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US Presidential Election

Burning issues of people's life suppressed under orchestrated hype centring Obama and Romney

The way the entire bourgeois camp and monopoly-controlled media sought to create hype centring on the recently concluded US presidential election as if such was an event that warranted the whole world to be agog with curiosity and excitement and the result was crucial for the future of the global citizens. Perhaps, there is a truth in this — not from the perspective of people's well-being or any possible rein on the global economic crisis but from the angle of increased overlordism and brigandage round the globe, trampling underfoot every canon of democracy, subverting sovereignty of other countries, creation of war psychosis and engendering wars in various parts of the world by the imperialist superpower and above all, multiplying the plight and penury, insecurity and misery people of the world including the US citizens are suffering from due to grueling capitalist-imperialist oppression.

While all the burning problems of spiralling unemployment, layoffs, low wages, fiscal savagery, crushing debts, price rise, lack of proper shelter and healthcare, growing climate disasters, unbridled police terror against the poor, spurt in social crimes and cultural degeneration wrecking the American people were simply shoved to the backburner, Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, two principal contestants from the two most trusted parties of the ruling US monopolists, the Democratic and the Republican, were locked in staged debates on a slew of non-issues to divert attention of the electorates. As a result, there was hardly any interest about the election among the toiling people. "Voting hasn't done anyone of us any good," said one young man, as he hastened to catch the slow-moving city bus in Hartford, Connecticut, during a pre-poll survey. That indeed was the dominant mood among the people notwithstanding campaign commercials saturating the television networks and print media. In such an election, Obama defeated Romney to stay in power for one more term. Immediately, a section of the powerful bourgeois media with the ostensible intention of befooling the people, both inside and outside USA, began to paint this victory of Obama as that of the "99 per cent" of America over the "1 per cent" of bankers and billionaires represented by

Romney's Republican Party. So, it is imperative that a thinking mind delves into the various aspects of this much-trumpeted event and unravels the sinister bourgeois design camouflaged behind the din and bustle.

Complicated election process

Before we come to the main points, it might be relevant to have a few words on the very mechanism of US presidential election. Under the US system, it is not that the President is elected by straight voting of the electorates. Instead, they vote for representatives of political parties known as electors who cast votes on their behalf. There are 538 electoral colleges in the 48 states. The electors of electoral colleges are not a body of special officials but a mishmash of local politicians and eminent persons nominated by the main, and not all, political parties. Each state is given as many electors for the Presidential election as it has Senators (upper house members) and Representatives in Congress (lower house members) and a number of electoral votes in rough proportion to its population. For example, the most populous state, California, has the most votes, 55, while least populated states, Montana, Vermont and Alaska have just three votes. Most states have a winner take all system, in which the winner of the popular vote in the state takes all of the electors. Two states, Maine and Nebraska, give

two electors to the winner of the popular vote, and divide the rest by district, which means that party electors can potentially split a state. Each state's winning slate of

electors then cast their electoral votes on separate ballots for President. Although electoral college members can technically

Contd. on page 2

SUCI(C) condemns Israel's brazen air raids and missile attacks on Gaza strip

Comrade Provas Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), issued the following statement on 18th November 2012 :

We strongly condemn the brutal air raids and the missile attacks that the US imperialism-backed Zionist Israel has resorted to on the 17th November 2012 accompanied with the continuous missile attacks on the Gaza strip violating all canons of international law, which has resulted in the deaths and deadly injuries of hundreds of innocent people, with the sinister design to overrun it and crush the most legitimate struggle of the brave Palestine people in demand for immediate establishment of a sovereign Palestine state. While extending wholehearted support to the patriotic Palestine people's inalienable right to demand their own homeland as well as their fight for that just cause, we call upon all anti-imperialist patriotic people of the world to firmly voice their protest against this dastardly aggression of US imperialist backed Zionist Israeli regime and organize worldwide militant anti-imperialist movement to squarely defeat this war mongering of Zionist Israel and frustrate the devious machination of US imperialists and their accomplices and lackeys to turn entire West Asia into a war zone.



The International Anti-imperialist Coordinating Committee (IACC) and the All India Anti-imperialist Forum (AIIF) organized mass demonstrations throughout India protesting against the barbaric attack by Zionist Israel regime on the blockaded citizens of Gaza in Palestine. Above are pictures of demonstrations held in Cochi, Kerala and Kolkata on 21 November.

US Presidential Election

Only two most trusted political parties of the ruling monopolists were made to surface as major contestants

Contd. from page 1

vote for anyone, 24 states have laws to punish faithless electors who do not cast their electoral votes for the person whom they have pledged to elect. The candidate who wins 270 electoral votes (i.e more than 269 out of 538) - by prevailing in the mostly winner-take-all state contests - becomes the President. The entire process is rather byzantine, and it can be confusing for people who are not familiar with the complexities of the electoral college. Critics argue that the electoral college is archaic and inherently undemocratic. With most states using a winner-take-all system, both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party candidates are all but certain to win all the electoral votes from the predominately Democratic and Republican states, respectively. This gives certain swing states, states in which no single candidate or party has overwhelming support, disproportionate influence. Thus, presidential candidates usually spend exponentially more time, money, and energy campaigning in a historically swing state like Ohio. So, it can be seen that there are some constitutional and administrative quirks that could derail the election and change the verdict as it happened in the polls of 2000 when Republican George Bush emerged victorious after recount in the state of Florida. Thus it can be seen that from this perspective, it is not, so to say, a direct election as is normally understood but an electoral college-based electoral process with a number of provisions and stipulations capable of moderating the result.

Operation of 2-Party system

Next point is about the right of the electorates to choose their candidate freely and fairly. How far is that followed in this presidential election? On paper, multi-party democracy is shown to be operative. But in election and for all intent and purpose, only the two most trusted political parties of the ruling monopolists are made to surface as major contestants as if they only are entitled to decide the country's governance and political roadmap. In the media, one would hardly find any mention of the candidates of other political parties, independent contestants or their political opinions which only goes to show that notwithstanding all the claptrap about democratic rule

and conduct, it is virtually a 2-Party system by the monopolists, of the monopolists and for the monopolists. Elections are also staged in accordance therewith. There is of course constitutional provision for filing nomination by any individual of any of the recognized parties. In this election also there were as many as 14 candidates. But no one other than Obama and Romney featured in the race. In 'democratic USA', the ruling class through shrewd manoeuvre and money power successfully restricts the choice of the electorates between the Republicans and the Democrats. No third party is allowed visibility, even mere acquaintance as if no one has any *locus standi*, any right to inform people about their political viewpoints and no propriety whatsoever to run for presidency or any other legislative post. Even the highly publicized open debate in media glare is so 'democratic' that no third voice is allowed to reach out to the electorates. Had there been real democracy in operation, there ought to have been opportunity for other contesting candidates to participate in the debate and let people know their stand and views. But such democratic right is denied in "democratic" US by the rulers who claim to be exporters of "democracy" to other countries. Over a period of time, taking advantage of the absence of requisite political consciousness among the people and powered by the extremely organized propaganda machinery, the ruling US monopolists have to a great extent been able to polarize the political opinion of the people between their two political outfits who pretend to be so opposed to each other in stage-managed verbal duels and campaign trails. But come the question of addressing, let alone redressing, the burning problems wrecking the life of common US citizens, they both show superb skill in either skirting or diverting the issues. The past has borne out this truth. This election too has been no exception as the discerning people would bear out.

Economic-political backdrop of the election

US citizens are reeling under a host of economic-political problems. Forty-six million or above 15% Americans live under the poverty line. If the existing social security system is further

diluted, as is feared by many after seeing what is happening in the sovereign debt-crisis-ridden European countries, straightaway 16 million more would be added to the list of poor. 48.6 million people are without health coverage. 3.5 million people are homeless. Millions more are compelled to live in subway or to huddle into their cars. Official unemployment rate is 8%. If one takes into account the number of underemployed, this figure would shoot up almost by 100%. There is massive loss of jobs. Last October alone, lay-off in some sectors including insurance and transport has increased 240% more than what it was in January 2011. The median, or midpoint of household income is stated to be \$50,054 per annum while the official poverty line stipulated is an annual income of \$23,021 per annum for a family of four. With soaring unemployment, spurt in job losses and increasing costs of living, American families are having a difficult time making ends meet. More and more families are forced to choose between necessities like health care, child care, and even food. Footfalls in the shopping malls and arcades are going down. Following bursting of the bubble of an artificially stimulated economy fuelled by virtual pumping of credit, banks are increasingly reluctant to lend, fearing crippling losses from the defaulting sub-prime loans. So, US households find it harder to borrow. As consumers' focus switches from borrowing to paying off their debts and saving, there is less money to spend in the shops entailing, what is called in technical language, retail slump. With US consumers plagued by declining income pulling back sharply, industrial production has suffered its sharpest drop in 34 years. There is massive stockpiling of industrial goods. Seeing no profit potential, shutters are downed on manufacturing industries. So, a spectre of recession several times more than what was seen during the great depression of the 1930s has pursued US economy. With joblessness persistently high, income inequality is widening and the gap between rich and poor has further increased in the last year, according to two major census measures. While the share of aggregate income has declined for Americans in the middle, those in the top 5 percent have increased their share by 4.9 percent.

Glaringly, notwithstanding all

number crunching of growth statistics, tall claims of renewed optimism at the stock market or surfacing of revival symptoms, US capitalist economy is tottering on a wobbly base. There is no abatement. Rather aggravation of the grave economic meltdown erupted virulently in 2007 with unfolding of sub-prime loan crisis. National debt which stands at \$16 trillion and reportedly increasing by \$1 trillion a year is well above 100% of the country's GDP. Since 1985, the cumulative budget deficit has grown to about \$4 trillion, or about \$13,000 per US citizen. In fact, USA today is the biggest debtor country in the world. And to make things worse for the people, the governments, whether run by the Democrats or the Republicans, have been doling out billions of dollars to the capitalists and corporate houses of the country to increase their profit or to replenish their loss of profit in the recent recession, sub-prime crisis and resultant crash in speculative capital market. So far, after announcing around \$10 trillion worth of bail-out package to the banks which became bankrupt because of over-indulgence in multiple forms of speculations with public money in the government bank bailouts, a further \$787 billion stimulus package is promised to the industry barons in the name of bringing in an upturn in economic activity. On the other hand, the US government treasury is so starved that it cannot pay out salary to its staff. From January 1, 2013 onwards, there will begin tax hikes and spending cuts amounting to around \$1.2 trillion. This will put further pressure on America's fiscal burden and investment scope; and unemployment numbers will soar. Obvious casualty will be the people who are already being pauperized. It is pertinent to mention that suicide rates in US have risen sharply since the economic crisis took hold five years back. An analysis of data from the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention showed that while suicide rates rose slowly between 1999 and 2007, the rate of increase more than quadrupled from 2008 to 2010 mostly on account of growing unemployment.

However, gnawing budget deficits have not restrained US governments, Democrat or Republican, from increased spending on military buildup and

Contd. on page 3

US Presidential Election

Obama and Romney have no difference in hoodwinking through hollow promises and serving the ruling nexus of industrial-military complex

Contd. from page 2

production of sophisticated weaponry including weapons of mass destruction by leaps and bounds. There is a huge drain on public exchequer on this count. Not that US is under any threat of aggression or war. On the contrary, it is the US rulers who in pursuit of their hegemonistic design and policy of extending sphere of influence round the globe are bullying other countries to submission at gunpoint, launching wars of aggression or precipitating proxy wars. The total cost of US's Iraq war has reportedly touched \$3.3 trillion. The US Congress has voted \$800 billion this year to carry out wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Zionist Israel's attacks on Palestine and its perpetrated wars in Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon. The cost of US-led military assault in Libya was set to exceed the \$750 million which Pentagon estimated in March, 2011, according to a leaked US Department of Defence Memo. Militarization of the economy, as our Party has been repeatedly emphasizing, is a desperate attempt on the part of the crisis-ridden capitalists-imperialists to get out of the burning pyre by artificially stimulating the market through increasing manufacture of lethal weapons and military hardware. And to release this stockpile of arms, they need to orchestrate and sustain wars or war-like situation. But wars not just keep the military-industry complex running artificially; they have other huge costs too. To meet that cost, the governments need to incur more debts or print currency notes inviting more woes to its gasping economy, the entire burden of which is borne by the common people. It is worth mentioning in this connection that the US authorities, of late, claimed that the economy grew by an annual rate of 2.0 percent in the quarter ending September last. But it has come to light that this notified "growth" is entirely inflated by a freakish surge in defence spending.

People's issues shoved to backburner

Did any of the two heavyweight contestants floated by the ruling camp care to focus on any of these issues in their billion-dollar campaigns? Not only the suffering

US citizens but the entire world saw that whatever fire of criticism against each other might have come out of the mouths of Obama and Romney, none of them in their campaigns had said anything concrete about the disastrous plight of the US people, dying condition of the US economy, the doling out of billions of dollars to the capitalists and corporate houses of the country to increase their profit or to replenish their loss of profit in the recession and the heinous murdering and marauding activities of the US rulers in different countries. Save and except certain customary promises of job creation, none of these pressing problems of people's life could find any mention in the much hyped campaigns and TV debates of Obama and Romney. Even the hollowness of the promises of job creation is evident from certain facts. Out of the 400 chief financial officers surveyed by the management consultancy firm Grant Thornton, only a third said they would add workers. Twenty per cent planned to shrink further, and the remainder would remain in the same situation. Moreover, North American companies since 1st September have announced plans to eliminate more than 62,600 positions at home and abroad, the biggest two-month drop since the start of 2010, according to data compiled by Bloomberg News. Number of retrenchment reported to be 158,100 so far this year is more than last year. This way, the Obama-Romney duo gorged out tall promises about a bright future but never showed the remedy, the real healing touch to the people. Equally significant is the fact that there was no reference to the simmering "Occupy Wall Street" movement nor was there any observation on the role of Wall Street, the bastion of US capital market and corporate sector, on the lives of US people.

The farce of media debate

What then were the pompous debates about? It was solely aimed at submitting respective credentials about the ability to best serve the vile class interest of the oppressive ruling monopolists. While Obama's plea had rested on the need for more time to revive an economy devastated by the cavalier policies of the former Republican administrations, Romney had sought to convince voters that the

American economy was on the wrong track and needed a change in command to lift it out of the doldrums. Both Obama and Romney agreed on the need fundamentally to overhaul the federal tax system not for public welfare under any stretch of imagination but for providing more comfort to the giant corporates, MNCs and the affluent with swelling coffers. Only, they disagreed on certain nitty-gritties of operation and rates of taxation. Without spelling out any concrete plan of job creation, both Obama and Romney dangled the carrot of millions of new employment opportunities. And we have just shown above that such are nothing but hoisting colourful balloons poised to burst in no time.

As regards foreign policy, Obama touted the 2011 killing of Al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden in his hideout in Pakistan as a major victory for US counterterrorism. He said his plan is to draw out US troops in Afghanistan and hand responsibility for security to the Afghans by the end of 2013 will "responsibly end the war" there in 2014. Romney countered by saying that Obama's announcement of a timetable for withdrawal of US troops in 2014 "left our Afghan allies in doubt about our resolve and encouraged the Taliban to believe that they could wait us out." He said he would order a full interagency assessment of the US presence in Afghanistan to ensure that the withdrawal is based on conditions on the ground but still with the goal of handing combat operations to the Afghan Army by the end of 2014. On Syria, Obama said his goal was to "promote a moderate Syrian leadership and an effective transition so that US get Assad (Syrian President) out." Romney held that Obama failed to "act resolutely" to help end the Assad government, making the United States "absent and irrelevant" at a time of instability in the Middle East, and hence his offer was : undermine Assad through sanctions and rejection of diplomatic initiatives which would allow Assad to stay.

So, in so far as hoodwinking people through hollow promises, avid pursuit of war mongering, international gangsterism and serving the nexus of the industrial-military complex are concerned,

they have no difference. What one could relish in their billion dollar commercials blitz and hi-tech debate was how they demonstrated a phenomenal acting skill in delivering scripted dialogues on the manufactured questions by specially trained anchors and of course, how an election campaign, which blanketed desired political discourse, could take bitter and nasty turns with personal attacks and accusations. There is a flurry of drawn up advertisements that depict opponents as incompetents, idiots, liars, un-American and so on. And, in the process, many despicable instances of malpractices, malfeasance, nepotism and doublespeak involving people in the highest level of governance came in public domain to unmask the murky face of 'great' American democracy. More such revelations, more disinterested in the electoral blitzkrieg have been the common people, back-broken by escalating economic and political oppression, as has been evident from the drastic fall in the percentage of polling. Even after so much of drum-beating, the Presidential poll virtually remained a non-event. It is understood that around 49% people of the electorates only have exercised their franchise this time. Moreover, David Shieler, in his authoritative book 'The Working Poor', reports that the poor vote at rates of 40 per cent while the rich vote at rates of 75 per cent. So, the mandate is virtually of the affluent and not the impoverished. In every respect, this presidential election has been one of the dirtiest and most underhanded elections of all time.

Money flew in gushes

And in orchestration of grandiose campaigns of the two political managers of the ruling monopolists pitted against each other by their masters, this muddiest sneaky presidential election turned out to be a feast of money. As commented by Noam Chomsky, noted human rights activist, "Elections are run by the public relations industry. Its primary task is commercial advertising, which is designed to undermine markets by creating uninformed consumers who will make irrational choices." The same has happened this time also with alacrity. According to all and

Contd. on page 4

US Presidential Election

Money and media power manipulate election verdict in favour of the rulers

Contd. on page 4

sundry, this presidential poll has been the most expensive one on the turf of not only US but may be of any country in the map. It is given to understand that the cost of this election, the lion's share of which was on account of TV shows and advertisements for Obama and Romney, crossed over \$ 7 billion. Needless to say that the actual figure would be much more than this official reporting. Wherefrom came this whopping sum? Obviously from the large industrial houses, business tycoons and corporate sector, both in and outside US, who had their vested interest in ensuring that one of the two occupies the throne and serves them better. For example, the American Petroleum Institute (API) funds TV advertising against legislators who support those energy policies which the corporate backers disapprove of. Of late, following a ruling by the Supreme Court of USA which allowed billionaires to fund super PACs (political action committees) with unlimited millions and letting corporations, deemed to be "persons," make exorbitant campaign contributions, the door was opened more liberally, if not non-transparently, to companies or trade associations to spend more freely on publicity campaigns attacking, or supporting, policies associated with candidates. Apart from US monopoly houses and MNCs, more than 20% of Britain's largest corporations have channelized political donations to these favoured candidates. Obama and Romney, through affiliated super PACS and donors, reportedly raised a combined \$1.82 billion. This staggering amount of political donations to buttress narrow sectarian commercial interest had virtually shut out the other contending smaller party candidates numbering as high as 12 since they had little chance to find mention in the corporate-owned media. This, as can be understood by any thinking or analytical mind, is a deliberate ploy of the ruling class to keep people arrested within not just the precincts of futile electoral politics but much truncated version of the same i.e. the 2-Party system. At the same time, through spread of parliamentary illusion and that too confined within two parties of its choice, the ruling class also tries to ensure that the aggrieved people do not embrace the path of movement but continue to have their misplaced

optimism in the choice of one of the two projected candidates under illusion created by the pre-poll promises and be duped subsequently.

Projecting Obama's victory as people's win

This aspect will be clearer if one tries to understand why there is motivated attempt from the ruling quarters to project Obama's return for a second term as a mandate of the downtrodden, the persecuted black and Hispanic populace and the women. One would recall that when Obama, an Afro-American or member of the 'coloured' community, swept the elections in 2008, a similar halo was sought to be created in his favour to dupe the people then seething against the war crimes and fiscal savagery of Incumbent Republican President George Bush. All the news broadcasts, telecasts, live discussions, comments, editorials, debates and analyses highlighted the 'colour' issue as unprecedented and projected this as augury of a change that the US working class and common people particularly the blacks and Hispanics should cheer up. Obama also gave call for a "change" and promised to the US people in general that if elected, he would arrest the economic downturn, create 2.5 million jobs, abolish outsourcing of jobs, stop the overseas wars, withdraw forces from Iraq within 16 months, close down infamous concentration camps in Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib and so forth. No doubt, many of the US citizens bamboozled by these showering slogans and promises also thought that there would possibly be a shift from hitherto pursued economic-political line of Bush under which they had immense economic suffering, bore the burden of huge war expenditures and were robbed of many hard earned civil and political rights. Even some of the noted intellectual and democratic-minded people of our country were also carried away by the calibrated propaganda.

But it took no time for them to be disillusioned. After initial customary gimmicks, Obama soon bared his real face of a trusted agent of the ruling monopolists and pursued domestic policies, military aggression, economic and political intervention in other countries in compliance with the class interest of ruling imperialism-capitalism — the only difference with Bush lying

in the rhetoric employed. The plight of the black people soared further. Being racially discriminated against and often facing social persecution, they continued to be, in every respect, the subdued wretched. Poverty and illiteracy remained rampant in them. For example, among the black and Hispanic populations, numbers of BPL (Below Poverty Line) category have been 27.4% and 26.6% respectively, almost double of the national average. 38 % of the infants belonging to the black population are not getting the required quantity of necessary nutrition for growth. Despite all promises of mitigating the capitalist economic crisis, it accentuated further to drag down tens of millions of workers and other sections of the toiling masses as the details provided in previous paragraphs would bear out. Instead of standing by the poor and deprived, Obama administration's priority when the bubble of artificially inflated economy burst was to bail out big banks and corporations. On almost every issue, Obama had accommodated the capitalist assault on the working class. In the finest continuity of his hated predecessors, Obama administration made every effort to muzzle voice of protest or smother any anti-government agitation. Not only did it crush the surging movements ruthlessly by police, but secretly monitored the leaders of the movement, first tried to drop bait before them to purchase, failing which it took them into custody and straightaway threw them into jail. Raising the alibi 'the country in danger', Obama consolidated the draconian special 'executive power' in the President's hand. By strength of this special 'power', the President, if he deems fit, can confine any US citizen without trial, and even can hang them to death. In America, police have kept 40 lakh people under the scammer of suspicion. The Muslims and other immigrants are facing extreme harassment. Under Obama, awarded Nobel Prize for peace in 2009 evidently under pressure of US imperialism, the Pentagon's deadly drone war against Arab, Asian and African peoples has been 500 percent wider than under butcher Bush. In fact, Obama has earned the identity of 'drone Obama' for this. Naked interventions, espionage and engineering regime changes through

planted agents and violence including military attacks went on unabated as has been seen, of late, in Libya, Syria and Afghanistan. Now from experience the US working class and toiling masses are realizing that there was no occasion for them as well as the oppressed millions throughout the world to celebrate Obama's victory as harbinger of a real change.

So powerful is the propaganda machine of the ruling monopolists that it can turn a downright falsehood into presumed truth and adroitly prevent any opinion or viewpoint other than what the rulers intend to drive home from getting any kind of acquaintance. Same has been in this presidential poll as well—a complete blackout for all other than Obama and Romney and their tutored preachings. Even those opposed to Obama had no choice but Romney and vice versa. A change in this situation can be brought about only if a public opinion strong enough to counterpose and quash this billion dollar hoopla is organized. Development of such a counter opinion under correct political leadership is yet to take place in US. Hence, the ruling monopolists are triumphing in their game of manoeuvring election to their advantage and gain.

Thus, it is clear that the verdict in favour of Obama is more a manipulated one than true reflection of people's choice based on due appraisal of various political opinions and views. In fact, from the precision with which elections are maneuvered in the latest design of the ruling quarters, it appears as if any result could be printed out of a suitably programmed computer by press of a button. That is why, despite so much of drum beating, this election and its result hardly touched the people and made only the capitalist class of the world including US feel heartened and ecstatic.

People must rise with anti-capitalist revolutionary consciousness

It, therefore, obviates to say that this election had nothing for people and would give nothing to the people except escalated suffering in every sphere of life. The reality will set in soon. True that it is slowly becoming clear that the two-party system in the USA is really a form of worst bourgeois dictatorship — posing as a "democracy" and

Contd on page 6

Comrade Manik Mukherjee attends 108th conference of Republican Sinn Féin in Dublin, Ireland

The 108th Ard Fheis (AGM) of Republican Sinn Féin, the oldest party in Ireland, formed in 1905 and providing leadership to the national liberation and anti-imperialist struggle of the Irish people since then, was held on November 10 and 11 in Dublin, Ireland. Since development of the

Indian people since the days of India's struggle for independence. The Indian revolutionaries belonging to the uncompromising trend of Indian freedom movement were greatly inspired by the glorious struggle of the Irish revolutionaries. Despite the Irish people having waged a heroic and

unwavering struggle from the spirit of proletarian internationalism and wished total victory to the Irish people in their fight for freedom and justice. He added that the struggling people of India and Ireland are comrades-in-arms in the uncompromising battle for overthrowing ruthlessly oppressive capitalism-imperialism and pledged to lead this struggle to its logical culmination by forging struggling unity with the toiling people of the entire world. President Des Dalton presented Comrade Manik Mukherjee with a signed copy of Dilseacht, a book written by Republican Sinn Féin Patron Ruairí Ó Brádaigh, about Irish Republican Army Commandant General

Tom Maguire. In his presidential address Des Dalton stressed the important part of the international struggle against imperialism.

Following the ArdFheis, Republican Sinn Féin International spokesperson Dieter Blumenfeld hailed this year's Ard Fheis as an excellent example of lively internationalism with comrades from countries as far as India attending and messages of solidarity read out from comrades all over the world. He said only the united and international struggle of comrades from all over the world will ultimately defeat imperialism. The Ard Fheis concluded with the singing of the Irish national anthem.



Comrade Manik Mukherjee addressing 108th conference of Republican Sinn Féin in Dublin

contemporary revolutionary movement in Ireland, Sinn Féin and the Republican Movement had maintained strong links in solidarity with the Indian people fighting for independence from foreign rule. British imperialist rulers dreaded the growing solidarity between the fighting Indian and Irish people. The book named "Principles of Freedom" authored by Sinn Féin major Terence MacSwiney was proscribed by the British rulers of the then India.

To renew the revolutionary links of solidarity, Comrade Manik Mukherjee, Member, Polit Bureau, SUCI(C), attended the 108th ArdFheis of Republican Sinn Féin as a distinguished invitee. In his address to the delegates, he said that the Irish revolutionaries have been held in high esteem by the

protracted battle to win their independence from the British rule, the victory was chimerical because before retreating after defeat, the British rulers had engineered a split of the country, artificially dividing the Irish nation. Similarly the long and determined struggle of the Indian people ultimately forced the British to leave, but before withdrawing, they divided the country and handed over power to the compromising section of the leadership on the independence movement.

Comrade Manik Mukherjee went on to add that the Republican Sinn Féin Organisation is committed to bring about a true end to British domination, unification of the whole country, upholding social justice based on socialist principles. He expressed solidarity with their

PRESS CLIPPINGS

A glimpse of claimed development of Gujarat under Modi

A recent report of a research wing of the US Congress portrays Gujarat as "perhaps India's best example of effective governance and impressive development ... where controversial chief minister Narendra Modi has streamlined economic processes, removing red-tape and curtailing corruption in ways that have made the state a key driver of national economic growth". Mukesh Ambani describes Modi's leadership as "visionary, effective and passionate". His brother Anil sees in him a "role model" for other states to emulate, and hyperbolically claims he is the best leader Gujarat has had after Gandhi. Ratan Tata regards him to be an "exemplary" leader who efficiently delivers what he promises. Sunil Mittal is convinced that Modi is prime ministerial material.

But reality is that as per yardstick of assessing a government's worth by its success in battling poverty, discrimination and want, the Gujarat administration dramatically slips from leading the country to a surprising laggard. Nearly 45% children below five are malnourished. Infant mortality among girls at 51 per 1,000 is higher than the national average of 49. The sex ratio fell from 920 to 918 females for 1,000 males between 2001 and 2011, well below the national average of 940.

According to Indira Hirway, as per the latest National Sample Survey statistics, Gujarat ranks 14th among 20 major States in India, in terms of daily wages given to rural casual workers (men). In terms of urban casual workers' (men) wages, it ranks seventh. The State ranks 17th in regular rural workers' (men) wages, and 18th in regular urban workers' wages. Which means the State is practically at the bottom of the heap. The repressed wages mean that workers do not have the purchasing power to buy adequate nutrition

From the benchmark of social equity, the gravest culpability of the Modi government is its openly hostile relationship with its minorities. What is less noticed is the administration's refusal to extend development services to the minorities. Muslim ghettos are conspicuously under-served with roads, sanitation, drinking water and electricity, compared to their glittering neighbours. Gujarat is the only state in the country which refused to contribute its share to a centrally sponsored scheme of scholarships for minority children, thereby denying minority children the same, although 36% Muslim children are out of school. (Source — Frontline—Nov. 17-30, 2012 and Hindustan Times, 28 November, 2012)



Gathering at BhawanNirmanKarigarMazdoorUnion conference at Bhiwani, Haryana on 25 November. Dr. Tarun Mandal, SUCI(C), MP addressing.

US Presidential Election

Desired emancipation of people lies in revolutionary overthrow of oppressive capitalism

Contd. from page 4

people's hope for change of the stifling condition through change of guard through election has been considerably sapped. So, what is the alternative? Is it that oscillating between the Democratic Party and the Republican Party is *fate accompli* of the oppressed and repressed US people? Can the desired change from this stifling condition be brought about by any third party if installed in power? Time has come to seriously ponder over the question.

The yawning gap between a handful of rich and millions of poor, the rising misery and penury are no divine endowments. Nor are they mere fallout of certain exclusive policy decisions of either a Republican or Democrat President. In that event, a change of guard would have resolved the issue? Has it happened? No, because, the cause lies somewhere else and a probing eye would be able to locate that the root of a plummeting economy, increasing debt burden, squeezing income, joblessness and all such aberrations strangulating life are not due to any "extraneous" factors or just failure of any incumbent government to deliver the goods, as the ruling quarters try to pose, but are products, inevitabilities of the prevailing historically outmoded capitalist system based on exploitation of man by man. Parliamentary democracy is the political superstructure of the capitalist system. Government is nothing but a caretaker of the capitalist system which only serves the ruling capitalists and their servitors. Through election, there can be a change of government but not the oppressive class rule of the capitalists whose profit comes from the squeezed blood of the poor and destitute. With capitalism having long entered its moribund stage, parliamentary democracy has lost its relevance. More crisis-ridden is capitalism because of its endemic laws, more degenerated is the parliamentary democracy and now virtually reduced to a farce with the ruling class pulling strings from behind to decide through money, media and other manipulative powers who would be saddled in the seat of governance. If necessary, the class does not hesitate to exert its influence and prepare the ground for resorting to malpractice in the elections in order to get its preferred nominee elected as was

seen during Bush's victory in 2004 election. So, in a highly centralized and sophisticated imperialist-capitalist state like the US which is mainly run by a nexus of industrial-military complex and bureaucracy, no one running the government and its administration, can come out of this nexus. He or she must have to be a puppet, caretaker or political manager serving the interest of the nexus in general, and that of giant industrial houses and MNCs in particular. So, even for a moment one ought not to forget that Democrat or Republic, white or black each incumbent of Presidential chair is bound by the US capitalist-imperialist interest. This historical obsolescence of parliamentary democracy is to be understood. To hide this lurking truth and divert people's attention from the whirl of acute unprecedented crisis of ruling capitalism the burden of which is squarely passed on the people by its subservient governments either of the Democrats or the Republicans, there is so much of fanfare of presidential election which has nothing to offer to the people except deception. In fine, it matters little whether the President is a Democrat or Republican. Here it is worth recalling what the great Lenin had said hundred years back when bourgeois democracy had not degenerated so much as we see today. He said: "Democracy for an insignificant minority, democracy for the rich — that is the democracy of capitalist society. If we look more closely into the machinery of capitalist democracy, we shall see everywhere, in the "petty" — supposedly petty — details of the suffrage (residential qualification, exclusion of women, etc.), in the technique of the representative institutions, in the actual obstacles to the right of assembly (public buildings are not for "beggars"!), in the purely capitalist organization of the daily press, etc., etc. — we shall see restriction after restriction upon democracy...in their sum total these restrictions exclude and squeeze out the poor from politics, from active participation in democracy. Marx grasped this essence of capitalist democracy splendidly, when, in analyzing the experience of the Commune, he said that the oppressed are allowed once every few years to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class shall represent

and repress them in parliament!" (*The State and Revolution*)

Capitalism must be overthrown

Thus, it is clear that since decadent moribund capitalist system is the root of all evils, desired emancipation of people lies in revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system. Without imbibing this truth and taking necessary initiative to tread along the historically-determined course of achieving that truth, this curse of oppression, repression, discrimination and deprivation would not end. So, what is imperative is to make people realize the futility of bourgeois vote politics and rouse them on correct anti-capitalist anti-imperialist base political line under correct revolutionary leadership so that well-knit class and mass struggles over the burning problems of life develop right from the grass root level in an organized manner to be sustained over time defying the red eyes of the government and its coercive machinery. So long capitalism is not overthrown, desired emancipation from the yoke of increasing misery and penury would not be attained. It is in this respect that the lessons derived from the historic "Occupy Wall Street" movement which swamped not only entire US and sent a chill down the spine of the capitalist rulers but also created inspiring waves throughout the world as a mark of new awakening, are of crucial importance. This movement denoted another America, America of the oppressed, repressed and deprived rising against exploitation, America which is refusing to remain suppressed and subdued. The spirit of this movement is the harbinger of the future. With agitators shouting anti-capitalist slogans and denouncing, if not revolting against the "rule of 1% over 99%", it also became clear that that objective situation for building up anti-capitalist revolutionary movement is quite ripe. What is warranted is maturity of the subjective condition for revolution. There cannot be revolution without a revolutionary party. As historically poised vanguard of anti-capitalist revolution, the working class needs to give rise to revolutionary consciousness, give birth to and strengthen a genuine revolutionary party of its own through conduction of a definite all-embracing struggle.

Ruling capitalism-imperialism and its sinister machinations can be defeated only on the basis of enriched, developed and concrete understanding of Marxism-Leninism. Dwelling on the methodology of organizing toiling people through class and mass struggles conducive to anti-capitalist revolutionary movement, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, Founder General Secretary, SUCI(C) and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era had said: "revolutionary change does not come about in a spontaneous way through outburst of people's accumulated grievances....To accomplish revolution, you will have to get organized on the basis of a definite, clear-cut political goal.... an organization capable of conducting the protracted struggle of politically conscious organized people ...in order to change this capitalist social structure, you will have to build up and develop people's struggle committees from the village up to the town and city levels — people's committees which will have to ultimately confront the state power through struggles...the whole object is to develop the struggle committees ... which can organize people everywhere ...guiding them like a disciplined army..." (SW, Vol. III p. 549 & Vol. IV p. 552-53)

So on US soil, there is a pressing necessity that the correct revolutionary party of the proletariat not only just emerges but also acquires necessary ideological and organizational strength to expose the oppressive industrial-military complex running the imperialist state and imbue the people with the revolutionary consciousness of anti-capitalist struggle. Unless the leadership of the correct revolutionary party is established on the surging people's movements, they would not be led to their logical culmination and they might be aborted midway or fizzled out over a period of time. History demands expedient fulfilment of this condition so that suffering humanity is free from the scourge of capitalism and dawn of a new era breaks out in crimson glory. Otherwise rulers would be given handle to befuddle people, drag them along utterly deceptive electoral path, kill their fighting zeal and plunge them into the dungeon of frustration and apathy towards movement. This recently concluded US presidential poll must be an eye opener to all.

SUCI (C) Bihar State Committee protests 50 per cent hike in power tariff

Registering strong protest against the proposal of 50 per cent yearly hike in power tariff the Bihar state committee of SUCI (C) organized a mass demonstration and a public meeting at Patna Jn. Roundabout on 16 November last where an effigy of the JD(U) Chief Minister Nitish Kumar was burned. The speakers at the meeting said that the proposal of hiking power tariff would put the common people already suffering from unprecedented price hike, and acute unemployment into immense hardship. They held the JD(U)-BJP headed state government chiefly responsible for the hike which parroted development and good governance in the interest of domestic and foreign capitalists, is taking steps that are out and out anti-people. They also said that according to the proposal the consumers would have to pay Rs.

3.90 in the next year instead of Rs. 2.60 per unit and likewise Rs. 5.85 in the year of 2014-15 and Rs. 8.80 in the year of 2015-2016. The speakers also said the Nitish Kumar government has privatized the Bihar State Electricity Board by splitting it into five companies and allowed them to enhance the tariff at their whims. All the speakers demanded that the government should withdraw the proposal of enhancing power tariff and urged the common people to build up mass movement against the anti people policies of the state government.

Among the speakers at the meeting were leaders of the Bihar State Committee of the party including Comrades Shivrul Prasad, M K Pathak, and Suryakar Jitendra and Comrades Rajkumar Chaudhary and Anil Kumar, members, Patna District Committee, SUCI (C).



SUCI (C), Bihar, organized a mass protest rally in Patna against power tariff hike on 16 November



Jharkhand State Committee, SUCI(C) held protest demonstration against price rise and other anti-people policies in Ranchi on 7th November



A section of the delegates of Delhi state conference of AIMSS on 24th November. Inset — Justice Rajender Sachchar addressing the delegate session

School of Politics at UP



Comrade Ranjit Dhar, Member, Polit Bureau, SUCI(C), conducting school of politics at Sultanpur, UP. It was held from 4 to 6 November, 2012

TMC follows CPI (M) in steeply hiking bus-taxi fare in West Bengal

Despite its tall talks of ushering in 'changes' in governance, the TMC-led Government of West-Bengal under Mamata Banerjee is revealing its true character day-in and day-out by following policies inimical to the interest of the people. Last but not the least has been the steep hike in the fare of buses and taxis it has effected in the most undemocratic manner and that too contrary to the commitments it had made before being installed in power.

Earlier, whenever the central government used to announce rise in fuel tariff, the then CPI (M) government immediately raised the transport fare on the ostensible plea of protecting the private bus owners from incurring loss and had never felt any concern about the concomitant distress of the commuters assailed by ever-increasing economic oppression. No one would believe that any bus owner would run his vehicle on loss. Any rise in fuel cost might at best minimally lower his hefty profit. Despite repeated demands, the CPI (M) government never bothered to present before the people a detailed analysis of ticket revenue and running cost of public transport. TMC government, after assuming power, initially showed reluctance in raising the fares and posed to be defiant to the customary demand of raising fare by the bus owners. The monopoly-controlled media, however, created a hype in favour of the fare increase without answering the obvious question as to why the common people who are already tottering under the burden of hike in the prices of all essential commodities and are in no way responsible for periodic rise in fuel cost should bear the burden of

escalated fare. Taking advantage of the sustained media campaign coupled with the immense hardship faced by the passengers because of a planned reduction in the number of plying buses by the bus owners, the TMC Government has effected an exorbitant rise in transport fares and that too under a camouflage of reluctant approval of increase of just a rupee at each stage of fare. In fact, secretly the government has consented to a thorough revision of the fare stages as a result of which the erstwhile fare of Rs 6 now stands revised at not Rs 7 but Rs 9. Moreover, the process adopted by the government on this matter has been far from democratic. The TMC government just like its predecessor CPI (M) government only had several rounds of discussions with the bus owners and never felt the urge to consult the affected passengers. It refused audience to the Passenger Committees. In a deputation to the state transport minister, Comrade Soumen Basu, West Bengal State Secretary, SUCI(C) and other sate leaders of the Party expressed their strong opposition to such a most unjust fare hike effected in the most undemocratic way and is an abject betrayal to the people's cause. Our Party organised statewide protest movements against this anti-people step of the TMC government. Under pressure of movement, the government was forced to take action to restore original fare stages and clarify that fare would increase only by Re1 in each stage. However, there are still certain anomalies in the fare structure of inter-district buses and in certain intra-district routes against which agitations are going on.



Comrade Manik Mukherjee, Member, Polit Bureau, SUCI(C), presenting Red Flag to Comrades Ri Song and Dr. Kim Sung Hyok, representatives of North Korea (DPRK) as a mark of establishing party to party relation at a felicitation programme held in Kolkata on 28 October. Korean comrades said that socialism comes in a historically determined process and hence cannot be prevented.



Protest rally of Tripura State SUCI (C) against automatic promotion price rise, fuel tariff hike, transport fare increase, etc., at Agartala on 24th November.



Comrade Dhurjati Das, Secretary, Odisha State Committee hoisting Red Flag at Cuttack Komsomol camp inauguration on 26th October.



A part of the gathering of delegate session of Kerala state conference of AIUTUC on 21 November. Left — Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, President, AIUTUC and Member, Polit Bureau, SUCI(C) addressing

Draconian act promulgated by Odisha Government to suppress workers' movement

The Navin Patanaik government of Odisha once again bared its naked anti-working people stand by passing draconian 'Odisha Industrial Security Force Bill 2012' through voice vote in the assembly. As expected, the Congress, the main opposition party in the state, has lent support to the Bill in keeping with its known pro-capitalist character.

The Bill adjoins that a special force to be formed under the DIG Police would be permanently stationed inside all factories. For this, police stations will be set up within the factory itself. The factory owners will have full control over this special force. That force will enjoy the most undemocratic right to arrest anyone or search any house without court summons or any other directive. Moreover, the court will accept no complaint against this force even if it perpetrates some criminal activity unless the government approves of it. The Odisha Government has already set up police stations within many industrial units in course of getting the bill transformed into act and implemented too. It may be added that domestic and foreign monopoly houses like the Tatas, Birlas, Vedants, Jindals and South Korean giant POSCO are setting up industries in the state by forcibly evicting lakhs of downtrodden tribal people. Against such most inhuman and unjust eviction, powerful movements are surging forth in natural course. At the same time, unable to bear the brunt of escalated

attacks on life and livelihood, the industrial workers too are bursting forth in movements over legitimate demands. In order to brutally crush these growing movements of the repressed and deprived by the specially constituted force with unbridled power, of course under the pretext of maintaining law and order, the Odisha government has promulgated such a draconian act.

It would perhaps be relevant to recapitulate that 'peace in industry' is an expression well-nigh effective in creating confusion among many. But the fact remains that the unrest in industry is caused by the owners themselves depriving the workers their legitimate dues. But this truth is sought to be suppressed by the profit-seeking owners by creating a smokescreen of confusions and befuddlement with the help of their pliant media and other tricks. Now, there is a step forward to nip in the bud any crystallizing just, working class struggle within the factory premises itself. The sign is ominous, the future portentous. This attack must be resisted by the working class by developing powerful sustained organized movement under correct leadership and all sections of exploited masses ought to back that movement firmly and determinately. Any attack on any worker anywhere must be perceived as an attack on all and movements must be developed based on that consciousness. Working class and the toiling millions must imbibe this truth and accordingly unite to frustrate the noxious moves of the rulers.

Road Blockade organized by SUCI(C) against Bus-Fare Hike in Guwahati, Assam

On behalf of the Assam State Committee a programme of road-blockade was organized on November 6, to protest against the unjustified hike in the fares of all buses as well as trekkers. Hundreds of SUCI(C) workers joined in with banners and placards. This blockade movement created a lot of inspiration among the people. The movement was led by Comrades Bimal Nandi and Suratjjan Mondal, both members of Assam State Committee.

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