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Remembering Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh



28 September, 1907 – 23 March, 1931

“A radical change, therefore, is necessary and it is the duty of those who realize it to reorganize society on the socialistic basis. Unless this thing is done and the exploitation of man by man and of nations by nations is brought to an end, suffering and carnage with which humanity is threatened today cannot be prevented. All talk of ending war and ushering in an era of universal peace is undisguised hypocrisy.”

Statement in the Sessions Court,
page – 74 (S.W)

CPI(M) government of West Bengal pounds peaceful demonstrators on the Martyrs' Day

Once again the CPI(M) government of West Bengal has bared its savage tooth and claw to brutally suppress legitimate democratic movement and that too on the day the struggling people of the state pay respectful homage to the brave soldiers of left-democratic movement who laid their life to uphold the cause of the people. It was on August 31, 1959 that the police of the then Congress government indiscriminately lathi charged unarmed peaceful demonstrators who rallied at the Esplanade East area at the heart of Calcutta city in demand for food for the people of the state. Within minutes, 80 precious lives were taken away and grievous injuries inflicted on several hundreds. Blood spilled all over, blood of martyrs whose sacrifice epitomized the fighting spirit of the state of West Bengal held in high esteem by one to all as citadel of left-democratic movement. Exactly after 31 years, the police of the CPI(M) government showed that the ruler had changed

but not the rule. On same August 31 in 1990, the toiling people of the state unable to bear the brunt of escalating rise in the price-line and transport tariff took out a protest

demonstration under the leadership of a left consolidation with our party as the main constituent. And in the same Esplanade area, the police ran

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Sachar Committee Recommendations

How far poised to ameliorate plight and penury of exploited Muslim masses

The High Level Committee on the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim community of India, chaired by Justice Rajindar Sachar, which was constituted by the Prime Minister in May 2005, presented its report to him on 17th of November last. Since August 2006, the Committee has collected data after visiting several states, holding talks with government departments in Uttar

Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Delhi, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, NGOs and Muslim organizations. The Committee in its finding has given a detailed account of the shocking spectacle of abject poverty, massive illiteracy, non-availability of the benefits of various government-run schemes like prevention of starvation, lower access to education, lower representation in

public and private sector jobs, lower availability of bank credit for self-employment, denial of minimal healthcare, high maternal mortality, high incidence of underweight children, pathetic slum-dwelling in most unhygienic condition in urban pockets and so forth that characterize the life of the toiling Muslim population.

The Committee, therefore, recommended that to improve the

social condition of the Muslims, appropriate mechanisms have to be found out to ensure them equity and equality of opportunity, redress of grievances, promotion and enhanced access to priority sector advances as well as easy educational and commercial credit facilities etc. The Committee also emphasized on development of special mechanisms for the most backward sections

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Sachar Committee Recommendations**Like other communities, Muslims also groan under yoke of capitalist exploitation***Contd. from page 1*

among Muslims who are almost comparable historically with SCs and STs and suggested either absorption of dalit Muslims in the SC list, or at least in a separate category like Most Backward Classes (MBCs) carved out of the OBCs.

Scrutinizing substantiality of Committee report

Though there is much hype over the findings and the known bourgeois parliamentary parties like the Congress and its allies including the pseudo-Marxists like the CPI(M) and its associates posing themselves as big champions of minority interest are found to exhibit a kind of hyperactivity in demanding of the government to scurry into the implementation of roadmap, there is nothing new that the Committee has come out with. The horrific peril and penury of the poor and downtrodden irrespective of caste, creed and religion in capitalist India is no spectacular a revelation. Moreover, Sachar Committee is not the first one to comment on the predicament of the Muslim minorities. Earlier a Minority Commission was established in 1978 to look into the socio-economic conditions of the religious minorities. A high powered Syed Mohammad Committee was also set up in 1980 to study the conditions of the minorities and other backward sections. The report of the said Committee submitted in 1983 was never made public. The Minority Commission in 1995 gathered substantial amount of data to show the extent of suffering of the Muslim population. A Planning Commission Sub-Committee in 1996 too expressed serious concern over the disproportionate representation of the Muslim people in various areas. But all such reports were buried underneath and the situation continued to drift from bad to worst as the intention on the part of the power that be was never to abate the situation or ameliorate the plight of the Muslim people but to use them as 'vote banks' by dangling carrot of a better tomorrow. Going by this past experience, how is one to believe that the Sachar Committee which has not indicated in the report as to who is responsible for such a

grubby state of affairs and is reportedly constituted 'for preparing only a database to understand the extent of deprivation of the Muslim community of India' would prove to be any exception? It should also not escape the notice of anybody that timing of announcement of the Committee with much fanfare as well as the timeframe specified for publication of its findings was so chosen by the Congress-led central government as to coincide with the UP assembly elections held in last May. On the other hand, arch communal RSS-BJP-Sangh Parivar vigorously pursuing the venomous agenda of Muslim-bashing did not lose a moment in heaping scorn over the report, branding it as a text of appeasement of the Muslim minorities. So the doubt remains.

In its concluding remarks the Sachar Committee has said, "The issues relating to disparities across socio-religious communities are of utmost importance to our nation today. If this report contributes in any way in constructively dealing with these issues and in facilitating a more informed discussion on them, the Committee's efforts will be well rewarded." Naturally, a section of the well-meaning people particularly among the Muslims might be inclined to pin some hopes on the sincerity of the authors of the report and look forward to something tangible emanating out of it. So it is incumbent on us to critically examine the substantiality and suitability of the Committee recommendations, try to understand whether the same would really work to bring the desired improvement in the life condition of the Muslim masses or would just prove to be another bundle of hoaxes that the oppressed deprived Muslim people have to swallow to secure one more term in the central ministry for the Congress and its allies including the pseudo-Marxists? To seek proper answer to these pertinent questions, we must view the problem by linking with the prevailing socio-economic-political scenario obtaining in the country. Otherwise, getting into the crux of the problem of the downtrodden Muslim masses and identifying the right course of improving their social-economic-educational status would remain ever eluding.

Exploitative capitalist rule breeding all maladies

We know that with the Indian bourgeoisie usurping political power through compromise, the political independence achieved by India proved to be a mere replacement of one exploitative class-rule by another. The desired emancipation of people from exploitation did not come about. On the contrary, as an inevitable consequence to this fresh bout of ruthless capitalist exploitation by the ruling Indian national bourgeoisie, an inalienable part of moribund decadent world imperialism-capitalism, the toiling people irrespective of caste, creed, religion, ethnicity, language or region, have been bleeding white. While a handful of the rich is going on multiplying their wealth, wrenching poverty is devastating the toiling millions. Ridden by an insoluble market crisis endemic of the capitalist system, the ruling bourgeoisie is shifting the entire burden of its crisis on the people through its savage economic policies implemented through its pliant governments, both central and in the states. Soaring prices of essential commodities and heightened unemployment coupled with rapid fall in income and increasing privation are spelling disaster in the life of the common people. An extreme instability and insecurity is gripping the entire populace. One after another, factories are getting closed throwing millions out of job. No new job opportunities are created. Pauperization of rural poor is galloping. Dispossessed of land and starved of any work, there is mass exodus from the villages to the city where also a cold embrace of death awaits them. In fact, there is a procession of death caused by hunger, starvation and malnutrition. Unable to bear the vagaries of life, thousands of poor peasants and retrenched workers are committing suicides. And the dead belong to all caste, religion or region. The death merchants do not distinguish between Hindus and Muslims, Assamese and Biharis, dalits and non-dalits. This is capitalism bestriding the country like a dead weight, root of all evils. Thus it is as clear as daylight that in the sixty years of ruthless capitalist

exploitation, the country has been sharply divided into two opposite camps. On one side is the handful of rich, gluttonous, intoxicated, ferocious ruling bourgeoisie bent upon sucking out the last drop of blood of the poor while on the other are the millions of downtrodden and have-nots, plunged in excruciating poverty, deprived of and denied even the basic right to live.

Though not making any distinction on caste or religion while exploiting the poor, the ruling bourgeoisie, however, is ever alert to keep the people divided on those lines so as to scuttle possibility of any united organized movement of all segments of the oppressed masses rising above all narrow sectarian considerations. More crisis-ridden is capitalism, more fascistic it becomes to secure itself against popular uprising against its despotic rule. So it tries to fan up religious, casteist or racial sentiments of the people to misdirect genuine people's struggles against the exploitative capitalist order. Hence alongside robbing all much-vaunted civil and democratic rights, concentrating all power in the hands of the bourgeois state and crushing democratic movements in a fascistic way, the ruling monopolists are continuously weaving ploys to disrupt the unity of the people by pitting one section against the other through fomenting of sectarianism, communalism, ultra-provincialism, separatism-chauvinism, racial and caste hatred. Systematically the ruling bourgeoisie and its agents are pandering to all kinds of divisive mentalities, rotten vulgar thoughts and obscurantist mentalities to cripple the exploited both politically and culturally. In absence of the desired bulwark of countrywide united organized sustained democratic movement of all sections of the toiling masses which could not materialize due to the treacherous role of the CPI(M), CPI masquerading as communists but serving class-interest of the ruling class, the heinous bourgeois conspiracy to keep the people split on caste or religion is gaining ground jeopardizing the process of crystallization of people's real struggle for emancipation. Like their brethren belonging to the

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Thirty years of CPI(M)-rule in West Bengal

— Claims and Realities

[Continued from last issue]

Soon after it had come to power the Jyoti Basu-led Left Front declared that cases of police atrocities during Congress regime would be probed and the guilty taken to task. He was soon to forget and forgo the promise. In fact right from his regime, police officers when in the wrong, even when they committed crimes like murder were promoted to higher posts. In fact, in maintaining bourgeois law and order, the LF has really proved its mettle. It has even surpassed the bourgeois Congress government it succeeded, in using the police against the people.

With Jyoti Basu at the helm of governmental power the LF police had killed hundreds of hapless refugees of Marichjhampi in 1979. In 1990, the movement against bus-fare hike was in Jyoti Basu's language 'turned to non-vegetarian from a vegetarian one', as the police shot down the young SUCI worker Madhai Halder to his death and shot at 29 others rendering them maimed and crippled, while injuring countless demonstrators.

Just in one district of South 24 Parganas alone, 132 SUCI workers were murdered and several thousand, including Comrade Probodh Purkait (9-times elected MLA) were falsely implicated and thrown to jail. In 1996, the police was used to evict 60,000 hawkers from the metropolitan thoroughfare under the deception of "Operation Sunshine". In 2002, on 10th December, the World Human Rights Day, the police was set on to raze to ground 4000 houses and burn 200 houses at Beleghta in Calcutta. Later, slums between Tollygunge and Garia were also razed to the ground.

Let us now give a few examples of the high-handed attacks by the CPI(M) government on left democratic movement

1. Firing on dock workers, 3 killed (19 November 1978).
2. Lathicharge and teargassing on SUCI workers, demonstrating against price-rise of essential commodities, power tariff hike and anti-people language and education policy etc., 500 wounded, among them 200 seriously injured (15 June 1979).
3. Lathicharge and teargassing on Port workers on strike, 47 rounds of firing, 4 killed (3 October 1979).

4. Firing on the resistance movement by SUCI against bus fare hike; 2 killed (19 August 1983)
5. Attack on bus-tram fare hike resistance movement; female demonstrators were bruised, their dresses (sarees, salwars-kameez, blouses) torn; they were kicked inside the police van (28 September 1992)
6. Procession against anti-social activities at Hariharpara, in Murshidabad was fired upon killing 9 and injuring many (2 November 1992)
7. In the civil disobedience (mass law-violation) movement against price hike of petro-products and electricity, 113 persons injured, including 15 seriously injured (19 September 1997)
8. On the movement demanding fair price of agricultural products at Haldibari in Coochbehar, police fired 150 rounds (8 May 2000)
9. In the movement against setting up of township at the cost of flourishing tea gardens at Chandmoni Garden, Siliguri, 2 workers killed in police firing (26 June 2002).
10. A demonstration by ABECA before the Vidyut Bhawan (Power Building) at Salt Lake in Calcutta was lathicharged, tear-gassed and fired upon; a poor farmer Khuddar Sheikh received serious bullet injury and his leg broken into two pieces. (27 October 2005)

In addition to all these instances, the report (1997-1998) of the West Bengal Human Rights Commission adds another 'feather in the cap' of the LF government as it comments – "Cases abound where innocent and peace loving citizens were dealt with roughly and with a degree of severity which was shocking... People were sometimes picked up at random late at night and released later in the morning from the lock-up after petty-payment ...Commission also noted that some of the police officials, particularly at the Thana level often allowed themselves to be used not merely by political functionaries, but even by developers of property and promoters of multi-storied buildings." According to National Human Rights Commission, death in police and jail custody in between 1995 and 2002 numbered

to 378, the figure varying annually round 50.

A peculiar 'merger' has engulfed West Bengal at the end of these thirty-years of CPI (M) rule. The chief minister enthusiastically desires to be part and parcel of the big-wigs of capitalism. "He charmed the industrial audience at the closing day of the summit... when he sought a membership of CII. 'Make me a member of CII', Mr. Bhattacharjee said". (Financial Express, January 14, 2005) This was published in other newspapers also barring the Ganasakti, the CPI(M) daily. The World Bank President James D Wolfensohn also expressed his admiration for the CPI(M) and allies in West Bengal. "World Bank has praised the left parties for their 'broad-based vision' on social sector and infrastructure development and said the UPA government's common minimum programme was in tune with the bank's objectives... 'It does not seem to be a red flag at all', he said referring to the left parties..." (Times of India, November 23, 2004, a PTI report) Giza Feketekuty, the former counsellor to the US trade representative, said, "It's great to find the Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee government moving beyond the rhetoric and tread the path of economic reforms. A lot of what is being said by the lefts in Delhi is part of political bargaining and everyone understands that." (Times of India, March 6, 2005) The CPI(M) tried to save its face by arguing that "the World Bank will not impose any conditionality." (Ganasakti, November 19, 2004) But the World Bank let the cat get out of the bag when it said, "All donors use conditionality in one form or other. Whether they do so implicitly or as part of an explicit binding agreement, they share a similar reasoning of the use of conditionality." (A review of World Bank Conditionality, World Bank, January 24, 2005; www.worldbank.org) We cite here just one instance of what is happening behind all these sweet words. "The government received Rs.214 crore in the form of grants from DFID to restructure 26 enterprises in the first phase of disinvestment. There were 9,944 employees in total in these enterprises... 4 thousand have lost their jobs out of 9,944." (Ananda Bazar Patrika, May 19, 2005). No-conditionality-syndrom indeed !!

Product of class struggles?

The General Secretary of the CPI(M) claimed that this government is the "product of the class struggle" and continues to be so for which it is popular. We shall not go into details of these "class struggles" here, but exemplify it by two recent happenings in West Bengal centering round Singur and Nandigram that deserve a special mention. These are the places where peasants have launched movements against forcible acquisition of fertile farmland in the interest of motor factory of Tata and SEZ-Chemical Hub respectively. On December 3, 2006, the police accompanied by CPI (M) party hoodlums and anti-socials came down with the most brutal attack on poor unarmed peasants of Singur. Indiscriminate lathicharge and arrests irrespective of young or old, male and female were witnessed. Even the children were not spared. On December 18, 2006, Tapashi Malik, the teenage activist and organizer of the movement was raped, murdered and burnt in the most unprecedented manner in the history of democratic movement; the CBI arrested CPI(M) leaders for their involvement in this case.

At Nandigram on March 14, 2007 police along with CPI(M) hoodlums-turned-activists unleashed a spell of terror on the peasants who had been continuing the movement against acquisition of land in the interest of a chemical hub by Salem group of Indonesia. 14 persons were shot dead, innumerable were injured, women were atrociously raped and tortured and even children were not spared. Are all these "class struggle"? On the contrary, the chief minister has made it clear whom he is holding brief for, as he calls – "Go and tell the world that we are changing, we Marxists are not fools to cling to obsolete ideas. In West Bengal the left is right. And this is the right place to invest." (CM at CII summit, The Indian Express, February 19, 2005).

The message is clear – after 30 years of the CPI(M) rule, West Bengal is now the heaven for the exploiters against the interest of the common people. Rightly, the left front is "right" i.e. no longer being left to uphold leftism here, that being the reality today.

[Concluded]

Big firms get rich as Iraq war escalates

Deirdre Griswold

The debate over the war in Iraq has finally made it onto the agenda of the Senate! But not at a time when funding for the war is up for a vote. A majority of Congress, including most Democrats, already voted to approve those hundreds of billions of dollars.

The current debate is over an amendment, put forward by Democratic Senators Carl Levin of Michigan and Jack Reed of Rhode Island, to a new appropriations bill. The amendment would begin to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq within 180 days (six months) of enactment and complete a reduction of troop strength—but not a total withdrawal—by April 30, 2008.

This debate is finally happening after the electorate has in many, many ways expressed its utter disgust with the war, the occupation and both political parties for letting the carnage drag on despite the immense pain and suffering it has meant for the Iraqi people and many in the U.S. Especially hit here is the working class, which pays for wars in blood and taxes while the rich generally do quite well as war spending oozes through the upper layers of the economy.

The senators also must know that calls are heard more and more frequently to impeach George W. Bush and Dick Cheney because these two lied to the world about Iraq's mythical weapons of mass destruction. Every online discussion having to do with the war or the White House—except those on bizarrely ultra-right Web sites—rings with colorful denunciations of these political figures.

However, there's an elephant in the room that still seems to elude most of the lawmakers and the media. It concerns what the war is really all about.

Not just personalities

There are criticisms galore of Bush's IQ, his lack of tact, his cowboy style, his refusal to compromise or bend to bring others on board. Cheney is raked over the coals for his Machiavellian manipulations. Other administration figures from the klavern of neo-cons are excoriated for being too ideological.

But you seldom hear the issue that gets raised at every anti-war demonstration. What about the immense oil profits that Bush and Cheney promised their wealthy backers would flow into their coffers once Iraq had fallen? How much is being said about that in Congress, or on prime time?

The world understands very well what this war is about, but it's a non-subject in official Washington and Media land.

For example, here's an item you probably didn't see on television:

On July 16, about 300 oil industry workers in the port city of Basra, Iraq, took their lives into their hands to protest a proposed new law—drafted by U.S. "specialists" and "advisers"—that these workers say would allow foreigners to "pillage the country's wealth."

This important demonstration got no coverage in the U.S. media, but was reported by the French press agency AFP.

"To compensate for the military and political failure of the U.S. administration in Iraq, this administration is trying to control the country's wealth," the organizers said in a statement distributed to reporters, as they carried black coffins labeled "freedom."

"If this is endorsed by the parliament it would abolish sovereignty and hand over the wealth of this generation and the generations to come as a gift to the occupier," the statement said. "This law, in fact destroys the achievements of the Iraqi masses and especially the Law number 80 of 1961 and the nationalization of 1973"—legislation that sharply limited foreign involvement in the oil sector, enacted after Iraq broke free of colonial domination.

The very same social forces that had hoped to profit immensely off this war own the politicians and the media. Their failure to talk about this is not because of some narrow conspiracy hatched by a few individuals — it is the way everything functions in a society where money capital reigns supreme.

The immense popularity of the film "Sicko" shows that millions now realize that health care is a mess because of the profit motive. Is there any reason to think that warfare is somehow more altruistic?

In fact, this war and the many other imperialist interventions known euphemistically as "national defense" represent an immense feeding trough for the well-connected.

Web of industry, government & military

This was illustrated most

graphically in a story that did break into the media in a very limited way recently. It is the story of a corporation that most people never heard of but that is awarded more lucrative government contracts for "defense" and "national security" than any other.

The company is Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC). Right, you say, never heard of it. But you've heard of Boeing, right? General Electric? Halliburton? Lockheed Martin? Well, SAIC gets more government contracts than any of them. Last year it sucked up over \$8 billion in public money. And it has more than 44,000 employees.

SAIC provides "experts," especially in high-tech fields. It was SAIC employees who tried to create economic chaos and bring down the government of Venezuela in 2003 by sabotaging the terminals where the oil was loaded onto tankers for export. The media here called it a "strike" by oil workers, but in fact the real workers—not the high-paid managers on SAIC's payroll—were the ones who figured out how to manually put the oil facilities back online after their bosses had shut down the computers that controlled everything.

In the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, one of the most vociferous and ubiquitous figures arguing on television for "regime change" to get rid of "Saddam's weapons of mass destruction" was David A. Kay, identified as an expert on counterterrorism. Kay was an executive of SAIC.

Two investigative journalists—Donald L. Barlett and James B. Steele—dug out information about SAIC and wrote it up for the March 2007 issue of Vanity Fair. Recently, the PBS program *Exposé* ran a half-hour special on the company.

In the Vanity Fair article, entitled "Washington's \$8 Billion Shadow," Barlett and Steele wrote that "SAIC executives have been involved at every stage of the life cycle of the war in Iraq. SAIC personnel were instrumental in pressing the case that weapons of mass destruction existed in Iraq in the first place, and that war was the only way to get rid of them. Then, as war became inevitable, SAIC secured contracts for a broad range of operations in soon-to-be-occupied Iraq. When no weapons of mass destruction were found, SAIC personnel staffed the commission that was set up to investigate how

American intelligence could have been so disastrously wrong."

This article explains that much of the running of the U.S. imperialist government's "dirty tricks" and its military adventures abroad has been privatized. Operations that used to be handled by the CIA or the Pentagon are now farmed out to companies like SAIC, which pull in billions of dollars every year devising and carrying out plans to control the economies of oppressed countries and, if necessary, use military force against them so U.S. big business can exploit their resources and labor.

They are not subject to congressional oversight and can operate pretty much as they please. In Iraq, SAIC got the U.S. contract to build a "democratic media" after the overthrow of the Saddam Hussein regime. Its Iraqi Media Network became such an obvious mouthpiece for the Pentagon, says the Vanity Fair article that soon Iraqis "openly snickered at the programing."

These companies have close relations with the oil monopolies, the big banks, defense contractors and all the government agencies in the business of warfare and "counterterrorism." In fact, SAIC set up its Center for Counterterrorism Technology and Analysis several years before 9/11, describing it to potential investors as a growth industry.

SAIC is much bigger than just the neo-cons in the Bush administration. Its bipartisan board of directors has included former CIA directors like John M. Deutch, appointed by Bill Clinton, and Robert M. Gates, appointed by the current Bush's father. In the present Bush administration, Gates is now secretary of defense, having replaced Donald Rumsfeld.

Other members of the SAIC board have included Melvin Laird, Richard Nixon's secretary of defense, and Rear Adm. Bobby Ray Inman, director of the National Security Agency under President Jimmy Carter and a deputy director of the CIA under Ronald Reagan. Inman was also on the board of the Rockefeller-founded Council on Foreign Relations. The Rockefellers, let it never be forgotten, originally got their money from Standard Oil and then spread out into banking.

It is this unholy trinity of big business, the government and the military/intelligence establishment that continues to drive the war in Iraq — or Iran or Afghanistan or

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Like BJP, Congress is equally guilty for plight and penury of downtrodden Muslims

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Hindu and other religious-ethnic communities, the poor and have-nots belonging to the Muslim community are also in absence of requisite political consciousness becoming equal victim of this vile capitalist design.

Muslims—victim of utter deprivation and discrimination

Over and above, there is an additional dose of oppression on the toiling Muslim masses. The right-thinking saner people of the country are aware that right from the day of achieving independence a kind of anti-Muslim bias has come to prevail in India, both in the society as well as administrative machinery. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, founder General Secretary of our party and a foremost Marxist thinker of the era, in course of his penetrating analysis had shown that since Indian capitalism grew at a time when internationally capitalism had become a spent force, the Indian national bourgeoisie from its fear complex of anti-capitalist working class revolution maintained a reformist oppositional role against imperialism, and as a result could not and did not carry out the task of democratization of the society, freeing the people from the bondage of religion through social and cultural revolutions and integrating different nationalities speaking different languages and different communities professing different faiths and religions into a homogeneous nation. Rather it took up religion as a means to propagate nationalism. Thus, Indian nationalism was basically religion-oriented and expressed itself in the form of Hindu religious revivalism. The psychological reaction which the Hindu revivalist Indian nationalism created in the non-Hindu masses was, by and large, responsible for keeping them, especially the Muslim masses, away from the national liberation struggle. For the same reason the dalit masses and tribal people could also not be stirred into the freedom movement as was necessary. The imperialist rulers exploited this weakness of the leaders of freedom movement reflecting class-desire of the national bourgeoisie to the hilt to drive the wedge of their divide-and-rule policy and create conditions for

continuous antagonism among different religious communities particularly between the Hindus and the Muslims and keep the Muslim masses out of the mainstream freedom movement. Moreover, since the British rulers had taken over the reins of power by defeating Sirajaudullah, Muslim nawab of the then Bengal and ousting Mughal rulers, Muslims were so opposed to the domination as to boycott English education and cling to the old Madrasa system. As a concomitant of this, the aspired enlightenment of the Muslim people at large did not take place. Rather, the toiling Muslim population instead of being dawned upon by the advanced thoughts and democratic enlightenment was further pushed towards backwardness. Thus an invidious distinction got deeply entrenched in the Indian society and the land became fertile for communalism-fundamentalism to sprout and communal conflict to conflagrate at any moment at the slightest of pretexts.

As the Indian national bourgeoisie after capturing state power following vivisection of the country centring round most unscientific and utopian two-nation theory, went on aiding more enthusiastically, in the name of secularism, the anti-secular forces and tendencies by encouraging all sorts of religious customs, conventions and prejudices to keep people disunited. This artificially propped up divide between the Hindus and Muslims which remained as a festering sore allowed the power-seeking bourgeois politicians to use it for their petty election gains. The RSS-BJP and other arch communal forces cynically exploited the situation with a distinctively provocative anti-Muslim focus. They went on unleashing an incessant hate campaign against the Muslims and engineered well-organized attacks on the Muslim masses to create base on a rabid communal plank. Since this communal politics of the RSS-BJP of dividing people, as shown above, serves well the interest of the ruling bourgeoisie, the BJP continues to curry favour with the ruling class as the most viable alternative to the Congress in the parliamentary game of power sharing. On the other

hand, as a counter reaction to this crass communalism of RSS-BJP, Muslim fundamentalism has also raised its ugly head and the reactionary elements within the Muslims are trying to consolidate their stronghold within the community by fomenting religious passion and advocating articulation of the aspirations of the Muslim masses in terms of religious identity.

Thus the downtrodden Muslims constituting about 13.5% of the total population besides being back-broken under savage capitalist exploitation like all other sections of toiling Indians are also bearing an additional brunt of being utterly neglected, persecuted, made victims of palpable inequity and pushed to the sidelines. Their economic and social backwardness, instead of being mitigated, goes on increasing. Not only languishing at the bottom of the heap when it comes to the question of receiving benefits of the government-run welfare schemes, access to education, employment, even the system of credit, including bank loans, they are also targets of a worst form of social discrimination. Alongside ruthless socio-economic exploitation, there have been repeated attacks on the life and property of the Muslim people under one pretext or the other at different parts of the country. Professing a particular religion has been the only 'fault' for which these hapless, extremely poor and downtrodden citizens of free India have been meted out prejudiced treatment, made object of a kind of hatred and victims of murderous assaults. The worst anti-Muslim carnage in the aftermath of Babri masjid demolition as well as the diabolic Gujarat pogrom planned and executed by the Hindutva zealots in connivance with the central and state governments have been the latest in the list. Battered and bruised by this twin exploitation, the toiling Muslim masses have been doomed to be the oppressed among the oppressed. Naturally, there is a seething rage and ire among the Muslim people and with every passing day it is becoming more acute and accentuated.

Shameful role of the Congress

While the BJP as the political face of the RSS and Sangh Parivar

openly flaunts its communal credential, the role of the Congress has been no less shameful but equally baneful. If one leaves out the brief tenure of Janata party in 1977, the short-lived coalition governments headed by V.P. Singh, I. K. Gujral and Deve Gowda and one term of the BJP-led NDA, it is the Congress which has been in the governmental power, both at the Centre and in the states, for most of the 60 year long period after independence. In fact, it ruled uninterruptedly during the first three decades. But the Congress apart from paying lip service here and there ostensibly to secure votes has done nothing tangible to improve the conditions of the Muslim masses. On the contrary, while the RSS-BJP and other rabid communal forces were creating base by incessantly spewing venom against the Muslims and perpetrating planned murderous assault on them, the Congress instead of curbing these emissaries of malevolence, actually connived with them, overtly or covertly. This has been what the common people experienced throughout the country. Indira Gandhi, it bears recall, won plaudits from the RSS for her measures and activities. During Rajiv Gandhi's period, the tilt of the Congress towards the RSS was more pronounced. It was Rajiv who took initiative in opening the lock of age-old Babri masjid and installed Ramlala idol within its premises with the help of his pliant bureaucracy to exacerbate communal tension and inflame the already tenuous socio-political atmosphere allowing communal BJP, the political face of RSS, to make it to the centrestage of Indian politics and intensify its hate campaign against the Muslims. Naturally, if the same Congress suddenly becomes over sympathetic to the ordeal of the Muslim masses so much so as to constitute a high-powered Committee headed by justice Rajindar Sachar to "enable a national consensus on how to improve the social, educational and economic status of the community and achieve growth with equity, to strengthen our pluralistic ethos and build an inclusive society," does it not raise doubt as to what is then there up the sleeves?

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Sachar Committee Recommendations

Muslims & non-Muslims must imbibe true spirit of united struggle to foil bourgeois conspiracy

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Remedy lies in intensifying democratic mass movement

We call upon the Muslim brethren to take due note of these aspects. It is for sure that the vote-seeking outfits or self-styled messiahs of Muslim masses who shed crocodile tears on their misery would not bring them any succour. These power-greedy political leaders and the fundamentalist elements have been and will be using them as pawns, as stepping stones to electoral fortunes and self-aggrandizement. The governments, whatever be their composition, Congress or BJP or any such other bourgeois party or combination, subserving the class interest of the ruling bourgeoisie to keep the people divided over caste, creed or religion have never been having even slightest of inclination to improve the situation by diffusing communal tension or take any effective measure to mitigate the immense hardship, persecution and isolation of the oppressed Muslim people. Only at the time of elections, there is expression of pretentious concern for the minority sections so that the contrived sympathy could be played upon to secure their votes. In absence of a genuine people's movement upholding the just cause of the oppressed Muslims and demanding amelioration of their untold suffering, it becomes easier for these vote-traders to vend deceptions to the assailed and appalled. Recent experience has been no exception. While the RSS-BJP is persistently trying to stoke the fire of communal conflagration and fanning up Hindu communalism to ride on communally polarized Hindu vote, the Congress also in order to grab a slice of the pie is merrily peddling in, what has come to be known as, soft-Hindutva. The recent acrimony of the RSS-BJP over the sethusamudram issue to whip up frenzy of Hindutva to corner majority vote on communal line and immediate somersault of the Congress to arrest losing out to the BJP on this score is the latest instance. Notably, the Congress has stated that while it respects all religions, it respects Hinduism much more. Many of the self-styled champions of Muslim cause are also found forging opportunist alliances

with either the Congress or the BJP in various states to secure berth in the corridor of power. It is thus clear that entanglement in the riddle of bourgeois vote politics will not give the oppressed and suppressed Muslim populace any respite. That is why, we have been repeatedly urging upon the suffering Muslim people not to fall prey to the clutches of the vested interest, not to be duped by opting for tailism of the ruling party or combination.

It is imperative that truth dawns upon them, guides them along the right track. All the sufferings, privation and misery, problems like social discrimination and ostracism are stemming from the exploitative capitalist system. Hence, the struggle for emancipation is inseparably linked with the question of overthrow of capitalism. Till that time, it is incumbent on all the segments of the toiling masses to close their rank, consolidate their solidarity, rise above all kinds of sectarian outlooks, give up all sorts of hesitation, overcome all shades of retrograding mentalities and come forward to develop countrywide democratic mass movements on the common problems of life conducive to anti-capitalist revolution. The specific legitimate demands of the Muslim people, oppressed among the oppressed for the objective reasons discussed above, including the demand for eradication of their backwardness must be correctly drawn up and incorporated on the agenda of the united democratic mass movement. All sections of poor toiling people must develop a feeling of oneness, a sense of identity with these demands of the Muslim minorities, view them as part and parcel of the just struggle of the poor against the handful of rich which has no caste, religion or language barrier. Both the Muslim and non-Muslim masses must imbibe the true spirit of this united struggle and accordingly emotionally involve themselves with the same so as to foil all conspiracies of the ruling class and its agents to drive a wedge between them. Separated from this mainstream struggle of the toiling people, any agitation exclusively by the Muslim masses to seek justice will achieve nothing but only help the ruling bourgeoisie to get away

by playing the communal card, giving a big handle to the communal RSS-BJP to take their anti-Muslim hate campaign to the peak and incite the non-Muslim population to oppose from a purely communal angle. The exploited Muslims will once again have their hands burnt, a few of their precious lives will be sacrificed but nothing except utter despair will emanate out of this. History and experience must open our eyes. So many lives have already been claimed by such caste or community-based agitations, fratricidal bloodbaths and internecine clashes. But is there any change in the lot of the toiling masses belonging to any section, any religion, caste, ethnic or linguistic community or the situation has moved from bad to worse? Ruinous impact of such clashes and divisive mentalities is invariably on the poor and marginalized sections of the toiling masses including the Muslim minorities. In absence of correct political consciousness, communal conflagrations and violence invariably end up strengthening the traditional communitarian politics among the minority Muslims, making the privilege-hunting career-seeking opportunist leadership within the community more powerful. In the name of countering anti-Muslim espousals, this leadership carefully nurtures the sectarian sentiments to stay afloat as self-styled guardians of the community. While they enjoy pelf, power, media coverage and recognition in the parlour of bourgeois politics, the destitute and impoverished rot at the bottom of the ladder to lead an inhuman life.

Same thing is happening over the reservation issue. Unaware of the hideous underbelly of the bourgeois design to use the issue of so-called reservation for throwing a spanner in the people's unity, one section of the people is taking arms against the other apprehending marring of each other's prospect in the event of broadening the list. Just the other day Rajasthan and the adjoining states had a glimpse of such internecine clashes.

Only a countrywide surge of democratic movement embracing all sections of the toiling people can stem the rot.

Treachery of the pseudo-Marxists

Unfortunately, during the sixty long years after independence, no political party except the SUCI, the revolutionary party of the proletariat, founded, reared and steered by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat, took any real initiative to develop such united movements based on real class-consciousness and on the edifice of higher ethics and culture and thereby intensify class struggle. On the contrary, the pseudo-Marxists like the CPI(M), CPI, waving flag of leftism have only disrupted the process of building up this movement of the downtrodden masses and instead saw to it that the grievances of the people remain arrested within the four walls of bourgeois vote politics so that they could encash on those to reap electoral gains. Spurred by the penchant for pelf and power, the CPI(M) and its associates, to be endearing to the ruling class, have completely shunned the path of movement. While it is only by releasing a countrywide wave of united democratic movement coupled with a fierce ideological struggle right from the grass roots level that the menacing rise of communal RSS-BJP could be halted and insidious doctrines of communalism-fundamentalism and such other pernicious divisive formulations combated and overpowered, the CPI(M) and its crumb-seekers in utter disdain to this imperative task forged an opportunist tie-up with the Congress having its hands tainted with communal blood, raising the bogey of resisting the BJP. They do not have any intention even to free the administration from the pronounced anti-Muslim bias that largely crept in the post-independence period. For all intent and purpose, they are behaving like any other bourgeois outfit. It is because of this treacherous role of these pseudo-Marxists that the BJP-RSS could become so unbridled in whipping up communal passion and orchestrating communal conflagrations. If the Congress is preparing sops to woo the Muslims for votes, the compromising CPI(M) and its mercy-beggars are buttressing no different a motive

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Birth Centenary of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh observed in Anantapur

On the historic occasion of the birth centenary of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, the great freedom fighter of the uncompromising revolutionary trend, was observed in a befitting manner at Hindupur, Anantapur district, A.P. On 23 August 2007 Bhagat Singh stone statue was inaugurated at a prominent place of the town at the initiative of the Bhagat Singh Birth Centenary Celebrations Committee formed with teachers, guardinas, TU leaders, DSO, DYO, MSS. The statue was inaugurated by Comrade K. Sridhar, state secretary of AP. Sri Anil Kumar, Municipal Chairman of the town, Comrade B S Amarnath, Anantapur Dist. secretary, SUCI,

Comrade G. Lalitha, State President, AIMSS, Comrade Narasimhulu, town secretary and committee dignitaries were on the dias.

In the public meeting, Comrade K. Sridhar called upon the students and youths to take forward the struggle of the great revolutionary Bhagat Singh in the present day complex social condition by following the thoughts of the great Marxist philosopher of the era, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. The meeting was presided over by Comrade Ramakrishna Reddy, Committee President. Committee secretary Comrade Girish, and treasurer Comrade Aruna garlanded the statue.

Big firms get rich at Iraq war

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Palestine or wherever it suits their interests.

SAIC not affected by elections

One former SAIC manager said in a recent blog posting: "My observation is that the impact of national elections on the business climate for SAIC has been minimal. The emphasis on where federal spending occurs usually shifts, but total federal spending never decreases. SAIC has always continued to grow despite changes in the political leadership in Washington."

Marine Gen. Peter Pace said on July 16 that the Joint Chiefs of Staff is weighing a range of possible new directions in Iraq, including an even bigger troop buildup, if Bush deems it necessary.

The U.S. Air Force has been building up its equipment inside Iraq, including the monster B1-B bomber. It has sharply stepped up bombing and has laid a foundation for a sustained air campaign, according to a July 15 AP dispatch. Already, there is an increase in "collateral damage" among Iraqi civilians.

Half the warships in the U.S. Navy are now in the waters around Iran and Iraq. When one of those ships, the USS Nimitz, made a five-day port call to Chennai in southern India in early July, it was met by massive protests.

Keeping their eyes on these hard facts and not being diverted by false hopes about change in Washington, some anti-war groups are now planning militant actions for the fall.

In both D.C. and Los Angeles, the week of Sept. 22-29 will see encampments, called by the Troops Out Now Coalition (troopsoutnow.org) and endorsed by hundreds more, that will take the anti-war struggle back to the streets and link it to the growing war at home of racism, poverty and repression. On Saturday, Sept. 29, massive mobilizations are planned in both cities.

The time could not be more critical. The power to stop the carnage lies with the people, not the politicians. *(Reprinted from Workers' World, 19-07-2007)*

Protest against SEZ in Orissa



Demonstration at Bhubaneswar against proposed SEZ for the Mittal steel plant at Keonjhar dist. Demonstration was organised by Mittal Pratiroadh Mancha and AIKMS

Protest against police torture in Bihar



Effigy of Chief Minister of Bihar being burnt in Patna on 29 August in protest against police savagery at Bhagalpur and other parts of the state

Sachar Committee Recommendations

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while clustering around Sachar Committee suggestions.

Pressure of united movement is imperative

It is thus clear from the above discussion that unless there is a perceptible change in the situation through accentuation of genuine people's movement under correct leadership, the state of affairs will remain as it is, if not sliding down to further sordidness. If the desired change in the mindset of the people does not come about, neither will the right course of minimizing the unbearable suffering of the oppressed Muslims be found out nor will it be possible to exert appropriate pressure on the government for expedient implementation of the few reasonable suggestions of the Sachar Committee. And this pressure of people's movement can

only be created if there is perfect solidarity, harmony and emotional bondage between the toiling Muslim and non-Muslim masses. Oppressed Muslim masses must realize that no remedy to their problems could be found out traversing along any communal or sectarian-separatist line. Rather, it would strengthen the hands of the RSS-BJP and drift the country to the precipice of a dark and disastrous future. Keeping in mind the perspective of and properly realizing the various forms of the ruthless capitalist exploitation shattering the life of common people, they must come forward to organize democratic movement based on democratic norms and values and muster strong the unstinted support of the non-Muslim oppressed people behind this just struggle of theirs to secure their life and property. As the downtrodden Muslims must secure

active support and full backing of all other sections of oppressed people in alleviating their untold suffering, the toiling non-Muslim masses must also understand that unless they develop complete fraternity and a feeling of total identification with the imperative need to fight for the bold legitimate demands of their coerced repressed tortured minority brethren, they will also not be able to emancipate themselves from the yoke of all-pervading exploitation. Both are interwoven and entwined. Let not the toiling Muslims be taken for a ride anymore by the vote-fetchers and vote-snatchers. Let them not be swayed by the questions of religious identity or patronage politics. Let them assert their cause as members of the oppressed millions, in alliance with their brethren from other communities equally pressed under the grinding wheel of capitalist exploitation.

Police atrocities on 31st August

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amuck on them with indiscriminate firing and baton charge. Madhai Halder, a 17 year old youth activist of the movement became martyr, shot on the head by the frenzied police. Madhai became a legend alongwith the martyrs of 1959 food movement.

And there is no let up on the part of the CPI(M) government and its police to go berserk on the day of August 31 if there is any initiative to commemorate the day with due solemnity and raise voice of protest against the unbearable assault of ruling capitalism and its subservient government on the toiling people of the state. As a result of galloping rise in the price of essential commodities including food items and periodic steep hike in electricity charges, the people of the state are gasping for survival. Also, with the government allowing big capitalists to invade

retail trade, small and medium traders, businessmen and shop owners are threatened with ruination. Concomitantly, an yet more spiralling of prices of all commodities is very much on the card. To protest against this mounting assault on the people's life, the West Bengal State Committee of our party took up a mass law violation programme as a part of the ongoing struggle against the anti-people policy of the CPI(M) front. Thousands of people from all walks of life assembled at Subodh Mullick square near central party office and then marched on in a procession towards the Rajbhawan to court arrest. No sooner than the peaceful rally reached Rani Rashmoni Avenue in Esplanade area, a huge police contingent accompanied by the ill-reputed RAF, pounced upon the protestors. While a leader like Comrade Debaprosad Sarkar, long-

standing MLA and mass leader, well-known to administration bigwigs was dragged by the police in a most disgraceful manner and barely saved by a vigilant party worker from a blow targeted at his head, Comrade Sadananda Bagal, another state committee member along with a few other leading workers and common participants sustained grievous injuries.

The most savage attack was then brought down at random by the police with assistance from the RAF. Indiscriminately were the protestors beaten up in the most brutal manner – young or old, man or woman – none being spared. Not less than a hundred demonstrators were seriously injured, 29 of whom had to be hospitalized. More than 150 were arrested, among whom 9 were picked up from hospital beds, to be later detained under unailable charges of 'attempt to murder

police'.

Such brutal police attack once again revealed that the CPI(M), bent on pursuing the policy of blatantly subserving the interest of national and foreign capital, would not bear with any sort of protests however peace, may they be. In particular, democratic movements steered and geared by the SUCI on the edifice of higher proletarian ethics and culture are invariably ruthlessly crushed by the CPI(M) government's police without the least of compunction as the ruling bourgeois class the CPI(M) is now bent upon serving with utmost sincerity is haunted by a spectre that such movements conduce to ultimate overthrow of capitalism.

The W.B. State Committee of the party has decided upon the next phase of the movement with programmes of blockades at the office of DM, SDO etc., in different districts and organize the suffering people on the platform of a sustained struggle against the capitalist onslaught perpetrated with all virulence through pliant CPI(M) in the state.

Mao Zedong Memorial Day Observed at Patna

On 9th September last the 31st Memorial Day of Mao Zedong, the great leader of the proletariat, was observed with solemnity by the Bihar State Committee of our party. Mao Zedong's instructive writing *Fight Against Liberalism* was read out and an elaborate discussion over the role of liberalism in restoration of capitalism was made. Comrade

Shiv Shankar, Secretary, Bihar State Committee, SUCI was the main speaker. He showed how the CPSU after the demise of Stalin and CPC after Mao were degenerated into revisionist party practising liberalism and ultimately restored capitalism in Russia and China. Comrade Shiv Shankar urged upon all to continue serious struggle

against liberalism and revisionism following the teachings of Mao Zedong and strengthen the SUCI, the only genuine communist party on our soil. Comrade Shiv Lal Prasad, State Office Secretary was the president. In the meeting Comrades Arun Kumar Singh and Sahnna Mishra, State Committee members, were also present.

MSC to Meet PM Against the Collapse of Healthcare System

The Central Committee of the Medical Service Centre is going to organise a national workshop on *Crisis in Medical Ethics and Effects of Privatisation of Healthcare Services and Medical Education* in New Delhi on 28th October, 2007. A deputation to the Prime Minister will follow on 29th October '07 on the eight-point charter of demands. The demands, *inter alia*, are : Ensure basic health facilities including safe drinking water, sanitation and proper sewerage system, control of anaemia, T.B., Malaria, encephalitis etc., for all down to the remotest village; stop privatisation of healthcare services including hospitals and medical education; abolish capitation fee system on any plea in medical, nursing and pharmaceutical courses; stop abolition of GNM nursing diploma course; allot at least 10 per cent of the budget for healthcare.

Surat remembers Shaheed-e-Azam



With enthusiasm people of Surat observed the birth centenary of Bhagat Singh, organised by the AIDYO, AIDSO, AIMSS and Migrant Workers' Association on 9 September 2007. A mass meeting was held at Modh Vanik Hall (Vadi). Along with it the conference of Migrant Workers' Association was also held. Following it a big fervent procession of youths, students, workers, women with the portraits of Shaheed-e-Azam marched along the streets of the city.

Observe Birth Centenary of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh with due solemnity

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