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Founder Editor-in-Chief : COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

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## SUCI (C) strongly opposes most unjust steep hike in Kerosene-Diesel-LPG Prices by anti-people pro-capitalist UPA government and calls for developing countrywide powerful resistance movement

*Strongly condemning and vehemently opposing the most unjust steep hike in the retail price of Kerosene-Diesel-LPG, Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI (C), had issued the following statement on 25-06-11 :*

The latest hike in the retail prices of Kerosene, Diesel and LPG by Rs 2 per litre, Rs 3 per litre and Rs 50 per cylinder respectively effected by the Congress-led UPA government close on the heels of conclusion of assembly elections in five states is not only precipitous and atrocious on every count but is virtually an offensive launched against the countrymen gasping under ever tightening noose of ruthless capitalist exploitation. The huge spurt in the already spiralling prices of all essential commodities that is bound to happen as a sequel to this brazenly anti-people move will make life yet more hellish and suffocating while the profit-seeking monopolists, large corporates and MNCs will have their swelling coffer overflowing at the cost of the suffering millions. It is clear that while a host of largesse and

plethora of concessions and incentives are offered to the industrialists and big business enmeshed in insoluble intense market crisis endemic of the decadent moribund oppressive corrupt capitalist system, the entire burden of this capitalist crisis is squarely passed on to the oppressed people under flimsy and fraudulent pretexts by the government subservient to the ruthlessly exploitative ruling capitalist class. The game of deceit and deception is glaringly manifest in the fact that the government is projecting 'under-recovery', a fancy term coined to indicate notional calculation of differential between domestic price and possible sale price in international arena, as loss incurred by the oil companies and thereby suppressing the truth of huge profits being made by the oil behemoths including the PSUs. Even the bogey raised about pressure of providing increasing subsidy is bunkum since as per published figures, oil revenues earned by the government in the form of taxes, duties, dividend etc. is more than double of the subsidy

figure. Moreover, the tax and cess component of the retail tariff is almost 50% and the government, if it so desires, can give much relief to the common people by reducing, if not withdrawing, such taxes and cess. So each and every excuse advanced by the government to justify this strangulation of common people is a blatant lie and purported to protect the commercial interest of the wealthy corporates. It is, therefore, clear that the government hell bent in fattening the purse of the monopolists and corporate sector, is not having slightest of hesitance to deal deadly blows upon common masses who have turned skin and bone due to incessant fierce attacks by the ruling capitalist class. It is imperative that suffering people resist with all might such savage onslaught on their life and livelihood.

We, therefore, urge upon the toiling people to build up powerful protracted organized resistance movement at every part of the country and force the government to rescind this awfully pernicious decision.

## On the role of SUCI(C) in recent times in West Bengal

As it is known to many, our Party SUCI(C) forged unity with the Trinamool Congress (TMC) in order to 'save the historic Singur and Nandigram movements' in particular and 'in the interest of democratic movement' in general from the fascistic attack of CPI(M) designed to brutally crush democratic movements of people by police and even criminal gangs and perpetrating indiscriminate murder, mass rape, torture, loot and arson. This Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary of the Party made clear to people at large in his speech on 24 April 2010, the 62nd Party foundation day. He emphasized that in such a situation with CPI(M) emerging as a veritable threat to people's movement, which had 'created a suffocating situation in the state with its oppressive rule' of several decades, it was imperative that it must be removed from power. 'CPI(M) must go', that was the goal set before people and the SUCI(C)-TMC unity was a step towards that as it was felt that "there was a

necessity to unite all left parties as well as the TMC against this fascistic onslaught of the CPI(M)". In the same speech, he further added that "even if TMC is saddled in the government, SUCI(C) will continue to carry out democratic movements on the burning issues of people's life, on the pressing problems of the workers and peasants" in the same manner as we have been launching movements in West Bengal one after another against the anti-people policies of both the central and the state governments since 1977, holding aloft the banner of Marxism-Leninism-Leftism. He said, "We had been the party on the street, we remain to be in that position."

The same views were reiterated by Comrade Provash Ghosh, at the Press Conference in Calcutta on 22 March, as also at the Meet the Press arranged by the Calcutta Press Club on 19 April where he clearly stated, "If CPM is defeated, our Party will not join the government; we will remain in opposition, since TMC is a Gandhaite

bourgeois parliamentary party and our Party is a Marxist revolutionary party". Along with that in the said Press Conference, he detailed the background and motive behind the TMC's not allotting any seat other than Joynagar and Kultali under the pressure of the industrial and corporate houses, to which SUCI(C), a Party relying on people's movements always posed a danger. It is also known that to satisfy industrial house TMC not only allotted merely 2 seats, but also voted for CPI(M) to ensure defeat of SUCI(C) in Kultali. Later on, an extended GB meeting organised by WB State Committee was held on 2nd June at Netaji Indoor Stadium, the largest auditorium in Kolkata, which was attended by more than 5000 selected activists. Addressing the meeting Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary of the party, in the light of the teachings of the great Marxist authorities including Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, elaborately dwelt on the Party's

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# Reintroduction of *Vidhan Parishad* a historic blunder

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experience during the last Assembly elections, the support and love it received from people, the lapses that were made during the whole campaign and process, the lessons that the Party and the comrades learnt from these and what should be the tasks of the comrades in the changed situation. Further, he pointed out the specific tasks to consolidate and expand the Party and mass fronts, measures to elevate the ideological standards of leaders and cadres of the Party to meet the present requirement. It was not just inspiring to those present, it threw ample lights on what the Party had done and what it had to do. Comrades became very much inspired and jubilant.

The Party is carrying out its activities in the post-elections period, in which TMC along with Congress has formed the ministry. Incidentally, we were offered a berth in the ministry by TMC, which we naturally rejected. Here, in this write up we highlight our views and reactions on different issues vital for people's movements and people's life that have cropped up with the different steps taken by the TMC government.

## Reintroduction of Legislative Council

Even before the last elections, in face of the severe public criticism to TMC's allotting only two seats to SUCI(C), TMC informed us that SUCI(C) would be given a seat in the Legislative Council (*Vidhan Parishad*). By that, it came to be known for the first time that TMC was harbouring a plan to revive the Legislative Council that was abolished several decades back. In this regard, Comrade Provash Ghosh said at the Press Conference held on 22 March: "I am telling it right here, we are against the setting up of *Vidhan Parishad* as a matter of principle. The salary and perks of the MLAs and MPs are increasing every now and then. This is a huge drainage on public exchequer. And setting up a *Vidhan Parishad* over and above the State Assembly means an even greater waste of public money. In the past when at one time there was a *Vidhan Parishad* in the state, we were opposed to that also. Hence, we do not want to be a party to that. I am openly saying this." People at large were also apprised of the reasons why we were opposed to

reintroduction of the Legislative Council, by way of a handbill distributed in massive scale. Subsequently, West Bengal State Committee of the Party sent a letter to the Chief Minister on 2 June, 2011 and finally when there was a decision to place the proposal in the Assembly on 28 June, Comrade Soumen Bose, West Bengal State Secretary, along with two other members of the State Secretariat met the Chief Minister on 27 June and submitted a memorandum to register our objection. Among other points, it was stated in the memorandum that: "The process of forming the *Vidhan Parishad* itself involves a few serious questions to ponder over. It would have members one-third in number as that of the Legislative Assembly. For West Bengal the number is 98. By the provisions of the Constitution those members of the *Vidhan Parishad* are not directly elected by people. One-sixth of them are nominated by the Governor and approved by the Ministry. Out of the rest a section is elected by the MLAs, a section by the Graduates, another section by the Teachers and still another section by the autonomous institutions like Municipalities, Jilla Parishads etc. These constituencies of the Graduates, Teachers or Municipalities have very few members. The processes of elections are also very complicated. Not everybody falling under the constituencies could be the voters. In Graduate Constituency, it even requires fees to be a voter. So people concerned seem to be least interested. Under such circumstances, can the members of the *Vidhan Parishad* be called true people's representatives? But even those members would eventually hold almost the same powers as the MLAs elected by people. Not only that, a *Vidhan Parishad* member enjoys the right to become a minister. Could any democratic system approve of that? To elect a representative to an institution is a fundamental right of people. It is the foundation of the democratic system. If that be, is it not a violation of the fundamental democratic rights, that a member of the *Vidhan Parishad* holding virtually equal rights as those of directly elected representatives of the Assembly, would be elected through an indirect election?"

Even acclaimed as a federal state, the indirect election method

instead of direct election, is in vogue, in case of the Rajya Sabha, the Upper House of the Parliament. A few members of the Rajya Sabha are also nominated by the President. Rest are elected by the MLAs of different states. The President nominates a few eminent personalities; but at the same time, taking advantage of the system, the bourgeois parties backed by the capitalists, select some such persons who can never be returned in any direct election by the people. For instance, Indian monopolists are becoming members of the legislative bodies through becoming members of the Rajya Sabha and are thus assuming direct role in formulating state policies or in framing of laws. Obviously, it is not strange to see people like Navin Jindal or Anil Ambani advocating for legislations conducive to further augment the quantum of monopoly capitals which are amassed through rampant plundering of exploited people.

Secondly, these members of the *Vidhan Parishad*, a part nominated, another elected indirectly, will enjoy equal rights and privileges, and could have become ministers, like the MLAs elected directly by people. These members, along with their family members would enjoy privileges in regard to travelling by bus-train or airplanes, medical treatment, benefits after termination of their terms, and in many such cases. The whole expense would be met from the taxes, which are nothing but the hard-earned money of people. But you yourself have repeatedly talked about the miserable condition of the state exchequer. You must be aware, that earlier too, we have protested hike of salaries and allowances of MLAs and MPs and termed such imposition of increasing burden on the people as unethical, unjust and anti-people. So in this case too, we do not consider it right to burden people further with this additional financial commitment. It may be mentioned here that the national leaders at the time of independence thought of and introduced this system of maintaining two houses, Upper and Lower, in the legislative bodies following the British model. For instance, in England there are the House of Commons, the lower house for commoners and the House of Lords for the elites, aristocrats and owners. By this, the house elected by people has been belittled. In India too, following this system of the

British imperialists, the Assembly elected on universal franchise has been termed the lower house and has thus been used to bring disunity in people. Other Western countries have shunned this system.

Third, you know it well in what economic deprivation and plight, crores of common people of the state are now living in. Millions of unemployed or retrenched workers have no means of earning; debt-trap is pushing poor-lower and middle peasants to commit suicide. Expense for education or medical treatment has gone beyond the reach of common people. Added to these, the huge expense for the proposed *Vidhan Parishad* is not only unnecessary, we think, it is not proper for any democratic system and institution.

Fourth, *Vidhan Parishad* is nothing but an ornamental body. It cannot promulgate laws nor can make budget allotments. Only the assemblies have these rights. It is welcome for the country if socially conscious; intellectuals and civil society come forward to take part in the legislative bodies and governance. Such personalities may be brought into the assemblies through direct elections by people. You have already brought some such personalities selected by you in the Assembly through the last election. It is possible to have the opinions and advices of those who did not wish to contest in the elections, by making them advisors in different committees and arrange regular meetings of these bodies for exchange of views. That would have been descent for democracy. It is true that for performing an exemplary role in support of the Singur-Nandigram movements and influencing public opinion in subsequent days, a large section of artistes-intellectuals-litterateurs did not have to be included in some forum or other. They discharged this extremely significant role just as socially conscious citizens. In the past, if and when it was found that some eminent personalities beyond the known orbit of political arena could play indispensable and important role in governance, they were put up as candidates for the Assembly elections and were made victorious. It did not require any *Vidhan Parishad* for the purpose.

Lastly, we would like to add that there is no democracy; rather it is

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## Comrade Manik Mukherjee participated in the Cairo Conference of the First Forum of Solidarity with Arab Revolutions

The First Forum of Solidarity with Arab Revolutions was held at Commercial Club in Cairo on June 3-5, in celebration of the victory of the Egyptian people's movement, and in support of people's movements in Arab countries. The Conference was convened by 14 organizations, including the Egyptian Communist Party, Coalition of Lotus Revolution, People's Committees for Defense of Revolution, Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions and other socialist and democratic organizations. The discussion themes in the Conference were a number of key issues, including, "dilemmas and achievements of the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions, the future and contradictions of the current wave of Arab revolutions, the relation between the Arab revolution and imperialism and Zionism, Arab revolutions in the general framework of democratic struggles historically and internationally, Arab revolution and the struggle against neo-liberalism and capitalist globalization." About 300 delegates participated and more than 12 countries from America, Europe, Africa and Asia including the Arab world were represented. The Plenary Session was held on June 3 in which Manik Mukherjee, Member, Polit Bureau, SUCI (C) and General Secretary of International Anti-imperialist and People's Solidarity Coordinating Committee (IAPSCC) was a speaker. Manik Mukherjee said that the wave of people's movements in the Arab countries and North Africa started in Tunisia and afterwards it spread to Egypt and other countries. After protracted and determined militant fight the people became victorious in Tunisia and Egypt. In Egypt students, youths, intelligentsia, women and people from all sections of society, became united to carry forward the battle and raised the demand of ouster of Hosni Mubarak, the autocratic ruler and stooge of imperialism. Sustaining the movement for over two weeks, the people could eventually force Hosni Mubarak to resign and relinquish power. This victory once more demonstrates the tremendous power of united determined people's movements. Manik Mukherjee, along with freedom-loving people of the whole

world, on behalf of IAPSCC, congratulated the Egyptian people. He said that some think that the movement was directed against the autocratic ruler. But it is only partially true, the people's discontent was also against their misery and deprivation under the capitalist rule, the exploitation of the workers and peasants, unemployment, massive immigration in search of jobs in other countries, and so many attendant economic and cultural problems in their life. The flaming desire to get out of this suffocating condition has fuelled this movement. The wave of movements



*Comrade Manik Mukherjee addressing the conference*

in the Arab countries and North Africa stemmed from this desire to attain freedom from oppression, exploitation and domination. But to give shape to this burning desire of the people, the leadership of a correct revolutionary party is an imperative. Without the revolutionary leadership the movement cannot reach its desired goal. The people of Egypt through their glorious struggle have put an end to the autocratic rule, but the revolution, in my opinion, is half-done yet waiting to be finished. That revolution is the overthrow of capitalism to establish socialism, which only can serve as the ultimate goal for people to attain freedom from all oppression and exploitation and which task has to be completed under the leadership of a genuine revolutionary party. Then and then only we can conclude that the revolution has been accomplished. Till then rulers may be changed, even notorious autocratic rulers may be overthrown; but the capitalist system that breeds discrimination and injustice, that perpetrates exploitation and oppression will

remain intact and people's suffering and plight will continue.

The Forum of Solidarity with Arab Revolutions also adopted a Final declaration, extending solidarity with people's movement now sweeping across the Arab world and North Africa including the struggle of the Palestinian people against the Zionist Israel, as also their regional and international impacts in regard to movements for democracy as well as anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist movements.

On January 4 and 5, 6 different sessions were organized on different themes, followed by the Final

and abject miseries, the people finally rose up in protest to drive away the autocratic rulers. It first started in Tunisia, and then spread like wild prairie fire to engulf a host of countries in North Africa and Middle East. In both Tunisia and Egypt the common people from all sections of society fought with unbending zeal and uncompromising spirit and stood up for justice, democracy, dignity, civil liberties and the basic right to choose their own destiny. And they tasted the first phase of victory when the despotic rulers of these two countries had to step down from the seat of power. Common people throughout the world rejoiced in this victory, and along with the freedom-loving people of the entire world we salute the Egyptian and Tunisian people for their unbending spirit, uncompromising struggle and glorious victory.

But this sent a shock-wave of panic among the reactionaries, the autocratic rulers, the imperialist powers headed by the USA and their Zionist ally Israel. They could see the writing on the wall and realize that people's power becomes invincible when they are united in a fight for the just cause. They were afraid that the events in Tunisia and Egypt could act as catalysts in triggering massive movements that would drive away the autocratic rulers, the imperialist powers and the Zionists from the Middle East and free the Arab people from capitalist exploitation. So the imperialists started to meddle in the internal affairs of countries, and to get militarily involved in the legitimate struggle of the people under the pretext of acting from a 'humanitarian' standpoint. In some countries they are fomenting troubles through agent provocateurs. Their sole aim and objective is to perpetuate their hegemony and to ensure their freedom to exploit the rich natural resources of the region. We demand in strongest terms that all the imperialist powers withdraw their military presence from the region forthwith and refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of countries. It is an inalienable right of the people to decide the form of their governance and to settle all their internal problems as they dim

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## Opposing strikes-bandhs-blockades infringes on very right to protest

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undemocratic, in bringing somebody into a representative body for governance in any way other than through direct elections. The demand for abolishing *Vidhan Parishad* in the state was raised because it was in contravention of democracy. The demand was logical and proposal was so strong that all the political parties had to accept it in 1969. Even Congress then in opposition agreed to it. There has not been any significant change in the situation so much so that the *Vidhan Parishad* which was abolished through due legal process will have to be brought back and the same parliamentary body which once ratified the abolition should now play a reverse role to reintroduce the same. Reintroduction of the *Vidhan Parishad* will be against people's opinion. We hope, the state government will seriously think over the issue and withdraw their proposal. ..."

When in spite of this letter, the proposal was placed in the Assembly on 28th June, Comrade Tarun Kanti Naskar, the MLA from our Party from Joynagar, strongly protested it. He added that the decision of abolishing the *Vidhan Parishad* in 1969, was an historic as well as correct decision, while the present move to reintroduce *Vidhan Parishad* marks a historic blunder going to be made.

This opinion of ours, the principled stand against introduction of the *Vidhan Parishad* won support from a wide section of intellectuals and common people including a large section of TMC activists and supporters who expressed their differences with the proposal. Earlier the government decided to pass the bill on the day of its introduction. But later government changed the decision. The CM announced that she would send the proposal to a 15 member committee of elected MLAs and would wait for their views. It was clear that people's opinion against this proposal made the government step back, though they seem to be bent upon getting it through in future.

### On the Chief Minister's opinion against Bandhs-Strikes-Blockades

Commenting on the opinion of the Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee against Bandhs, Strikes and Blockades, expressed at a meet with

the industrialists on 18 June in Kolkata, Comrade Soumen Bose, West Bengal State Secretary of SUCI(C) in a statement issued on 20 June said:

"The opinion, the honourable Chief Minister has expressed against movement including blockade - strike and bandh at her meet with the industrialists, has caused a great worry to the working people and democratic minded citizens of the state. It is unthinkable that in a capitalist system, exploitation, oppression and injustice will run on in the society, but no protest-strike-bandh against those would be allowed.

Common people on whom the entire burden of capitalist crisis is squarely passed on by the rulers rise in protest and demand redress of their problems, respite from harassment-oppression-terror. Since the very days of our freedom movement, meetings, demonstrations, rallies, squatting, sit-ins, blockades, strikes or bandhs have formed means of mass movements launched in protest against the immeasurable plight and penury of the toiling masses. Resorting to such means as form of democratic movements are recognized rights in parliamentary democracy. During their rule of the last 34 years, CPI(M) had been regularly adopting anti-people policies and measures. Aided and abetted by them, the industrialists have also brought down injustice and oppression on common people. In such compelling situations, people of this state had to, time and again, articulate their protest and grievance through such rightful forms of democratic mass movements. The historic blood-shedding sustained movements of Singur- Nandigram that roused people of the entire state against the fascistic repressive rule of the CPI(M) leadership and generated an irresistible desire for a change. To make this change happen, the tide of mass movements that swept across the state was in the form of these recognized means of struggle. Millions of common toiling people of the state as well as TMC and our Party were intimately associated with these movements that burst forth in such forms.

It must be noted at this stage, that in 1960s, when CPI(M) was in the opposition, it used to take up these means with an eye to achieving some electoral gains. But as soon as it was

saddled in power, it began to brutally pound and crush any legitimate movement that developed in the forms of strike-bandhs-sit-ins-mass law violation etc against misrule of its government and exploitation and oppression perpetrated by the industrialists. While in the opposition, TMC also took recourse to these means of movements. But now after ascending to power, under pressure from the industrialists and with a view to appeasing them, it is opposing blockade-strike and bandh. This is most unfortunate.

We consider that this announcement made by the Chief Minister of this state stands against democratic movements and people's interests. So, we demand of the government to withdraw this declaration."

This opinion of the Party has been widely and warmly received by people at large belonging to different sections of life.

### Singur Movement and Singur Land Rehabilitation and Development Bill

As one of the main forces of the Singur movement against forcible grabbing of very fertile land for Tata's automobile company, our Party welcomed the Singur Land Rehabilitation and Development Bill, 2011 tabled in the Assembly on 14 June proposing return of land to the peasant owners. But at the initial stage, the Bill did only speak for giving compensation to the Tatas. At this, on the floor of the Assembly, Comrade Tarun Kanti Naskar, SUCI(C) MLA while supporting the Bill and marking it as a victory of people earned at a heavy cost of sacrifice and struggle, also pointed out that the government was contemplating paying compensation to the Tatas only, which have devastated life and livelihood of many people and caused damages and losses to them and others. But the Bill did not have any provision of paying compensation to those who had refused to accept compensation cheques from the previous CPI(M) government as a mark of their express unwillingness to hand over land to the government, to the peasants who were debarred from cultivating their lands, as those were grabbed and delivered to the Tatas as also to the sharecroppers and land labourers (khet majors) who used to work with these peasants. Comrade Naskar urged upon the government

to include this most legitimate demand in the Bill. After that, the Chief Minister in her reply, announced on the floor of the House that separate package is being worked out for them.

### Withdrawal of Centre-State Combined force from the Jangalmahal

At a Press Conference on 9 June, Comrade Soumen Bose, Secretary of the West Bengal State Committee of SUCI(C) expressed the views of our Party on the issue. A few days after he wrote a letter to the Chief Minister, which held as stated below:

A report on 16 June in the daily, Hindustan Times, revealed that there would be an all-party meeting on *Jangalmahal* at Lalgarh. On seeing this report when representative of our Party went to meet the BDO at his office at Lalgarh, he expressed surprise and said he did not anything on it. Yet our representative submitted a memorandum to him. The same paper reported on 17 June that an all party meeting was held at the Lalgarh Police Station in presence of the BDO. It was attended by TMC Block President Banbehari Roy, Congress leader Pranesh Roy, CPI(M) leader Tarun Banerjee, Jharkhand (Aditya) Party leader Manic Baske, Lalgarh BDO and OC of the Lalgarh PS. TMC proposed against withdrawing camps of the Joint Forces and others supported it. Thus the proposal to keep the joint para-military forces of the Central and the State governments was unanimously accepted. This stands in contradiction with your opinions and pledges made before the elections. So we draw your attention to the issue and seek for your intervention.

It is very sad and surprising that even though common people and all political parties including TMC as well as the police and the administration knew it well that our Party had been actively participating in the Lalgarh movement; our Party was not invited in this all-party meeting. The reality is that when democratic movement of long - deprived people of the *Jangalmahal* started since 2008, CPI(M) was very much cornered. Panic-stricken CPI(M) with help from the Central government, and with a view to crushing this democratic movement of people in a brute and fascistic way, on one hand unleashed a reign

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# Comrade Khalequzzaman on Political Situation of Bangladesh : Past and Present

*[Requested by our party SUCI(Communist) during his visit to India, Comrade Khalequzzaman, General Secretary of Socialist Party of Bangladesh (also referred as BASAD : Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal) spoke at length on the political situation of Bangladesh, present as well as past, at the University Institute Hall in Calcutta on December 13, 2010. We would publish the English rendering of the speech in Proletarian Era. The first instalment is included here. Responsibility for inadequacy in rendering, rests upon the Editorial Board of P Era.]*



*Comrade Khalequzzaman delivering his address in Kolkata*

Honourable Comrade Provas Ghosh, General Secretary of SUCI(C), the Party, which the great Marxist thinker of this era and teacher and guide, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had himself built up, the honourable leaders of the Polit Bureau and the Central Committee of the Party, Comrade Soumen Bose, member, Central committee, SUCI(C) and the president of today's programme on Bangladesh, other state and district leaders of different levels, dignitaries and dear comrades, accept our heartiest well-wishes and revolutionary greetings on behalf of the Central Committee of Socialist Party of the Bangladesh, Comrade Mobinul Haider Chowdhury and myself.

At the outset I must humbly admit that I lack the mastery and competency to present in a nutshell, the entire situation of Bangladesh covering all its aspects and the programme of our Party in its entirety. Moreover only two days before I was to arrive at Kolkata, I was given the impression that I would have to speak a few words on Bangladesh—but it was beyond my thought that I would have to address such a huge gathering as this. So, if you find some waywardness in my discourse going beyond essential issues and your expectation, I would only expect you to bear with it in fraternal tolerance.

Comrades, it is the same tradition that we have both inherited. Besides, despite being two different countries, considering their geographical contiguity, fraternity and solidarity in the revolutionary struggle of the two countries carry immense significance in respect of international communist unity. From that standpoint, once more I express my gratitude and thank you for arranging today's programme that clearly stands out as a mark of your love for us, your fraternal concern for and oneness with our revolutionary endeavour.

Comrades, you are well-acquainted with the history of India during the British rule, from its beginning to end. You also know, how Indian nationalism developed, how at the beginning of the 20th century, with the emergence of Hindu religious revivalism on one hand and Muslim communalism hinging upon a two-nation theory

on the other, Indian nationalism was transected ultimately to give rise to two states - India and Pakistan. We, the people of today's Bangladesh were thrown into an identity crisis, after India and Pakistan had been born in 1947. People of West Pakistan were included in the Pakistan nation, i.e. became the Pakistanis and the Bengali speaking people of West Bengal were included in the Indian nation, i.e. became the Indians. We were neither the Pakistanis nor the Indians — being thus dumped into a crisis of national identity. We were told that we belonged to the Pakistan nation. How could it be? We were two thousand miles apart; there was hardly any similarity, any unity, in language, culture and heritage; nor there were any economic centralism or commonness in economic interest. Religion was posed as the only bond. Even there – not all the people of East Bengal had the same faith- i.e. all were not Muslims. Moreover, what difference would it have made, had we all been Muslims? It was as clear as daylight that religion can never serve as the basis of a nation. Middle East stands as the glaring instance of that before the entire world; one country after another, sharing borders between them and all being Muslims, did not and could not emerge as one single nation. Yet we were told that we comprised one nation; the reality, the truth was otherwise, we did not belong to one nation. One year after the partition in 1947, Md. Ali Jinnah Sahib –known as the father of the Pakistan nation arrived in Dhaka. On 21 March 1948, he

announced at the public meeting of Race Course Maidan in Dhaka, that Urdu alone would be the national language of Pakistan, and ours too. As a result, from the already existing identity crisis, the entire people of East Bengal fell into a crisis of existence. This meant, we could no longer speak in our mother tongue, nor would we have any historically separate identity. We would die a cultural death. The entire population was thus bogged in such an existence crisis. Then as he repeated the same view at the Dhaka University Convocation programme, what was just a protest by raising hands at the Maidan turned into a vocal protest to say 'no', 'no!' Jinnah Sahib had thought that the noise would not be so pronounced or spread all over the country. But there it was, just as a stone thrown into the pond starts with ripples ultimately to surge forcefully against the bank, at first a strong protest on part of the student community, was later to turn into waves of protest spreading out throughout the entire country. In the backdrop of the identity crisis and then the existence crisis that we had faced ever since 1947, with imposition of Urdu thrown in – started the language movement against the conspiracy that was hatched by Pakistani rulers to destroy our language, heritage and culture for all time to come. Out of the language movement was born our 'nationality' feelings that ultimately rose to the concept and consciousness of our 'nationhood'.

Between '48 and '52 — alongside the language movement, there were sporadic peasant revolts led by the leftists like Nachole Revolt, Hajang Revolt, Nankar Revolt, on one hand and a great change coming about in the realms of thoughts, ideology and consciousness, on the other. Earlier

Pakistanis used to say 'All Muslims are brothers'. But it was witnessed when in 1952, students violated the Rule 144, thousands of common people joined in and said we want to speak in our mother tongue, they were shot at. People knew it well that those who had opened fire were Muslims and so were those shot at and killed. Is it a crime to wish to speak in one's own mother tongue? Would they be shot on the chest just for that and the streets get wet with their blood for this? Should dead bodies of young people of Bengal lie scattered on the streets only for this longing? What sort of brothers were these butchers? So, the appeal of the slogan of Muslim religion-based nationality that they had raised, fast weakened.

Consequently, just as the language movement generated national consciousness, side by side it carried associated with it many related ingredients that could help the nation grow into a matured one. When in 1952, there was firing and undaunted youths of Bengal laid down their lives — instantly a temporary martyrs' column was erected on the middle of the road. You know in Islam, only those who die in a crusade are called martyrs and none others are attributed martyrdom. But in those days songs and poems on Salam, Barkat, Rafique, Zabbar were composed and sung, and they were awarded martyrdom. The Pakistanis tried to drive home a point that they were not martyrs as they did not lay down their lives for religion. But people simply did not comply. Not only this; there was introduced a system of placing floral tributes by men and women together, at the Martyrs' column in remembrance of those who had sacrificed their lives in course of struggle; the Pakistanis let loose a denigrating campaign terming this system as anti-Shariat. Earlier only the leftists would regard Masterda Surya Sen, Pritilata, Khudiram and others as martyrs whereas they (the Pakistanis) campaigned that could never be so, since they were neither Mussalman, nor did they sacrifice lives for the sake of religion. But just as the language movement of 1952 conferred the honour of martyrdom to Salam, Barkat, Rafique and Zabbar, so also

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Masterda, Pritilata, Khudiram, Profulla Chaki, Baghajatin, all of them were honourably recognized as martyrs. In this manner, in the mental sphere of the people the religious and communal mentality started to undergo a transformation and many ingredients of secular consciousness started getting assimilated in it.

The Pakistani rulers got frightened in such a situation. Particularly before 1952 since 1948, when this movement, gradually coming out of the confines of the University Campus was extending out to districts and blocks, markets and shopping places and other areas, they resorted to another conspiracy, its object being to fan up a communal frenzy so as to reinstate the Pakistani nationality they had earlier talked of and create a division among the Hindus and the Muslims. They had attempted to instigate a riotous situation following the communal riot of 1950 in India and had used the situation to frame a law in 1951 — Abandoned Stable Property Supervision Act, simply to instigate Hindu-Muslim communalism. Abandoned properties of the Hindus who had left the land after 15 August 1947 came under its jurisdiction. It meant grabbing the properties of the Hindus by a set of hireling Muslims with state patronage behind them. It was thus aimed at inciting communal disunity and frenzy between the Hindus and the Muslims. But in this respect, though they succeeded in causing economic loss to many people belonging to the Hindu community, they were not much successful in creating any communal cleavage. However, grabbing of lands of the Hindu community people, thereby keeping them under perpetual pressure, social and psychological as well, continued under governmental patronage; parallel to it continued oppression of all sections of people including students, workers, and intellectuals, Hindus or Muslims whatever they be, for their being involved in movements.

At that time, there were some other incidents. In 1947, Pakistani rulers had spoken of a single state and one single nation, but in reality they subjected us to colonial chains. In fact this was a new phenomenon, a historic exception in the growth of a nation and state. It was a

situation, when within one and the same state the rising capitalist class, that is the underdeveloped national bourgeoisie of East Pakistan, meaning today's Bangladesh, realized that their independent development was not possible under this Pakistani colonial rule and oppression. With this urge for their independent development, they founded a political organization in 1949, naming it Awami Muslim League (*Awami* standing for people). Its president was Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani, Samsul Haque, the General Secretary, while Mujibur Rahman and Khandkar Mustaqbe were the Joint Secretaries. Thus was Awami League formed, the word Muslim being dropped later from Awami Muslim League. Through this dropping of the word "Muslim" under the leadership of Moulana Bhasani, a newer message of non-communalism was conveyed to the people of the whole country. These incidents took place one after the other. On one hand bloomed our national consciousness and elements of secular consciousness were mixing with it, on the other, stage by stage consciousness for emancipation from exploitation was added to these; how all this came about step by step, how the consciousness that we ascribe to have generated from the freedom struggle of 1971 grew up as well — all this I cannot discuss in details, I will only be presenting these issues in brief.

In the election of 1954, the Bengali bourgeoisie contesting as an United Front, came out victorious. Muslim League could not think that those who had in 1946 brought about Pakistan by fomenting communal riots raising the slogan 'Ladke Lenge Pakistan', would themselves dig the grave of Muslim League. United Front — under the leadership of *Sher-e-Bangla* (Tiger of Bengal) Fajlul Haque, Moulana Bhasani and Hossain Shaheed Sohrwardi, won with absolute majority, winning 228 constituency of a total of 237 Muslim seats. In days to follow, to save the situation for them, the Pakistani rulers hatched conspiracy of foiling the United Front Government as well took resort to various means to ignite communal riots and create communal cleavage. Only 7-8 days ahead of formation of United Front Ministry, they instigated a bloody riot between the Bengali and Urdu-

speaking Behari workers at Chandraghona Paper Mills. Immediately after the United Front Ministry took oath under the leadership of Fajlul Haque, a dreadful riot was incited in which hundreds of workers were abducted and killed at the biggest Jute Mill in Asia- i.e. Adamji Jute Mill. At that time, speech that the provincial Chief Minister — Fajlul Haque had delivered during his visit to Calcutta, was distortedly presented by an American journalist, alleging at the same time that he was against national integrity of Pakistan and distinctly inclined towards India. The Central Government applied Clause 92 (A) to dissolve the Ministry and clamped Governor's rule in East Bengal. The newly appointed Governor Iskandar Mirza threatened to shoot Moulana Bhasani to death, the latter was though out of the country then.

Despite all these, they could not gain much. Desperate in their bid to stave off the awakening of the Bengalees, Ayub Khan introduced Military Rule in 1958 and destroyed whatever little right we possessed like voting rights. He wrote a book "Friends not masters", in which he said that the people of East Bengal had evolved from lower-caste Hindus and were not fit for enjoying freedom and as because they were never subject to democratic rule, it was not applicable in their case. So he discovered a new sort of democracy — that is, Basic Democracy. He introduced a system of a presidential form of government, and election thereof, comprising 40 thousand Basic Democratic members each from East Bengal and West Pakistan. Despite some obstructions including special quota for the Hindu community in 1954, whatever little scope of people's verdict was in vogue — was now replaced by votes of just 80 thousands of Basic Democrats. This means Martial Democracy was introduced, putting on a civil cloak upon uniformed military administration. This did not help either.

Then again in 1964, they made a lot of attempts to instigate riots in Bangladesh in reaction to the one that had occurred in India following the theft of Muhammad's hair from the Hajratbaal Mosque, possibly in Kashmir. Not only that, they framed a law too, "Order for Rehabilitation of Affected People in East Bengal, 1964". It stipulated that those who

had left the country after that riot, would have their properties protected. In reality this was the prescript for their eviction. Ownership right, sale, donation, will and transfer — all these were stopped and a new oppression was started on the minorities and attempts were made to create division. At that time, they started raising the slogan "Your address and mine — Mecca and Medina." People on the contrary voiced the slogan "Your address and mine — Padma, Meghna, Jamuna". Mecca and Medina are sacred pilgrimages for the Muslims — the latter go to Mecca for Haz. Yet not more than 20-30 persons were there to respond to their slogan. Then they again raised the slogan "Who be you and me? We are Pakistani Muslims". The slogan from the opposite camp was "Who be you and me? Bengali, Bengali," "Not Pindi (Rawalpindi) but Dhaka — Dhaka, Dhaka". The slogans 'Naraye Takdir, Allahu Akbar' raised since 1946-'47 was changed into "*Jai Bangla* (Hail Bengal)". I am relating all these in details to show that in those days, the Bengali bourgeoisie too were compelled to take a stand against communalism stirred up by the Pakistani rulers. People too did not succumb to the traps the latter had set. People foiled the conspiracy that the ruling class had hatched for perpetrating their rule and exploitation over the people — in the name of so-called Pakistani Nationalism and chaining them up with religious communalism.

At a certain juncture in this phase, the Information Minister declared one day that Rabindranath — a Hindu, did not reflect Islamic culture in his songs, so those should be stopped. The common people were not in a position to enjoy and appreciate poems or literature of Rabindranath — the large majority of them had not read them either. So they (the rulers) had thought this pronouncement would not create so much reaction. But within 24 hours of the announcement — as soon as a small rally was taken out initially from Dhaka University — thousands of people, who have never even read Rabindranath's poems joined in. So did artists, litterateurs, intellectuals and cultural activists. A programme of Rabindrasangeet was held underneath the Romana Oak tree on the Bengali New Year day. The Day

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appeared in a newer form before the people of East Bengal. From beyond the practice of the business community to work out their yearly accounts and open a new account for the coming year on that day along with the custom of their treating the customers to sweets on that happy occasion, disregarding and not bearing any religious heritage, this day came out as a day of universal secular bonding and celebration, based on non-communal cultural-traditional union and joy. Right from the moment of sunrise there was a surge of people-irrespective of religion, caste and creed. All this led to such a situation that the rulers were forced to step back. Playing of Rabindrasangeet was resumed on the radio. Though people could not truly appreciate the content of poems, stories and lyrics of Rabindranath, yet, that there is an inherent relation between the Bengalees and Rabindranath and that an attack upon Rabindranath was virtually an affront, an attack on the Bengalees and their culture — this they could grasp. On that day, as students took to the road, they were hesitant to start with, wondering what response they would get. Many could not imagine thousands of people would join in. It was equally difficult for the rulers to apprehend this, and thus this effort of theirs was foiled too.

Just as the fight against the attack on our language and culture rid us of the crisis of national consciousness and a Bengali consciousness developed, so also a secular, non-communal mental make-up began to develop in social life. Side by side people could clearly make out the exploitation and discrimination perpetrated by the Pakistani rulers. Eighty per cent of the foreign currency that we earned was spent for them. No important job was meant for the Bengalees, nor was there, unfettered scope of education. Then again in 1962, Pakistan Government presented the blue print for curtailment of education by forming the Sharif Commission. Extensive students' movement developed against this and they (Pakistani rulers) could not put into effect the report of the Sharif Commission. There was no scope of proper, quality medical treatment, nor any important government jobs for the Bengalees, nor the scope of

business for them. The Bengalees could not secure license for opening mills and factories. Pitted against such deprivation and oppression at every step, people could clearly discern that on the one hand were the 22 families flourishing, West Pakistan was being enriched; Army, Navy and Air-Force — all had their headquarters there. Starting with secretaries, upto officers of middle rank, virtually none of them were Bengalees. No Bengalee was occupying any high post in any mill and factories. On top of ruthless capitalist oppression on the workers, one had to bear an extra burden of humiliation and insults for being a Bengalee. From these, the sense of protest against exploitation started to grow up among people. A whisper campaign conveyed that the Pakistani rulers worked in the interest of those 22 families. Based on the awareness that people of East Bengal are being subjected to oppression and all assets are getting appropriated by a minority section, the zeal to fight against this, urged the people towards socialism. A desire for liberation from exploitation and an awareness for socialism blossomed. In this context, the position of the leftists will be related later on.

An incident may be cited here as an evidence of the aforementioned situation. Such was the atmosphere with public opinion roused in favour of socialism, that, just imagine, the students' organization of even a bourgeois party like the Awami League was compelled to adopt the resolution of "Socialist Bangladesh" in 1970. Swapan Chowdhury, the martyr of freedom movement was then Central Publicity Secretary of Students' League. As soon as he placed this resolution it was passed with majority vote. A handful who had differed, rushed to convey the matter to Sheikh Mujib. They said that with Naxalite elements infiltrating in the Students' League and provoked by the leftists, Sirajul Alam Khan effected this misdeed, that is passing the 'Socialist Bangladesh' resolution. Mujib realized there was nothing to gain by opposing it then. Or else students and youth force would not stand by him. So he maintained silence; he had no option but to comply with it. But slogan of two different sorts showed the difference. On one hand, there were slogans like

"Valiant Bengalee — take up arms, liberate Bangladesh" or "Vietnam taught us, fight to live" etc. On the other hand, there were slogans that "Prepare bamboo sticks, destroy the petty revolutionaries," "We must be given self-rule and autonomy", etc. As these slogans were voiced, the second category found not even ten persons following them; then only they desisted from continuing.

Even the student-youth organization of the bourgeoisie could attract a wider section of students and youth by voicing these

slogans "Valiant Bengali, take up arms, liberate Bangladesh" and "Establish Socialist Bangladesh" etc. Why did such a situation crop up? What then was the role of the leftists, when despite their presence, it was the students' organization of a bourgeois party which was proposing socialism? The same tradition borne by the Communist Party of India (CPI), that was founded in 1920 and the trend of leftist movement laid down by them continued even after Pakistan was born. *(to be continued)*



*Comrade Pratap Samal, Secretary, Delhi State SUCI (C) addressing a joint rally in Delhi on 15 June protesting price-rise, corruption, etc.*

### Assam State Committee condemns brutal police firing on evicted poor at Guwahati

Strongly condemning the incident of police firing following brutal lathi-charge and bursting tear gas shells killing 3 persons including a child who had gathered at Dispur, Guwahati to protest against the unjust drive of the Congress-led State government to evict the people who have settled for long years at the government land at the hills and wetlands surrounding the Guwahati city, Comrade Kalyan Choudhury, Assam State Secretary and member, Central Committee, SUCI(C), in course of a statement issued on 22 June, 2011, demanded setting up of a high power judicial enquiry to probe into the incident, extension of adequate compensation to the families of the killed or injured and immediate issue of *patta* (lease) regularizing and settling the people at the said land as committed by the government earlier.

### Cairo Conference

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fit and proper. Israel also must be forced to give up the territories which they have occupied illegally and to honour the right of the Palestine people to have their own state, with capital at Jerusalem.

The people of Egypt and Tunisia have won their first battle. The autocratic rulers have been unseated from power. But the war against capitalist oppression and exploitation has still to be won. True emancipation of people will come only with the rooting out of all forms of oppression and exploitation. Replacing one set of autocratic rulers by another set, but keeping intact the

machinery of oppression, exploitation and tyranny will not bring about emancipation of the people. People's upheaval in Tunisia and Egypt developed spontaneously with the demand focused on removal of the despotic rulers. The rulers are ousted, but the fight must continue till the whole system of capitalist exploitation of all forms, economic, political and cultural, is dethroned through revolution. It is essential that correct revolutionary leadership is established in this fight, for it to achieve its goal of ending capitalist exploitation. I have no doubt that finally it is the people who will emerge victorious in this war.

# On the role of SUCI(C) in recent times in West Bengal

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of terror deploying the armed criminal gangs both hired as well as those of their own party, posing them as Maoists and on the other hand making this a plea, through the different camps of the joint paramilitary forces of the Centre and the state, perpetrated attacks, murders, rapes and lootings. Since the beginning, our Party exposed this conspiracy and opposed it. Were not we invited in the all-party meeting because of this? Even when our representative asked the BDO, he simply concealed the truth. Is it because our Party has opposed deployment of the joint forces and continuing it. We apprise you of this behaviour of the administration and expect your intervention and in order to solve the problems of the *Jangalmahal* including Lalgah fast, we reiterate the demands we raised to the earlier CPI(M) government.

1. The joint forces must be immediately withdrawn and normalcy be restored in the *Jangalmahal*.
2. There must be neutral investigation of all the killings that took place in the *Jangalmahal* including Netai village and the CPI(M) criminals, so-called Maoists and CPI(M) leaders as well as the responsible police officers involved in those cases must be arrested and dealt with severe punishment.
3. False cases must be withdrawn from upon all those involved

with the people's movements in the *Jangalmahal* and those held in prison including Chhatradhar Mahato and others must be forthwith released. Families of murdered people must be given a compensation of at least 5 Lakhs of rupees each and victims of rape at least one lakh rupees.

4. Judicial enquiry will have to be undertaken in regard to the mass rape by the combined forces and the CPI(M) criminals at Sonamukhi of Jhargram and those found guilty must be served with exemplary punishment.
5. Legal rights of the forest-dwellers over the forests as well as facilities concerning roads, power, irrigation, education and free diet and medicine, including medicine for snake- and dog-bites must be effectively given effect to for all the people of the *Jangalmahal*. They must be provided with food and kerosene at nominal prices.
6. Cases must be clamped against all the officers belonging to the police and administration that helped the CPI(M) party during all these past 3 years and lent support to murder- rape and looting, and they must be suspended.

Hope you would seriously consider these issues.

## On the Governor's inaugural address at the State Assembly

Participating in the debate over

the Governor's address at the State Assembly on 13 June, Comrade Tarun Naskar said that since this government has come in the course of democratic movement, people have much expectation from it. It is known to everyone that during the CPI(M)'s rule, administrative neutrality was given a decent burial. Police stations were virtually turned into CPI(M) offices. So, the announcement to free the police-administration from the clutches and influences of the ruling dispensation is welcome. People are also aware at the instance of previous CPI(M)-led government; the police unleashed savage attack on democratic movements. The barbarity during Singur-Nandigram movements bears eloquent testimony to that. So we welcome the present government's assurance of not using police to destroy democratic movement. If the government can persist with this policy for the total 5-year period, it will definitely set an example. During its rule, CPI(M) has implicated many leaders and organizers of democratic movement in false cases and sent them to jail. We welcome the policy decision of the present government to free these political prisoners and constituting a review committee for the said purpose. We demand unconditional release of political prisoners. But we are unable to concur to one of the aspects of the governor's address. It is stated that industries have been closed down because of worker's movements. This is travesty of truth.

Shutters have been downed mostly because of declaration of lock-out. According to a report of the Indian Chambers' of Commerce, there have been as many as 258 cases of lockout as against just five strikes in 2008-09. There is no question of soliciting 'justice' of the capitalist owners to the just demands of the workers. If the demands are legitimate, the owners must accept that. Such should be the labour policy of the government.

Thus, as the genuine revolutionary party, SUCI(C) is pursuing in West Bengal, the path of leftism. The consistent struggle of our Party to uphold the banner of leftism has attracted people of different sections of life, particularly the left-minded section of them. In the same vein, as in other states of the country, in West Bengal too our Party has carried on intense protest movement against the present unjust hike of prices of diesel, kerosene and cooking gas. It has organized throughout the state hundreds of street corner meetings, effigy burning, deputation to the DM or SDO, staging sit-in and gherao of their offices, street blockades and others. Enthusiast support from people, we received, as before. On the floor of the Assembly too, Comrade Tarun Kanti Naskar, while endorsing the decision to waive state duty of Rs 16 from the raised price of LPG, also wanted of the government to withdraw state imposed tax and cess on diesel and kerosene.



*Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C) addressing a massive meeting of party workers on post-poll situation held on 2 June in Kolkata. Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, member, Polit Bureau, other Central Committee members Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar, Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee, Comrade Soumen Basu as also state secretariat members were present*

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : PROVASH GHOSH