies, offering VRS to the employees in the state-run units. While thousands of factories and mills are getting closed, the CPI(M) boasts of prosperity through installation of select capital-intensive Information Technology and allied industries by profit-greedy monopolists and MNCs. The CPI(M) leadership is not only appeasing the ruling class, serving its class interest but systematically holding the working class struggle, trade union movement responsible for obstructing the process of industrialization thereby justifying the falsity the owning class propagates to shield its own crisis. Not only is the CPI(M) government trying to hold the reins of the working class movement surging forth against the gruelling capitalist oppression and chicanery, but, in the same mould of the Congress, BJP and other bourgeois parties, is ruthlessly crushing genuine trade union movements and legitimate democratic mass movements as well. Of course, there is no relent to deceive the people by covering up these anti-working class stand through a show of mock opposition to privatization-globalization policies. This is hypocrisy par excellence!

That is why industrial tycoons like Tata, Birla, Ambani, Goenka, Premji and emissaries of imperial capital of US, UK, Japan, Italy are showering encomiums on the CPI(M) and its chief minister. And in the remote village of Amlasole and other areas, people die in starvation. Retrenched workers and wretched poor peasants unable to bear the pain of life commit suicide after killing family members. Women are forced to flesh trade for a pittance, parents sell children for securing square meal for a few days. What is "left" in it? It is expressly practising the putrid social democratic politics of working as a compromise between labour and capital and in the process emerge acceptable to the owning class for being appointed as its political manager on the seat of power. It is for this reason that Stalin, the great leader of the proletariat, said that — it is impossible to put an end to capitalism without putting an end to social democracy. It is, therefore, incumbent on the people to protect themselves from these attacks and come out of the influence of social democratic politics of capitalism to

the ruling class and so is the necessity to embrace the path of democratic movement. As political consciousness is increasingly dawned upon the people and this treacherous role of the pseudo-lefts is being laid bare, response from the masses to this historic rally was so wide and spontaneous.

## THE HISTORIC PROTEST MARCH

The time set out was 12 noon when the participants of this historic rally, coming from every nook and corner of the state, from every district, from remote villages to the towns, from every walk of life, congregated at Deshabandhu Park at North Calcutta which has been silent witness to many such momentous occasions both during the flaming days of freedom movement and the glorious days of left-democratic movement in the post-independence period. It was around one o'clock afternoon that the procession began its journey. Well-decorated tableaux highlighting the major demands of this people's march were in the front. Two truckloads of signature sheets containing the mandate of the people on the monstrous government policies formed part of the arcade. Then were the central leaders Comrades Provash Ghosh, Asit Bhattacharyya, Ranjit Dhar, Manik Mukherjee followed by Comrades Protiva Mukherjee, Chhaya Mukherjee and other prominent leaders of the state leading the march. Desire for resistance waving in mind, grit and resolute pursuance of the cause writ large on the face, the protesters stepped forward in bold strides, holding aloft banners and posters, voicing thunderous slogans in demand for justice. It was a spectacle of valiant splendour, articulating the yearnings and aspirations of the masses. People watched from both the sides as the marchers passed by, greeting, applauding the ambience of resolve.

Traffic came to a standstill but hardly anyone, contrary to what is repeatedly made an issue by the bourgeois press to denigrate legitimate struggle of the people, resented or showed any feeling of disgust. They all knew that this was for their cause. Disruption in traffic was temporary, but disruption in their life caused by the anti-people

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## Ukraine Crisis

# Reflection of imperialist conflict

Following the presidential election a serious political crisis even threatening the integrity of the country and creating a situation with the possibility of direct confrontation gripped Ukraine in the last two months of 2004 centring round the contending candidates, the present prime minister Viktor Yanukovich and the ex-prime minister Viktor Yushchenko whose supporters laid siege on government buildings bringing government administration to a standstill for days together.

In the election held on 26th December, 2004, the ex-prime minister Yushchenko has been elected president of Ukraine. Before that, the present prime minister Yanukovich had been elected president in the election of 21 November. Just after the publication of results of the election of 21 November the opponent side raised hue and cry alleging rigging by Yanukovich and finally the government held a re-election on 26th December and Yushchenko defeated Yanukovich who also now complained that a large number of voters had been prevented from voting. Significantly, the US rulers felt very much disturbed at the outcome of 21 November election and the secretary of state Collin Powell commented, "The election is not in conformity with international standard", totally forgetting what the present president Bush did in 2000 to win the presidential election.

Whoever might be right or wrong, the unusual political crisis in Ukraine has drawn attention of many and it reflects an important bourgeois political and imperialist conflict in the post-socialist political arena in the erstwhile USSR region. Ukraine is a big country rich in natural resources, remarkable agricultural production and educated man-power. According to the Western media, Ukraine is one of the best countries, once constituting the former USSR, for investment. Much more is its strategic importance, its boundaries touching Russia, Belarus, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, Moldavia, Black Sea and Azov Sea. After joining the USSR in 1922, Ukraine transformed itself into a giant industrial force from a backward agricultural and simply mineral-rich region with the planned socialist economy of the Soviet Union. It became the secondmost industrialised state in the USSR after Russia. And it is that planned socialist economy by dint of which Ukraine could sustain the

unthinkable destruction of World War II.

After the fall of socialism in the USSR, the constituent states including Ukraine fell apart from Russia to establish bourgeois rules of their own just like Russia. At that time, Russia formed the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to keep those bourgeois states under its hegemonic fold with its imperialist ambition. Along with others, Ukraine also joined CIS for its own capitalistic interests. The US and the Western imperialists at that time did not oppose that move of Russia but with the passage of time, Ukraine came closer also to Western and US imperialist countries in spite of its closeness with Russia for its speedier capitalist development. The aforesaid US and Western imperialists also were looking for such an opportunity to carve out their position within the member countries of the CIS including Ukraine. A section of the newly emerged capitalist class of Ukraine began to show more closeness, politically and economically, with the US and Western imperialists than with Russia while another section tried to be closer with Russia which was historically, geographically and militarily much closer to Ukraine. This has long been influencing the internal politics of the country and has created a position of cold war in between the pro-Russian lobby and the pro-Western pro-US bourgeoisie. The present political crisis in Ukraine is to be judged in the context of the above conflict of two groups of newly emerged bourgeoisie there.

It has already been pointed out that Ukraine is very rich in so many respects with highly developed agriculture, industry and plenty of mineral resources. Although it is not rich in oil and natural gas, it is one of the main regions in the world over which oil and natural gas are transported to other countries. Oil and gas of Russia and Caspian Sea are exported through Ukraine.

Naturally the stockholders, Wall Street brokers, corporate houses, bankers and other profiteer business tycoons of the Western imperialist countries and the US were greedily waiting to control the country's enormous wealth, natural resources, highly developed infrastructure and cheap but highly educated and equipped labour power. But under the rule of president Leonid Kuchma, the pro-Russian group was not sufficiently cooperating with the foreign capitalists of the US and Western power. They themselves, with Russian help and assistance, wanted to plunder the entire wealth created by the previous socialist regime. With this, nascent Russian imperialism's interference also grew. In this backdrop, the intense conflict and competition between the present prime minister Yanukovich and the ex-prime minister Yushchenko for the post of president is not confined merely within the internal affairs of the country but it has other ramifications also. The monopoly controlled media is trying to paint the conflict as one between democracy and corruption and between nationalist west Ukraine and the majorly Russian-speaking east Ukraine. But it is actually imperialist interference only on the basis of which the contradiction can be judged. A section of the reservationist Ukrainian capitalists who are already benefitted with the privatization policy of the counter-revolutionary government are now eager to grab the industrial empire of Ukraine once built up by the working class of the country. On the contrary, the Wall Street tycoons, corporate houses of the US, Britain, Italy, France and Belgium and their political agents are also trying to break the backbone of these European capitalists for capturing their industries and market of the country by any means. This has created the present political conflict.

Yanukovich actually belongs to Kuchma group — Leonid Kuchma is the outgoing president of Ukraine. This Kuchma group played prominent role to fill the pockets of the Ukrainian industrial houses. Some of the benefitted capitalist owners are Rinat Akhmetov, the owner of System Capital Management, Ukraine's biggest corporation with large holdings in

metallurgy, the owner of Inter Type and other three TV channels Viktor Pinchuk who also happens to be the son-in-law of Kuchma and the second richest person of Ukraine. Besides, Yanukovich is backed by the owners of different private banks and industries. The chairperson of the National Bank is also very close to Yanukovich and is trying to grab the major portion of Ukrainian industries.

US and European imperialist capital and the pro-Russian capital are now engaged in bitter fighting. As Russia is deeply involved with Ukraine economically, militarily and in the field of space research, US and European imperialists are warning Russia that it should not meddle in the Ukrainian crisis. Conversely, Putin is also warning them. (The Statesman, 7.12.04).

The US and European capitalists are supporting Yushchenko who is trying to bring Ukraine into NATO and are pressurizing the parliament to oust Yanukovich from the post of prime minister. However, after creating a volcanic situation in Ukraine to carve out a strong position there, they are now trying to manage the situation peacefully and draw Ukraine into the imperialist fold without war.

But that does not mean that Yushchenko and Yanukovich groups want to come to a total confrontation at this moment. This is evident from the compromise that led to the re-poll of 26th December and the meeting of Yushchenko with President Putin of Russia immediately after the victory of the former in the presidential election. This was obviously in the aggregate interest of Ukrainian capitalism.

Since restoration of capitalism there the people of Ukraine have been subjected to ever-increasing suppression and oppression and, on the other hand, Russian interference in their internal affairs and nascent Russian imperialism's domineering attitude during the tenure of Yanukovich's prime ministership gave birth to mass discontent. Capitalising this discontent among the people, the Yushchenko group tried its best to win the election of 21st November but failed due to alleged rigging by the former and finally won the re-poll of 26th December.

Thus the Ukrainian crisis is nothing but the reflection of the crisis of world capitalism and imperialism in a new context. In such a situation the common and

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# SUCI fights against Hawker eviction in Agartala

Hawkers, slum-dwellers, in cities and towns everywhere, off and on, face eviction today. Tripura, the state ruled by the CPI(M)-led government is no exception. Agartala Municipal Council, run also by the CPI(M), have started evicting hawkers in the state capital, Agartala, ostensibly on the green signal of the state CPI(M) leadership. The evicted hawkers are thus left in the lurch being robbed of their living, which, they were eking out somehow, for long, long time. Needless to say, the CPI(M) leadership, in order to hide their mischievous motive from the public, made beautification of the capital a pretext for carrying out such a disastrous decision without holding out any promise even for their alternative economic rehabilitation. The evicted hawkers, a bulk of the people, do not know when and how would they be rehabilitated or else, if they, at all, be restored to their living condition!

The Apex Court of the country in an important judgment opined: Hawkers are part and parcel of a modern city and so eviction is not a

solution. Specialized hawking zones are the answer for having them rehabilitated economically and hence socially.

The CPI(M)-led Tripura State Government, of course, have no such qualms about cheating the victims of eviction.

The party of the Indian proletariat, the SUCI, took up the cudgel, the cause of rehabilitating the uprooted hawkers in due course. To this end, a mass protest demonstration was held before the Municipal Council, Agartala where Comrades Shibani Das and Subrata Chowdhury spoke in defence of the following 3-point charter of demands:

- (i) no eviction without appropriate economic rehabilitation;
- (ii) immediate suitable rehabilitation of the evicted hawkers;
- (iii) pending rehabilitation of the evicted hawkers, gratuitous relief to the affected families be granted for their sustenance.

Later on, a memorandum to this effect was handed over to the Chairperson of the Municipality.

## Ukraine Crisis

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patriotic people of Ukrain must now realize that the conflict and contention between the two groups of Ukrainian bourgeoisie have nothing to do with their interest because both these groups dismantled their working class state to restore capitalism for exploiting them. So at this moment, what they

need most is to develop such a working class leadership which will uphold the working class demands, their rights, thwart the bourgeois design to create linguistic and regional cleavage in working class solidarity and launch revolutionary struggle afresh on the basis of Marxism-Leninism to bring back socialism in their fatherland.

# Red Salute Comrade N. K. Sharma



Comrade N. K. Sharma is no more. He had been suffering from incurable cancer for the last one year and breathed his last on 18th January last. At the age of 18, in the 70's, he came in contact with Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, member, Central Committee, SUCI, in Delhi. At that time he was in service there. He was deeply impressed with the discussion with Comrade Chakraborty. After that he participated in a political class in Delhi which was conducted by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our leader, teacher and guide. After this political class he joined the SUCI. Till his last breath he engaged himself to build up the party and trade union organizations among the workers of UP. In course of time he became one of the All India secretariat members of UTUC-LS and became UP state secretariat member of the party. On 5th August, 2004 he attended the memorial meeting of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh held in Allahabad. Due to his serious illness he could not speak, but he placed his written tribute in the meeting and it was read out by one of the comrades of Allahabad. This was his last participation in a meeting.

His life-long revolutionary struggle would imbue party comrades for days to come.

### Condolence Message of Comrade Nihar Mukherjee

At the news of Comrade Sharma's demise, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee sent the following message to the Secretary, UP State Committee, SUCI and also to Comrade Lata Sharma, wife of departed Comrade Nagendra Sharma

I am deeply shocked to learn the news of passing away of Comrade Nagendra Sharma, a veteran member of our Uttar Pradesh State Committee, who during his prolonged party-life contributed a lot to the growth of our beloved party in Uttar Pradesh and was totally dedicated to the cause of revolutionary trade union movement in our country. In his death our party in Uttar Pradesh has suffered a great loss. I convey my heartfelt condolence to our Uttar Pradesh comrades and to the members of his bereaved family.

Red Salute Comrade N.K. Sharma



Orissa state AIDS0 organized a big students rally in Bhubaneswar on January 28 demanding allotment of at least 10% of National Budget for education etc.



Huge students' rally in Bangalore by AIDS0, Karnataka, against exorbitant fees and charges in private colleges

## Massive Rally in Calcutta

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policies of the governments is perpetual, too assailing. "Never saw such a disciplined demonstration after the days of Netaji Subhas" remarked an octogenarian onlooker. "This is a party built of iron" observed one only to be corrected by his companion, "Not iron but steel". "What are you doing here amidst such bogus affairs by abstaining from your school" asked a middle aged well-dressed gentleman to a teenager participant. Pat came the reply, "This is no bogus affair but an action demanded of any conscientious human being. For important it is, far more educating than attending school. It is the very right to education that is under threat — how can we remain passive?"

After leaving the party's central office on Lenin Sarani on the right, the rally turned towards Rani Rashmoni Road in Esplanade East, the heartland of the city. And then came the hour to pass through another test of revolutionary endurance and mettle. A heavy downpour began to lash the ground — something unexpected during winter season. It flooded the streets, drenched the participants, the top leaders included but could not sink the spirit of the march which continued, disdaining the rain, undaunted and unflinched, holding on to the revolutionary discipline that Comrade Shibdas Ghosh exhorted all to exhibit unwaveringly even in extreme adversity. "See, they are all completely doused but not leaving the line" was an utterance in soliloquy in the beholding crowd. "Yes, only this party can, none else" was the appreciate endorsement from among there. Splashes of crimson in the western sky greeted the march on convergence at rain-soaked Rani Rashmoni Road junction. The whole area was then turned into a sea of valiant soldiers of people's movement. Adverse weather forced curtailment of a short meeting on conclusion. Only a small delegate comprising state level leaders went and met the Governor to handover the signature copies. At the end the participants quietly dispersed in groups taking a vow to take the struggle ahead, heighten the pitch of the movement. Enshrined was in the pages of democratic mass struggle a spectacle steeped in revolutionary audacity resplendent with revolutionary purposiveness and heralding the dawn on a new horizon.



Over 1 lakh protestors marched through the streets of Calcutta on 28th January against the attacks of the central Congress and state CPI-M Front governments. Above is a glimpse of the historic rally

## CPI(M)'s hypocrisy exposed

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which people was definitely critical of the verdict itself, the CPI(M) did not touch the issue at all, evading use of the term 'bandh' in the resolution. Further, to cover up this treacherous move against people's sentiment, they framed a rather non-descript resolution, beating the bush stating that the 'right to general strike' is being curtailed by some quarter, not even mentioning what was the 'quarter' they meant, let alone pin-pointing the judiciary. Their move was, however, amply exposed to people. With a view to giving a further befitting exposure to this treason of the CPI(M) to people's cause of upholding their fundamental right to call and hold 'bandh' and to urging upon the judiciary to refrain from intervening into and snatching away that fundamental right, our party,

SUCI moved a parallel resolution that the ruling Front defeated by the brute majority in the House. The so-called opposition, comprising the Congress and the Trinamul Congress, both branded bourgeois parties, joined the concert. Incidentally, it may be added that the judiciary did not at all ban the right to general strike, rather upheld it as non-violent non-coercive, vis-a-vis the 'bandh', they maintained, had element of coercion. However, in reality, there was no difference between general strike and bandh. In fact, to make general strike more acceptable, the term 'bandh' emerged from the phrase 'chakka bandh', particularly from its use in Hindi-speaking areas. Besides, there are ample examples of people observing successful 'bandh' in West Bengal, spontaneously and peacefully, even in the

face of threat and coercion, as it was on the November 17 'bandh' itself.

The CPI(M) move in the West Bengal Assembly and their response to the SUCI proposal was thus fraught with a highly deceptive character, a posture of defending right to strike, while evading the real issue and thereby shielding the class behind. This, no doubt, matched their present shameless appeasement of the ruling class, while attempting to hoodwink people. We tried our best within the legislative forum; outside it, we urge upon people to keep vigil not only against newer and newer forms of attack from the ruling class that may come in future, but also this treacherous double-faced politics of the CPI(M). We also call upon people to hold high the banner of democratic movement, which alone is a real guarantee for their cause and interest.

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