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RSS-BJP's vandalism at Mangalore in the name of fighting pub-culture — some pertinent questions

A local pub at Mangalore, a city in the state of Karnataka witnessed an untoward event towards the end of January last. A group of activists of an organization, going by the name of Sri Ram Sena, staged an attack on the pub, assaulting its owner, employees, customers and more particularly, the girls, reportedly found indulging in the revolting habit of enjoying drinking and partying there. The vandalism was professedly against the obscenity being practised there, that, the vandals claimed, went also against Indian culture. Several girls were seriously injured. The

attackers, including Pramod Mutalik, their leader-mentor, a president of some Rashtriya Ram Sena, were arrested, but were immediately bailed out by a city court reportedly on the ground that 'practice of women visiting pubs was against Indian tradition' (Times of India, Calcutta, 1 February, 2009). The incident, however, sparked off a public outcry, which swung between support and condemnation. Congress, one of the two major bourgeois parties at the national plane and enjoying a secular certificate from CPI (M), their once-partner in the UPA

government at the Centre, as well as BJP, the other major bourgeois party and a proud champion of the so-called Hindu cause, both tried apparently to distance themselves from the incident. Socially influential and high-up personalities like Renuka Chowdhury, Union minister of the Congress-led UPA government, Sheila Dixit, Congress chief minister of Delhi, or Girija Vyas, Chairperson, National Commission for Women, came out to hold brief for this pub-going culture of youth, as against the vandalism of the Ram Sena. Yet, the Congress chief minister of the

Rajasthan government, Ashok Gehlot, passed the comment that 'his government would not allow pub culture in Rajasthan and would put an end to the practice of young boys and girls holding hands and consuming alcohol at pubs and malls in the state' (The Statesman, Calcutta, 29 January, 2009). BJP leaders of Rajasthan condemned the Congress chief minister's comments as vote-grabbing gimmick, while in Karnataka itself, a BJP-run state, the chief minister condemned the attacks, though agreeing with the attackers on one

Contd. on page 2

Historic Calcutta Rally on 9 March

Peasants Defy CPI(M) government's move to foil it

Right from the days of British imperialist rule, Calcutta has held the banner of democratic movements high. It has witnessed many a historic movement for preservation and furtherance of human rights and the legitimate

democratic rights of toiling people, be it against the British imperialist rulers, or the rule of Congress or other bourgeois parties, not excluding the so-called Marxists like CPI(M) in the capitalist state of independent India. The 9 March

"Mahamichhil", the mammoth rally of peasants was the last added to that glorious list. Organised by the All India Krishak o Khet Majoor Sangathan (AIKKMS), the peasant wing of our party, the SUCI, the rally brought peasants- agricultural

labours from the remotest villages of the state of West Bengal to converge at the megapolis. It proclaimed to force the CPI(M)-led state government to meet their demands concerning burning problems of life; at the same time, it meant to focus to one and every section of common toiling people of the state and the megapolis in particular, the wretched condition to which the vast population of poorer rural people of West Bengal have been subject, during the three decade long rule of CPI(M). In effect, the rally also became a platform for common people of the state to register their fraternity and solidarity with the struggling peasants, who have come out recently in militant resistance movement against barbaric onslaughts at Singur, Nandigram and Lalgarh among others, on their

Contd. on page 4



Vandalism at Mangalore pub

Sanity to prevail, agents of capitalism and their designs need be exposed

Contd. from page 1

point that pub culture was not good for the Indian youth and expressing that he would not allow its growth in his state. The same Karnataka government has, however, already decided to set up wine taverns on a meagre license fee with a view to further enhancing revenue- earning over the present sum of nearly Rs. 1000 odd crores from beer and liquor sales. Whom will these wine taverns mainly target as potential clients there? Will it not be the same pub-going age group (18 to 35)? On one side of aftermath of the Mangalore incident, some women sent Mutalik a parcel of 'pink undergarments', others made a call in TV shows to girls to 'fill the pubs' in protest; a Union minister charged Mutalik for being insensitive to women's feelings as he was a bachelor. On the other side, Mutalik issued 'fatwa' to the youth to keep watch on malls, colleges, hostels etc., that there was no Valentine Day celebrations on 14 February; enthused 'Hindu Senas' or 'Ram Senas' made their presence felt at several cities or towns by their acts of vandalism on the youth celebrating the day.

Thinking people stirred and perturbed

The incident has stirred the thinking people who are increasingly perturbed at the way putrid imperialist culture is making fast inroad into our society and destroying the moral base particularly of the youth. So they sincerely want that rotten thoughts about life and entertainment dished out in the name of modernism must not be allowed to pollute the youth of the country. At the same time, they are unable to reconcile themselves to the way a group of vandals has chosen as the means to stop the menace. Some are also viewing such violent attacks on pub-goers as an infringement on the freedom of the people to seek pleasure or refresh themselves in pursuit of their own cultural beliefs. On the other hand, another section of the people upset by the invasion of decadent imperialist thoughts from the Western world is turning back to old traditional values even religious revivalism and obscurantist thoughts presuming

that to be the correct step to insulate the country from all these. When the public opinion is swirling among such divergent thoughts and beliefs and there is a quest for knowing the truth, it is necessary to ascertain the root of the problem and based on that, trace the course of remedial action.

What is this pub-culture?

Before we proceed to look into the genesis of the problem, a few words are necessary to state what is exactly meant by pub-culture. The word 'pub' is a recent addition to the dictionary of 'entertainment' of the variety promoted in the Western imperialist world at the encouragement and patronization of power that be. Pub, short for Public House, means a place where mainly light drinks are served. The frequenting of pubs has long become an essential feature of Western society. In our country, as it stands today, pub has come to mean a bar, a tavern or night club like place where people congregate mostly from late evening onwards to stimulate themselves with hard liquor, drugs, accompanied by a kind of obscene music and dance. What these pubs generally promote and cater to is intoxication of all kinds provoking base instincts, prurient attitude and sex perversion. It is a bizarre loathsome joy in which the people particularly the youth are incited to be plunged in so that they for a few hours could remain in a world of 'insane' pleasure and queer fantasy alienated from life. And this is what is being promoted in the name of pub-culture in our country. The cancerous growth of pubs and liquor industry liberally patronized by the Union and state governments throughout India, has already been accompanied by horrible spread of liquor- and drug- addiction at every levels of society, rich or poor, educated or not, and by an alarming spate of mental problems including schizophrenia, depression etc. among the youth, as well as pornography, sexual harassment and exploitation, along with violence, even homicides and suicides. A section of media, itself monopolists-sponsored and aided and abetted by the patronage of many influential individuals and institutions, is

continuously giving a colourful coverage of this pub-going with shameless jubilation to prove that the extent the youth get used to partying, drinking, discotheque-trotting and such others, really shows how they are attaining 'independence', 'adulthood', etc., serving as a measure of 'modernization' and 'development'. This is why well-meaning persons are vexed with this growing menace making deep inroad into the social-cultural life of this country, nakedly fanned up and supported by advocates of the pub-going culture and they are desperately seeking redress.

Existing socio-economic life condition

First of all, we must understand that this incident should not be viewed in isolation. We need to take into account the specific socio-economic milieu in which this assault of such decadent imperialist mal-culture is taking place. With every passing day, toiling people are slipping into aggravated pauperization, penury and misery. Income is falling if not being reduced to nil, unemployment is spiralling, price line is soaring, and even the barest needs for survival are eluding the common man. There is no food, no shelter, no clothing. In fact, piteous cry of suffering is renting the air. The hard earned political and social rights are being systematically robbed away. The governments irrespective of hues are totally insensitive and disdainful to people's legitimate demands for barest means to survive. Democratic mass movements are being ruthlessly crushed. Limitless corruption, criminalization, sheer opportunism, politics bereft of any principle and honesty, slanderous personal bickering and such others have become the mark of all major parliamentary political forces. Administration, military even judiciary are being totally infested with the same maladies. Social life is equally perilous. Communal-parochial-chauvinist-casteist forces are raising their ugly heads. People are often getting locked in fratricidal fights and internecine clashes.

In tune with that, there is an all-pervasive moral and cultural

degradation. Human relations within the society, even the families are being shattered. Father does not hesitate to kill his son, nor a son thinks twice to murder his mother; marital bond is avoided, only to indulge in unethical live-together with 'sex-partners' frequently shuffling with time, mood and convenience; poverty-stricken parents sell out their girls to traffickers; debauch rich do not find any compunction at raping and then killing girls in countless numbers. Human trafficking, atrocities on women, prostitution, child abuse have assumed menacing dimension. A horrible exhibition of sex, violence and crime through billboards or other forms of advertisements, films, electronic or print media, are vitiating the entire cultural fabric and mass-mind. Even in the name of modern literature, what is being dished out is nothing short of pornography. All finer senses, tenderness, values, ethics and morality, obligation to family, society and fellow are being razed down. The suffocating moribund ambience is driving people to extreme alienation from society and self-centrism, to lead a life for only satisfying one's self, for surviving anyhow, by any and every means. A kind of thinking is sought to be made to set in that one is 'ordained to live one's own life in any manner one wants' without being bothered about 'any restriction, confinement or so-called fellow feeling'. A total uncertainty and insecurity of life and livelihood has gripped particularly the youth who, being paralyzed by utter frustration and aimless desperation is stooping into all sorts of anarchical behaviour, unethical livelihood and sex-perversion. The vandalism against Mangalore pubs by storm-troopers of the saffron brigade proclaiming themselves as protagonists of Indian cultural tradition is to be understood in this backdrop.

Why this attack on culture

Obviously, thinking people are vexed with the question as to why the social fabric is getting so increasingly polluted and an all-out cultural degeneration is devouring the society? We need to get the

Contd. on page 6

COMING LOK SABHA POLLS**Statement by the SUCI West Bengal State Committee
on the basis of decision of the Central Committee**

Democratic-minded people of West Bengal know that the SUCI, founded by the great Marxist thinker Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, organizes working class struggle and mass movement always with the anti-capitalist revolutionary objective. So long as it is not possible to prepare the working class and the people for the decisive revolutionary uprising, the SUCI party, in accordance with the teaching of Great Lenin, participates in election with the object of strengthening class struggle and mass movement and not for the purpose of any how winning seats or securing votes.

The SUCI considers that the governments at the national or state levels led by the Congress, the BJP or the pseudo-Marxist CPI(M) in West Bengal are all working in the interest of Indian capitalism and foreign imperialism, the main enemies of the Indian people. In order to install these parties or any combinations or fronts led by them to governmental power, the capitalist class not only gives huge sums of money, but also provides propaganda and other all-out help of the state machinery to them. Again, if the necessity arises, the capitalist class replaces one of these by other in power by turn. The clarion message of "a government by the people, for the people and of the people", much proclaimed in the early days of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, has been reduced to a farce today in the entire capitalist world. In its place have come the money power, media power, bureaucratic power and police-backed criminal or muscle power, engineered and monitored by the capitalists-monopolists, which determine the election results. Although it is very difficult, still a well-consolidated, powerful mass movement may, sometimes and in some places, play a role in determining the election result, but that is short-lived and if the elected government is not run in the interest or as per the will of the capitalists, the existence of that government becomes endangered; it is the force of mass movement that has to conduct struggle again to protect it.

Just as our party has been carrying on movements on various demands in the other states, in West Bengal too, our party has conducted many a bloody struggle single-handed from 1977 onwards on various demands including the demand for re-introduction of English at the primary education level. In these movements in this state so far, 151 leaders-workers of our party became martyrs by laying down their lives, 49 have been

sentenced for life on false, framed-up cases and there are cases on false murder charges pending against 635. The Trinamool Congress, which formed breaking away from the Congress in 1998, has also conducted various agitations and movements with their parliamentary political aim.

In the meanwhile, in 2001, the CPI(M) proposed to us for fighting election unitedly with them. But we rejected that proposal because that party had abandoned leftism in the interest of capitalism-imperialism against mass movement and was engaged in activities against the people's interest, even at the risk of facing all-out attacks by them in the election for the two Assembly seats : Jaynagar and Kultali. There were proposals to us several times from different quarters for fighting election jointly with the Trinamool Congress, but we did not agree to those on the grounds of principle. Standing against the wind of polarization created by the bourgeois class and much propagated in the news media and despite the reckless use of CPI(M)'s huge money power, attacks by criminals nakedly backed by the police and widespread rigging, our party has won these two seats again and again since 1977 on the strength of support by the poor people.

In West Bengal, centring round the historic movements of Singur and Nandigram, and in the interest of mass movement, the unity between the SUCI and the Trinamool Congress developed at first at the local level through the *Singur Krishijami Raksha Committee* and the *Nandigram Bhoomi Uchedh Pratirodh Committee* respectively. Subsequently, when the CPI(M) party and the government launched barbarous fascistic attacks on 14 March and 12 November, 2007 at Nandigram, our party, from the necessity of protecting the mass movements from such fascistic attacks at present and in the future,

took the initiative first to unite Forward Bloc, RSP and the different naxalite parties at the state level to form people's committees at the local level along with the Trinamool Congress and then to extend those on to the state level. But those leftist parties did not respond. In such a situation, in the interest of mass-movement, our party decided to launch united movement with the Trinamool Congress on conditions that 1. the struggle would be conducted against the anti-people policies and activities of the Central and state government serving the interests of capitalism-imperialism; 2. equidistance from both the BJP and the Congress would have to be maintained; and 3. no attacks would be made against Marxism and leftism. The united movement of these two parties generated tremendous momentum in the movement in West Bengal. Ultimately, the state government had to rescind its decision for land acquisition at Nandigram. In Singur, too, the state government and the arch-monopoly capitalists Tatas were forced to retreat although the demand for return of the acquired land has not yet been met. Ignited by the fire of these movements of Singur and Nandigram, the resistance movement against corruption in the rationing system, the heroic struggle of the jute mill workers, the struggle of the PTTI students and the student movements on various other demands as also movements by the state government employees were strongly invigorated. The Singur-Nandigram movement inspired democratic and peasants movements in other states too. Naturally, capitalism-imperialism and the parties like the Congress, the CPI(M) and the BJP, which serve its interest desperately went on conspiring as to how to destroy the unity of the movement by separating the Trinamool Congress from the SUCI. People of this state know that there are differences between the Marxist outlook of our party, our objective of anti-capitalist working class revolution, our own method of struggle, on one hand, and the Gandhite outlook and parliamentary political aim of the Trinamool Congress, on the other, in spite of

which in the interest of mass movement, we have maintained the unity with the Trinamool Congress.

The CPI(M) government in this state is implementing the same programme that is being pursued by the Congress and the BJP governments at the Centre and in other states of the country in the interest of Indian monopoly capital and foreign multinationals. That is why, these two all-India bourgeois parties have not opposed this CPI(M) government on these policy questions and have not taken a stand on the side of any movement including that of Nandigram-Singur, barring a show of mild protest with an eye to securing votes. In this, apart from the class interest, the interest of preserving the CPI(M)-supported Congress government at the Centre has also worked. Even after witnessing such barbarous brutality at Nandigram-Singur, the Central government through their outward silence, has in effect supported the CPI(M) government. Recently, the State Congress President and the Union Foreign Minister has pleaded in favour of the heinous role of this CPI(M) government on the Nandigram-Singur question. Naturally, it has elated CPI(M). Because there is an understanding between the CPI(M) and the Congress on the question of forming the next government at the Centre, its advocacy of a third front is simply aimed at increasing its bargaining power vis-à-vis Congress. In this state of West Bengal, the Congress has been largely condemned by the people as the 'B' team of the CPI(M), it is isolated from people and has turned into a weak force. Congress leaders and workers, in series of batches, are joining the Trinamool Congress. On the other hand, activists and supporters of the CPI(M) are also widely supporting our party, considering us genuine Marxists.

The glowing fire of the recent mass-movements have revealed that now in West Bengal there is, on one side, the united combination of SUCI and the Trinamool Congress engaged in movements, and, on the other, CPI(M)-Congress- BJP, the forces that have become mortally afraid with these mass-movements.

Contd. on page 4

People, eminent intellectuals step out in support

Contd. from page 1
life and livelihood.

Adding fuel to the fire of intense capitalist exploitation since independence, the CPI(M)-led government has kept on adopting increasingly severe pro-capitalist anti-people policies and measures telling miserably upon the toiling millions of the state, poor peasants-agricultural labours in particular. Before each parliamentary election, as it is with the ensuing Lok Sabha polls round the corner, all major parties – Congress, BJP, CPI (M) come out vociferously with dazzling promises for the rural poor, to be fulfilled if they were voted to power. They have been in power, repeatedly, rotating or as with the CPI(M)-led government for a continuous stretch over three decades. Yet the real plight of rural West Bengal like elsewhere in India, is so dismal that its revelation unfolds the most pathetic scenario as can be conceived of.

Abject poverty of the rural masses, aggravating each day with capitalist exploitation, is further deepened with acute unemployment, grabbing of fertile farm land by the government for the benefit of corporates and monopolists in the name of development, limitless corruption of a nexus of rural rich-administration- local leaders of the ruling parties in regard to the

committed relief measures like the 100 days' job, BPL (Below Poverty Level) card, rationing system for foodgrains, fuels etc., which prevented the real needy or those entitled from enjoying the relief benefits, exorbitant price rise of essential commodities including those required for farming, such as electricity or fuel for irrigation pumps, fertilisers, etc., suffocating grip of big money, including foreign multinationals and indigenous monopolists on the seeds, agricultural produce, etc., thus controlling cost of farming, marketing prices or such others entirely to the detriment of peasants themselves. At the same time, with a view to crushing and smothering any voice of protest and resistance, CPI(M) unleashed unprecedented terror and repression on peasant movements, including mass-rape of women, using a nexus of administration-police and goons, that reached its culminations at Nandigram, Singur or tribal-dominated Lalgarh. Thus extreme poverty and starvation, total uncertainty confronting life coupled with repression had pushed the peasants to such a desperate position that, wherever unorganized, they were finding no other way but to kill the self. Pushed to such a point of no return, peasants and agricultural labours of the state



Dais of 9 March meeting with eminent intellectuals and leaders of SUCI and AIKKMS

came out in massive support to the movement launched by the AIKKMS since long during the CPI(M)-rule. As a culmination of that sustained movement, AIKKMS declared a programme of indefinite sit-in demonstration in Kolkata on and from 9 March, in which the peasants were not just ready to place their 14-point demand to the government; they stood in one voice with the slogan "Meet our demands or shoot us to death", thus resolute to lay down their lives at the bullet, if their demands were not met. Peasants' demands included among others, ensuring 100 days job under NREGA or in its absence adequate allowance; prevention of black-marketting of seeds and

fertilisers; prevention of corruption in the rationing system; inclusion of genuine poor in the Below Poverty Level(BPL) list; provision of tariff free electricity upto 3 acres of land, etc.

Preparation for the sit-in was in full swing; it had to be carried out on the basis of the money raised from the small contributions of people, more so the peasants themselves. But to the dismay and indignation of the people of West Bengal, things took ugly turn only 48 hours ahead of the date. Biman Bose, the chairman of the CPI(M)-led Left Front wrote a letter to the Chief Election Officer of the state, terming the slogan as 'filthy', 'undemocratic' 'provocative' etc. Immediately after this letter had been written, the police cancelled the permissions for the sit-in at the Esplanade area of the city. In an unprecedented manner and in violation of all democratic norms and values, the CPI(M)-led government and its administration withdrew all permissions, hell bent at frustrating the movement. Clearly, their concern was writ deep on their face, they were mortally frightened of the organised resistance of rural exploited masses.

People in general and rural peasants in particular, were not to be cowed down. The bourgeois law prevented them from carrying out the original programme. But they decided to bring out a massive rally instead on the same date of 9 March, which was to throw a fitting reply to the government.

The rally was scheduled to start at 2 p.m. But from the morning itself, people from the remotest corner of the state started pouring in, that turned into a sea of humanity finally. It was a moment

Contd. on page 5

Statement by West Bengal State Committee

Contd. from page 3

On one side, there exist struggling exploited and oppressed poor peasants-agricultural labours-workers-students-youth-womenfolk and middle class. On the other side, there are anti-movement reactionary forces of capitalists-monopolists, big business, blackmarketeers, smugglers. This new political equation that has emerged with the recent movements have shattered the foundation of the hitherto existing so-called vote-banks.

To foil this new equation or alignment of two forces, one for the struggles, the other against struggles, and to rehabilitate the Congress, the national party of the Indian bourgeoisie totally discredited, isolated from and rejected by people of West Bengal, the media, sponsored and run by the bourgeoisie, are conspiring to develop another equation, that is, CPI(M) on one side and all forces

against CPI(M) on the other; a section of people is also being confused by this conspiracy.

It is in this context that the Trinamool Congress, by showing reasons that the Opposition votes do not get divided and their party is not held responsible for splitting the Opposition votes, has decided to go for seat-sharing with the Congress for a few constituencies, preserving the unity of movement with our party. Considering the Congress, the national party of the Indian bourgeoisie as the main enemy of mass-movement, we have opposed this understanding and have informed that we cannot be a part of it.

On the other hand, the demands of the Singur movement have not yet been fulfilled, the culprits of Nandigram massacre have not yet been punished and victims there have not yet been provided with compensations; the Lalgarh

movement, the struggle of the PTTI students, the movement against the proposed chemical hub at Nandigram – the question of many a movement still looms large. In this situation, struggling people of all levels and sections, have expressed their strong desire to see the SUCI-Trinamool Congress unity for movement be maintained. Leaders and activists of the Trinamool Congress too desire this. It being so, we have taken the decision to maintain the Trinamool Congress-SUCI unity in the interest of mass movement, in spite of our disagreement on the question of their seat-sharing with the Congress.

We shall support the Trinamool Congress candidates as our allies in mass-movement. On the other hand, in keeping with our limited financial resources, we shall contest a few seats in West Bengal against the candidates of the CPI(M), the Congress and the BJP.

Historic Peasants' Rally in Calcutta on 9 March

Contd. from page 4

when Kolkata was reminded of those golden days of militant left movement of the 50s and 60s of the last century. Mothers with babies in their lap joined the rally – bearing in their faces the determination and jubilation of the militant movement of Singur, Nandigram and Lalgarh held not long back. The rally was participated by not only peasants but people of all ages from all walks of life including students and youths in large number.

The long rally with unfathomable depth meandered ahead through quite a long stretch from Hedua, the furthest point of North Kolkata. When its head reached the endpoint at Esplanade Metro Station, its tail with huge mass was still to take its start. For the entire length, the innumerable red banners, posters with demands highlighted and the participants shouting slogans filled with conviction and determination, created an indomitable surge of fighting people. Yet, the whole procession moved like one-man, firm and disciplined. The huge rally obviously caused some difficulties to the traffic and people moving around. But the solemnity and character of the rally made people

not only endure the problems, also register their ovation and approval. Standing wayside, they were amazed at the magnitude, discipline and resolve of a rally, which consisted overwhelmingly of poor, starving villagers taking pains to have travelled from different areas, the remotest parts of the state only to register their wrath and indignation against the brute, callous government, which is hell bent to serve the capitalists-monopolists at the cost of life and livelihood of common toiling people.

The rally ended in a meeting at Esplanade, albeit held under severe constraints. Esplanade is at the heart of the city, essentially non-residential, business and office centre, always full of all kinds of noises. Yet the permission for using microphone was also withdrawn, so democratic was the CPI(M) government! It is the same CPI(M) who had the audacity of calling the movement 'undemocratic'. On the dais in the meeting, were seated the Central Committee members of our party, Comrade Provash Ghosh and Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, Central Staff Comrade Manik Mukherjee and State Secretariat member Comrade Protiva

Mukherjee. With them, were seated eminent intellectuals of West Bengal, all of whom leading members of the Forum for Artistes, Cultural Activists and Intellectuals, which have been at the helm of a mass movement in the state in support of the struggling peasants of Singur, Nandigram, Lalgarh and elsewhere. Among them were Professor Tarun Sanyal, veteran leftist poet and educationist and the President of the Forum, Bibhas Chakraborty, eminent dramatist and theatre personality, Suvapasanna, renowned painter and intellectual, Kabir Suman, famous singer and journalist and Professor Miratun Nahar, well-known social activist. Comrade Khoda Bux, President, West Bengal AIKKMS presided over the meeting. Comrade Panchanan Pradhan, Secretary, West Bengal AIKKMS addressed the gathering underscoring the background of the rally.

All the speakers hailed the rally as a mark of genuine left movement. Moved by the vast, organised and disciplined rally Professor Tarun Sanyal recognized it as having distinct elements of genuine communist movement. Also he drew analogy between the present movement and the historic 'Quit

India' movement of 1942 against the British imperialists. He recalled that the call "Do or die" or "Kareng ya Mareng" raised during that movement was berated by the Viceroy, the then administrative chief and Churchill, the Prime Minister of the imperialist Britain as suicidal meant for creating problem to the law and order. The same voice, in fact, is heard from the so-called Marxists installed in governmental power, when their leader term the slogan of the movement as 'dirty', 'undemocratic' 'conspiratorial'. Suvapasanna said that the government which have befooled peasants for all these years, must not be allowed to remain in power. Bibhas Chakraborty expressed his indebtedness to the struggling peasants for imbuing him with the spirit of coming out in support of the mass movement of toiling, oppressed people, with feeling from the bottom of the heart. Kabir Sumon made it clear that the slogan of the CPI(M)-led Left Front, "Agriculture is our foundation" was nothing but a hoax.

The meeting ended with the resolve to carry on the peasants' struggle further and to greater heights.

All India MSS Inaugurates of Year-long Observance of Centenary of International Women's Day



Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, Central Committee member, SUCI, addressing at Nizam College Centenary Hall, Hyderabad



Calcutta, West Bengal



Guwahati, Assam



Patna, Bihar



Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Vandalism at Mangalore pub

Only correct ideological struggle can put an end to capitalist- imperialist design of promoting pub-culture

Contd. from page 2

answer which is available. Nothing, we must understand, happens without any reason. There is a causal basis, causal connection of every phenomenon. Any thinking mind will appreciate that no saner thought about life can approve of such a stifling situation. If this is not what the people want, who is benefitting from these aberrations, the perverse decomposed thoughts eating into the very vitals of life? Who is perpetrating all these attacks and for what? Answer lies in the economic-political system of the country. It is not difficult to understand that those who are beneficiaries of this discriminatory system, who fill their coffers by squeezing out the last drop of blood of the toiling millions, who enjoy all fruits of civilization created by the sweat and blood of the working people, who grow and prosper at the cost of hunger and deprivation of the suffering humanity will only intend to prolong this exploitative inequitable social order. And we all know that it is the oppressive exploitative capitalist system which is the root of all evils. It is the ruling capitalist class who is usurping all benefits of civilization by denying and depriving the people of their legitimate dues by sheer force. With the help of coercive state machinery in its hands, the ruling bourgeoisie is controlling the economics and politics of the country in such a way as to be subservient to its narrow sectarian class interest. Anyone who is conversant with the basics of social science, the history of civilization and social progress knows that the realm of culture, the mental world is the superstructure of a given economic base. He also knows that those who control economics and politics also control the spheres of social relations and culture. So, it is not difficult to understand that this planned attack on culture, ethics and morality is perpetrated by the ruling capitalist class now in its death throes following inexorable course of history.

Why has it targeted the realm of culture? The answer is not far to seek. In this hour of grave crisis in every walk of life, the suffering people will make every effort to build up struggle for existence out

of life's necessity. And this struggle ought to be a conscious one and in keeping with the historically determined course of social progress by overcoming all hindrances and obstacles. It is the moribund decadent capitalist rule which is impeding the path of social progress and breeding all maladies and miseries. Unless capitalism is overthrown, there is no respite from this stifling situation. So the struggle for existence must be identified in the revolutionary struggle for overthrowing capitalism. And as building blocks of that struggle, there has to be a surge of sustained intense organized united democratic movement on the burning problems of life based on higher ethics, morality and culture, surrogates of emerging new social thoughts conducive to social progress. It is in course of this movement that real revolutionary leadership also emerges to take the struggle to its logical culmination. This is what the ruling capitalist class dreads most haunted by the fear-complex of anti-capitalist revolution which the working class is historically poised to lead. So, as counter-offensive it directs its attack against culture so that the moral backbone of the working people as well as other sections of the toiling people is broken and they are dispossessed of the necessary mental strength, emasculated from within to transform protest agitations into revolutionary movement, courageously rise against the exploitative capitalist order. This is the crux of the whole issue.

Rotten thoughts to be combated by right thoughts

So it is clear that the ruling capitalist class in order to provide extra lease of life to its decadent moribund tyrannical class rule and stem revolutionary upsurge against such rule is out to pollute mind with either sex-perversion, consumerism and vulgarism or all kinds of revivalist thoughts, blind religious faith, bigotry and fatalism. The proliferation of pub-culture is part of this greater conspiracy to dehumanize the people. So those who are visibly perturbed if not overwhelmingly disturbed at this rapid penetration of perverted

imperialist culture ought to realize that mere lamentation, moaning or groaning will not keep this menace at bay nor can we get rid of this ruinous invasion in any way we like. Mere emotional outcry or self-styled reaction will lead us nowhere. While their concern is genuine and reaction is justified, what is demanded of them is to direct their protest and resistance along the right course. As we have discussed above, capitalist rulers in their vested interest are hatching conspiracy to dehumanize people. Hence, this attack on culture and morality can be repelled only if a fierce counter ideological-cultural movement conducive to the task of overthrowing capitalism is released in right earnest. Spread or predominance of a vile idea or thought can only be stemmed or curbed if a counter-idea or counter-thought stemming from the urge of social progress and conducive to social necessity is released. As propagation of this new thought gains momentum, finds space in the mindset of the people and remoulds the process of thinking, the odious preachings of noxious ideas about life beats retreat and is ultimately extirpated. Short of that, mere protest and forcible closure of pubs and bars will be of no avail. Rather, it would help the apologists of pub-culture to confuse and confound the whole issue by branding such attacks as infringement on individual freedom to profess one's own cultural beliefs and practices. If the correct concept in this regard does not dawn upon the people in general and they fail to relate the menace with the capitalist conspiracy to dehumanize the masses, they might well get carried by this deviant tactics of the perpetrators of this crime. On the other hand, absence of necessary theoretical clarity might also provoke another section staunchly opposed to such rotten imperialist mal-culture to rally behind even the arch reactionaries who in order to buttress their ulterior motive of dividing people on communal or other divisive line and cash in on popular sentiment feign hostility to such pub liquor culture. In either case, what suffers is people's cause and what triumphs is the sinister design of the ruling bourgeoisie.

Who are these so-called crusaders?

In the instant case of Mangalore violence, those who spearheaded the attack are Hindu-fanatics. Mutalik and his ilk belong to the arch communal Hindu fundamentalist RSS and *Sangh Parivar* which, we all know is part and parcel of the exploitative capitalist system. BJP, their political outfit, is one of the most trusted representatives of the ruling Indian bourgeoisie. During its rule at the centre and in various states, BJP has taken no step to stop proliferation of this noxious imperialist culture. On the other hand, its has been a continuous attempt to foment all kinds of obscurantist ideas, religious bigotry, revivalist thoughts, regressive mentality and above all, worst communal frenzy to give shape to bourgeois class design of blunting thinking process and thwarting germination of higher creative progressive values and ethics conducive to social progress. Thus, it has been directly instrumental in bringing about the cultural degeneration. So there is no question of these bourgeois forces leading genuine crusade against any variety of rotten bourgeois culture. What the Sri Ram Sena wing of *Sangh Parivar* did at Mangalore to pretend opposition to pub-culture was to buttress an altogether different motive. Sensing disapproval of the pub-culture by common people, the *Sangh Parivar* on the eve of elections wanted to encash on that. Hence, they embarked on such a vandalism which has no connection whatsoever with genuine concern about this growing menace of pub-culture. Rather, it is a kind of diversionary tactics so that people's protest does not get crystallized along right track. Notably, they did not utter a single word against imperialist cultural invasion or penetration. In keeping with their communal credential, they sought to project 'pub-culture' as 'Christian culture' and hence inimical to Indian tradition or Indian culture, that is 'Hindu culture'. Thus, the whole approach had been from a communal angle which, in the light of the discussion made above, is equally detrimental to the interest of

Contd. on page 7

Vandalism at Mangalore pub

Pathetic exposure of cultural degeneration in Indian capitalist society

Contd. from page 6

the common people and deterrent to growth and development of the ideological movement conducive to anti-capitalist revolution. Naturally, as mentioned earlier, these Hindu-fundamentalist vandals also grabbed some support from the judiciary-administration and vote-seeking politicians whose sole aim is to exploit popular sentiments for securing a space in the corridor of power. Even a section of monopoly-controlled media which on and often champion this rotten imperialist culture as modernism went whole hog to justify the attack. Danger inheres here. So, the well-meaning people who would like to see cultural degeneration eradicated must beware of these forces, in a sense with greater caution than they need be with the advocates of rotten pub-culture. The latter nakedly stand in favour of the putrid capitalist-imperialist culture and thus expose themselves relatively easily. But forces like the Sri Ram Sena are veiled agents of the ruling class, the capitalists. They pose a greater danger to people, as they wish to befool people playing upon their genuine feelings against the fast spreading cultural degeneration in the society. On one hand, the saffron brigade of RSS-BJP are enacting Mangalore-like incident by pressing Mutalik like vandals in action while on the other it is in the aggregate interest of the ruling capitalist class working overtime to keep people arrested within the precincts of depraved debased decaying bourgeois cultural thoughts. So unless these sham crusaders against the pub-culture are thoroughly exposed and totally isolated from the people, healthy cultural movement conducive to social progress can not be developed.

Aspects of pleasure, aesthetics and beauty

One more aspect merits discussion as extremely relevant and pertinent. The ruling class and its servitors have been unleashing a propaganda that frequenting pubs, taverns, night clubs, discotheques and even drinking, drug-consumption and enjoying vulgar sex exhibitionism are kinds of recreation, sources of seeking

pleasure. Since they provide pleasure, they are aesthetically satisfying modes of enjoyment. And debarring one from having pleasure in any of these forms is a clear encroachment on one's freedom. Hence, it is imperative that we have a clear idea as to what we mean by pleasure, aesthetics and freedom.

We all know that truth is beauty and beauty is truth. By truth, what is meant is truth of life, of social progress of enrichment of mind, of higher thoughts and values that will lead and elevate the humanity to higher mode of life, both materially and spiritually. Estranged from the objective condition and social context, from the scientifically determined course of social progress, there can be no truth of life. Any other version is either distortion or travesty of truth. Pleasure or nourishment of mind by appreciation or enjoyment of beauty is inseparably linked to the concept of beauty and hence truth. So mind can be nourished only by way of appreciation of beauty that is derived from truth of life. That is how real pleasure can be relished. Any other definition of pleasure is misleading and incorrect. Instead of refreshing the mind with creative emotion, such brand of pleasure will only pollute the mind and make it subservient to instinct. As Lenin once observed that if thirst is sought to be quenched by drain water, one should be aware of its ruinous consequences. Similarly, aesthetics or capacity to appreciate beauty is also related to cognition of truth. So when the truth is that social progress and emancipation of mankind can be achieved only by overthrowing capitalism, anything that does not conduce to this historic necessity is not truth and hence neither beautiful nor source of real pleasure. Any contrary argument will overtly or covertly will subserve worn-out bourgeois class interest and is hence reactionary.

Similarly, freedom is not synonymous with anarchy or license to do anything or behaving in any manner. The concept of freedom lies in the recognition of social necessity or the truth of life. So one can enjoy real freedom if one can identify social necessity or the historically determined course of social

progress as well as its laws and work in accordance with those laws to accelerate social advancement. So freedom can never be unbridled but must contain a sense of reasonable restriction which comes from the obligation to uphold social cause and submit the self to that. This is the truth about freedom. Delinked from truth, real pleasure, sense of aesthetics and enjoyment of freedom would remain ever elusive. If things are not viewed in this right perspective, the desired crusade can not be undertaken against perverted imperialist pub-culture.

Remedy lies in intensifying anti-capitalist movement

It should be realized that Mangalore variety of vandalism by the agents of the bourgeoisie can never free people from the influence of any harmful, even obnoxious thoughts, ideas and practices. Rather, it muddles the issue, misdirects the movement and thereby diffuses the cause and the goal. Such vandalism would only help degeneration, in this case, the pub culture to grow further, really fulfilling the heinous design of the ruling class. This is the truth that can not be missed or ignored under any circumstances. So those who anxiously and painfully watch the social malady that is fast taking its roots through pubs and malls etc., those who feel the urge to free the

society of this degeneration, must recognize that eradication of the malady lies in strengthening and intensifying the revolutionary struggle to overthrow capitalism and the ideological-cultural movement conducive to the same. As we said earlier, onslaught of rotten reactionary thoughts are to be fought and defeated by acquiring, nurturing, cultivating and unleashing progressive higher thoughts. If people's movements are based on higher proletarian culture, ethics and morality, it will prove to be a deterrent to spread of reactionary bourgeois cultural thoughts. The cultural milieu of movement will create congenial environment for cultivation of higher thoughts. Alongside, if a fierce all-embracing ideological-cultural movement based on Marxism-Leninism, the loftiest ideal of the era, is conducted right from the grass root level, all such vile bourgeois ideas, decadent cultural thoughts can be effectively combated and ultimately overpowered. So if Mangalore-like incident erupts, well-meaning people must come forward in protest and fight. But this fight must be on the basis of higher thoughts and with due consciousness about the pernicious effects of such vile imperialist culture as well as firm resolve to extirpate the same along the right course.

SUCI and AIMSS demands exemplary punishment against rapist police officer in Haryana

On 21 February last, SUCI and AIMSS lodged a vehement protest against the rape of a minor girl by a police officer at Mahendragarh of Karnool in Haryana.

Two youths had kidnapped that teenager on 9 February. On 13 February she was found deserted on the street. The said police officer picked up the girl and took her to the police station instead of reaching her to the parents. There she was savagely raped throughout the night. Even the said police officer snapped her nude and threatened to wipe her out including her family, if she dared reveal this

dastardly act. After the Haryana News Channel had divulged the news, SUCI and AIMSS workers and supporters organized protest demonstration at the police station demanding immediate and severe punishment of the said police officer. Comrade Kavita Chandra, AIMSS member and Comrades Rajendra Singh and Ramfal, SUCI Haryana State Committee members, addressed the gathering at the P.S. Comrade Shyamali Mukherjee, council member, AIMSS, met the family of the girl and expressed sympathy on behalf of the organization.

IAPSCC condemns arrest of 57 activists of democratic and revolutionary organizations in Turkey

International Anti-imperialist and People's Solidarity Coordinating Committee (IAPSCC) in a statement issued on 12 March 2009 strongly condemned the arrest by the Turkish Government of 57 activists of democratic and revolutionary organizations. These organizations are fighting for the cause of the common people of Turkey and their arrest once more brings into focus the fascistic attack of the Government on democratic and revolutionary movements. IAPSCC demanded that the arrested persons must be immediately and unconditionally released and that the Turkish Government desist from such heinous attack on the democratic rights of the people. IAPSCC expressed solidarity with the fighting people of Turkey and called upon the democratic minded people all over the world to condemn this act of the Turkish Government and to organize movements to put international pressure on the Government for the release of the prisoners. IAPSCC affirmed conviction that ultimate victory belongs to the people and that fascistic rulers will surely be defeated through revolutionary struggle of the people based on a correct ideology.

AIDSO Study Camp in Kerala

From 5 to 7 February 2009 the South Zone Study Camp of the AIDSO was held at Ernakulam in Kerala with 130 organizers from Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu attending it. The camp, based on two books – one "On Dialectical Materialism and Revolutionary Life" by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and the other, "Some Aspects of Students' Movement" by Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, was conducted by Comrade Provash Ghosh, Member, SUCI, Central Committee and adviser, AIDSO. Comrade Ghosh highlighted upon the life-struggle of the party leaders and cadres, the problems faced by them while carrying out the work, and possibilities opened before the organization. Comrade Krishna

Chakraborty, Member, Central Committee, SUCI, discussed the questions such as why Marxism is necessary to free the society from the yoke of all exploitations, how dialectical materialism is instrumental in advancement of the society. Comrade C. K. Lukose, Kerala State Secretary, SUCI, expounded in his address why such camps are necessary off and on.

Earlier Comrade V. Venugopal, SUCI Kerala State Committee member and former President of AIDSO inaugurated the camp. Comrade M.N. Sriram, President, AIDSO, and Comrade Sourav Mukherjee, General Secretary, AIDSO also addressed the camp. The drama group of the Karnataka AIDSO staged a play on Singur.

Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) on emerging situation in Bangladesh

Comrade Khalequzzaman, the Convener of BSD issued a statement on 26 February, 2009 giving out his reaction on the situation emerged after the incident of 25th February at the BDR camps all over the country as well as at its headquarters of Pilkhana of Dhaka. In his statement he said, "We are shocked and worried at the sad incident of armed revolt and the loss of lives taken place at the BDR headquarters as an outburst of lingering deprivation and discontent. We believe, however sad might it be, the problem cannot be resolved through coercion or military intervention. The solution lies only in discussion and political will. The best way would be to proceed, both inside and outside parliament, in cohesion with all the political parties. It is the government that has to exert the main role to make this all-party initiative effective. We appeal to all concerned to keep patience and strongly demand of the government to find appropriate political solution through peaceful discussion shunning the coercive path."

Make SUCI candidates victorious in the coming Parliament and Assembly elections to strengthen democratic movement

PARLIAMENT

State	Name of the Constituency	Name of the Candidate
Andhra Pradesh	1. Secunderabad	Comrade Ch. Murahari
Assam	1. Dhubri 2. Mangaldoi 3. Silchar 4. Barpeta 5. Karimganj (SC)	Comrade Minhar Ali Mondal Comrade Bhupendra Nath Kakati Comrade Kantimoy Deb Comrade Jaynal Abedin Comrade Prabhash Sarkar
Bihar	1. Vaisali 2. Munger	Comrade Indradev Roy Comrade Promode Kumar
Delhi	1. North East Delhi	Comrade Manager Chaurasia
Gujarat	1. Baroda	Comrade Tapan Dasgupta
Haryana	1. Rohtak	Comrade Anoop Singh
Jharkhand	1. Jamshedpur	Comrade Sitaram Tudu
Karnataka	1. Bangalore South 2. Bangalore Central 3. Bellary 4. Gulbarga 5. Raichur	Comrade H. G. Jayalakshmi Comrade K. Uma Comrade A. Ramanjanappa Comrade H. V. Diwakar Comrade K. Somasekhar
Kerala	1. Trivandrum 2. Quilon 3. Pathanamthita 4. Mavelikkara (ST) 5. Alleppey 6. Kottayam 7. Chalakkudy 8. Kozhikode	Comrade M. Shajarkhan Comrade S. Radhakrishnan Comrade V. P. Kochumon Comrade K. S. Sasikala Comrade S. Seethilal Comrade Mini K. Philip Comrade Dr. P. S. Babu Comrade D. Surendranath
Tamil Nadu	1. North Chennai 2. Theni 3. Cuddalore	Comrade V. Sivakumar Comrade P. Pandian Comrade Chandra
Uttar Pradesh	1. Jaunpur Sadar 2. Ghosi	Comrade Jagdish Chandra Asthana Comrade Shailendra Kumar
West Bengal	1. Joynagar (SC) 2. Jhargram (ST) 3. Bolpur (SC) 4. Burdwan-Durgapur 5. Bankura 6. Purulia 7. Murshidabad 8. Malda (North) 9. Raiganj 10. Jalpaiguri (SC)	Comrade Tarun Mondal Comrade Sushil Mandi Comrade Bijoy Dolui Comrade Shyamali Mukherjee Comrade Lakshmi Sarkar Comrade Bisambar Mura Comrade Khadija Banu Comrade Mallika Sarkar (Nandi) Comrade Manas Jana Comrade Haribhakta Sardar

State Assembly Elections, 2009 of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa

	Name of the Constituency	Name of the Candidate
Andhra Pradesh	1. Khairatabad 2. Anantapur (Urban)	Comrade S. Govindarajulu Comrade G. Lalitha
Orissa	1. Jashipur (ST) 2. Binjharpur (SC) 3. Talcher	Comrade Shambhunath Naik Comrade Surendra Mallik Comrade Manasi Swain

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