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Red Salute Comrade Fidel Castro



Comrade Fidel Castro, the architect of Cuban revolution and a renowned communist leader breathed his last on 26 November. He was the embodiment of the struggle of oppressed humanity for a life free from exploitation of man by man, honourable, upright and filled with love, affection and other human qualities. Throughout his life, he held aloft communist internationalism and had been a fount of inspiration to all the revolutionaries in every nook and corner of the globe. "Either socialism or death"—such was his outlook.

Immediately on receiving the news of his demise, the Red Flag was dipped half-mast at the Central Office of the Party and Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI (C), sent a letter to the Communist Party of Cuba condoling the death of this revered communist leader. The Party also decided to hold a memorial meeting in Kolkata on 4 December to draw lessons from the life and struggle of the departed leader. The Party also took part in a joint silent mourning rally organized by the left forces the same afternoon. The letter sent by Comrade Provash Ghosh is given below.

To
The General Secretary
Communist Party of Cuba
Havana

26-11-2016

Dear Comrade,

We are profoundly grieved at the demise of Comrade Fidel Castro, a valiant communist revolutionary leader whose laudable struggle and commendable role in establishing and protecting socialism in Cuba overcoming all threats, machinations and attacks by the world imperialist camp headed by US imperialism has been a source of immense inspiration to the anti-imperialist fighters and communist revolutionaries of not only Latin America in particular but the entire world. It was the exemplary revolutionary struggle led by Comrade Fidel in Cuba that roused the oppressed people of Latin America in taking up cudgels against the tyranny of US imperialism and building up proletarian revolutionary movements on their respective soils. A true internationalist, Comrade Fidel shall remain ever alive in the hearts of the oppressed toiling masses round the globe as well as millions of proletarian revolutionaries struggling for accomplishing anti-capitalist revolution and stepping on to socialism. We are sure that the leadership of Communist Party of Cuba would continue to strengthen socialism in their country strictly adhering to the path shown by the departed leader and provide impetus to world communist movement.

At this hour of bereavement, we express our revolutionary fraternity and solidarity with the comrades of the Communist Party of Cuba and the people of Cuba and convey to them our heartfelt condolences.

With revolutionary greetings

Comradely Yours
Provash Ghosh
General Secretary
Socialist Unity Centre of India (Communist)

Sudden demonetization of high value currency notes

Underlying motive of ruling class and party

The country's Prime Minister went on national television at 8 p.m. on November 8 last to announce that from approaching midnight, i.e. in a mere four hours' time, 500 and 1000 rupee notes would cease to be legal-tender. The justification advanced for this bizarre move was that it would strike at "black money" and curb corruption. An additional argument was thrown in, to the effect that fake currency notes pumped into the country for 'terrorist funding' would now cease to be effective. The Prime Minister has said that because of his 'bold' move, the poor is having sound sleep while it is sleepless night for the rich. Is it so or just the reverse? Is it not a unique way of transferring the paltry cash in hand of the poor to the treasury of the rich? What is the ground reality?

Panic button triggered for common toiling people

The government and the ruling party BJP claimed that this 'surgical strike on black money' for 'betterment in future' would cause 'short term inconvenience' to people. But this move launched without caring for any proper planning or adequate infrastructural support to cope with the process of exchanging old notes for new ones has expressly turned out to be a huge nightmare for the countrymen specially the downtrodden have-nots and low-income households. The poorest of the poor — daily wage-earners, labourers, migrant labourers, domestics, those working in the rural or informal economy who get their means of sustenance, mobility and security from having petty cash in hand and low-income families who predominantly depend on cash to meet daily expenses— are worst hit. Already around 90 people are reported to have died because of this whimsical fiat. Some of them

including old and disabled collapsed in the queues. On the other hand, many have committed suicide being unable to secure the exchanged currency, overcoming the unprecedented hazards and hassles of the totally mismanaged procedure for meeting emergent needs like feeding the children or arranging daughter's marriage. A few stressed bank officials died in harness. Even death has occurred to patients unable to receive medical attention because of the refusal to accept old currencies by the hospitals. There is spree of retrenchment and layoffs. Peasants are not able to sell their produce in the APMCs ('Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee' markets). With co-operative banks not allowed exchanging notes, cash-based agricultural economy is the worst casualty. Cash crunch has almost paralyzed the food chain. There is a cry of distress throughout the country. The whole economy is in chaos. Predicament of the people already strangled by rapidly rising economic onslaught by ruling oppressive capitalism in the form of horrific price spiral, mounting unemployment, increasing job loss, fast drying up of all sources of earning and fiscal savagery, knows no bound. Not only the ongoing calamitous situation, the cascading and concomitant effect of this 'scorched earth' economic dose would be devastating while the outlined objective of uncovering black money, immobilizing counterfeit notes and weeding out corruption would prove to be a big hoax.

Recovery of black money

What is black money? To put it in simple terms, undisclosed income or wealth accumulated through a whole set of undeclared activities, on which tax is evaded is black money. Unaccounted

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Demonetization

Life and economy in total chaos

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illegal wealth or black money also gets generated through criminal means like smuggling of drugs, arms or gold, under invoicing of exports or imports, realizing understated value of real estate deals in cash, or bribes, grafts, kickbacks and cut-money taken by the corrupt ministers, politicians and bureaucrats, etc. Black money through rampant indulgence to unlawful money transactions and suppression of income is thus stamping around for decades with impunity fuelling inflation and fostering black-marketing and hoarding. Estimated 95% of this black wealth is being stashed away overseas either in anonymous Swiss bank accounts or through dubious means like *hawala* route. Who are the principal dealers in black money? Surely not the common toiling people but those few like top industrialists, unscrupulous big businessmen, crooked and dishonest politicians-ministers, dishonest bureaucrats, real estate barons, arms dealers, smugglers and speculators who are the privileged lot in this utterly exploitative, discriminatory and corrupt capitalist system. What is the amount of black money in circulation? A few years back, Swiss bank authorities indicated that as high as 1.4 trillion US dollars or Rs 72 lakh crores of money are lying in the personal accounts maintained by Indian industrialists, politicians and bureaucrats. (Kuldip Nayar in *the Express Tribune, July 19, 2011*). Calculation shows that if this huge amount of black money could be brought back to India, the entire foreign debt of the country can be repaid in 24 hours. Even after clearing foreign debt, there will be a surplus 12 times larger than the foreign debt which, if invested, would earn an interest more than the annual budget of the central government. So even if all the taxes are abolished, then also the central government will be able to maintain the country very comfortably. This gives an idea of the extent of domination of black money in Indian economy. Even if we go by a latest report of World Bank which for obvious reasons wants to peg down the figure through computing manipulations, black money in India is 23.2% of GDP. If GDP is estimated to be Rs 150 lakh crore (as in 2015-16) and 25% of that is roughly assumed to be black money, the quantum comes to Rs 37.5 lakh crores. As per Income Tax department, 95% of this black money is stashed abroad.

Another 3 to 4% are held in gold, diamond or real estate. At best, only 2% to 3% or between Rs 75, 000 to Rs 1 lakh crores are held in cash and that too mostly by some small players in unaccounted money, not the big fishes. Even if we assume for argument's sake that the entire black cash in circulation is unearthed through this demonetization drive, would that cleanse the system of black money? How to flush out balance 98%? Demonetization was undertaken on earlier occasions also. Could that rein domination of black money?

Hoodwinking propaganda and parading in falsehood

Prime Minister is on record to have said that printing of new currency notes started six months back. If that be true, how come the notes bear the signature of Urjit Patel who took over as governor of RBI only on 4 September last? A calculation shows that if printing of Rs 2000 currency notes takes place simultaneously in four printing presses of the country, replenishing of invalidated currencies numbering 684 crores (valuing Rs 6, 84, 000 crores i.e. 45% of the total currency in circulation) would require nearly 3 months. Then, why is this shortfall if printing commenced before six months? On the contrary, if printing has commenced from 8 November last, then time required to replace the disbanded currency would go up to February middle. Then how can government talk of replacing the banned currency by 30 December, 2016? Clearly, there is suppression of truth and hence such contradictory statements. The government also claims that everything was kept extremely secret. But, how could Dainik Jagaran, a well circulated Hindi daily carry out news about this impending demonetization as early as in its edition dated 27 October, 2016? Bhawani Singh, BJP MLA from Kota (Rajasthan), alleges that "top monopolists like Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani had prior knowledge of demonetization of Rs 500 and 1,000 notes and sorted their money in advance." (Financial Express 17-11-16) It is also reported that consequent on the BJP government's raising of the upper ceiling of overseas remittances by resident individuals from \$ 75, 000 to \$2,50,000 per annum from 26 May, 2015, as high as Rs 30,000 crore (\$4.6 billion) have been transferred from India in last 11 months. (Indialens.com 11-11-16) A substantial portion of this could well

be black deported to foreign lands. It is also reported that RBI under Raghuram Rajan, former governor, staunchly opposed this currency note scrapping early this year. (The Statesman 29-11-16) Bourgeois economists like Amartya Sen, Nobel laureate, or Kaushik Basu, adviser, World Bank, have also totally disapproved the move. In an open letter to the Prime Minister, Yatin Ojha, a former BJP MLA from Gujarat writes, "information of demonetization must have been conveyed well before announcement to your near and dear industrialists who in total control 50% of black money of this country.... all district co-operative banks controlled by people committed to BJP... exchanged Rs.500 and Rs.1000 currency notes against smaller denomination right from 9 PM on 8/11/2016 till 5 AM on 9/11/2016...I have a video recording with me which will clearly and beyond reasonable doubt prove that all the near and close associates of Shri Amit Shah since 8th November till today are engaged into exchange business. There is a big queue outside their office and residence for conversion of black money into white at a discounted rate of 37%." (The quint.com 21-11-16) Economic Times reported on 19-09-2016 that in the fortnight ended September 2 last, bank deposits rose by almost 10 times (Rs 50,000 crore to Rs 5 lakh crore). One would be not wrong in assuming that this is black cash transformed into white on receipt of the news of forthcoming demonetization beforehand. In the widely publicized zero balance accounts under Jandhan Yojana, as high as Rs 21,000 crores were deposited overnight since 8 November, showing how black cash is turned white by the hoarders exploiting the uninformed poor, may be with a lure of minuscule commission. Through facebook and twitter, it went viral that Laljibhai Patel, a Surat-based diamond businessman has surrendered to the bank Rs 6000 crores of black cash dumped in his house. But, later Laljibhai story was found to be a fake one. (Financial Express 15-11-16) Yet, many Twitter and Facebook exhibited it as an evidence of success of the demonetisation move. Even rumours were floated that bagful of currency notes were being burnt in the field. Is there any fool who would burn his cash when there are thousand and one escape routes open?

Some 'theoretician' economists have been arguing that of the total

Rs 14 lakh crore worth of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes that have been scrapped, roughly Rs 3 lakh crore are not likely to be exchanged for new notes ever. This entire extinguished or disappeared black money would be profit or 'bonanza' to the RBI, and would be transferred to the central government as dividend. This is ridiculous! Every novice knows that cancelled currency is not cash income in the same way that interest on bond is income which is actual cash flow. So, where is the question of 'bonanza'? Curiously, based on claimed 5 lakh positive response of 10 lakh Nammo App (a specific mobile phone application), the PM announced in his reality shows here and there that despite all sufferings 92% of people are supporting demonetization move. Population of the country is 121 crores. Then how could 5 lakh out of 121 crore be 92%? Vedic Mathematics?

Double standard of BJP

And now a word about the double standard of ruling BJP. First of all, if the government was keen to uncover black money, why is it so averse to disclosing the names featuring on the list submitted by the Swiss Bank before the Supreme Court? Is it because that, as leaked by Wikileaks, the list contains names of the first-ranked monopolists, big businessmen and top-notch bourgeois politicians including those of ruling BJP, Congress and other regional parties and their families?

Next is that when Congress-led UPA government intended to withdraw all currency notes issued before 2005 on the same pretext of fighting black economy, Meenakshi Lekhi, then spokesperson of BJP, said before the media that, "The latest gimmick of the finance ministry to demonetise the notes, printed before 2005, is an attempt to obfuscate the issue of black money stashed outside the country... This measure is strongly anti-poor. The 'aam aurats' and the 'aadmis' - those who are illiterate and have no access to banking facilities will be the ones to be hit by such diversionary measures...65 per cent of the population does not have bank accounts and such people — largely illiterate, poor, old and living in remote areas — store their money in cash. They will fall victim to middlemen who will scare them that the notes are worthless and charge them hefty fees to convert them. They will also be ripped off by

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Suppression of truth, surfeit of stunts

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shopkeepers. ... This policy ... is only meant for the blue blood and not for the sweating, red-blooded, toiling millions. It is not going to affect those who have numbered accounts in Swiss accounts." (*Times of India* 24-01-14) Read this in conjunction with what Shri Amit Shah, the BJP President, said of late. When he was asked why their pre-election promise of unearthing black money within 100 days and paying every countryman Rs 15 lakhs has not been honoured, he said on ABP Live channel that it was a *chunavi jumla* (electoral gimmick). "There is no way so much of money could be given to the people", he quipped. Hypocrisy, doublespeak and shamelessness par excellence! Just three days back, Prime Minister has once again spoken of what stern measures would be taken against those found to have held black money in course of demonetization drive. Who knows what 'jumla' it is! Among political parties, BJP has largest amount (Rs. 977 crore) of unknown income in two years. (*Business Standard*, 29-11-16) All these clearly show that this demonetization move is not for fighting black money or corruption but for buttressing a hidden agenda.

Possible outcome—drastic cut in bank interest

Before we focus on that hidden agenda of the ruling dispensation, let us have a glance at what could be the possible fallout of this move. First of all, everyone knows that almost Rs 8 lakhs worth of bank loans mostly to the giant monopolists, big corporates, wealthy and super-rich are unrecoverable (NPAs). This is despite the government having liberally granted tax waivers and exemptions worth Rs 48.15 lakh crores of rupees in last 12 years. But the defaulters are neither taken to task nor their names revealed by the government despite directive by the Supreme Court in this case also. Instead, loans as high as Rs 1.14 lakh crore has been written off. But, with so much of defaults, banks have been starved of cash and the government has already announced a bailout package of \$ 40 billion or Rs 2,720 lakh crore (2% of GDP) from public exchequer by 2018. But now following demonetization drive, the banks are flushed with funds and restricted withdrawal ensures availability of that cash for a longer term easing to a great extent the depletion in cash holding. Citing this surplus cash in the hands of the banks, the government through RBI

will now be on a spree of slashing interest rates pushing the common men particularly retired persons and senior citizens saving their hard-earned money in the banks into enormous problems. Progressive lowering of interest rates coupled with spiralling price line would make meeting both ends near to impossible for them. But the government has no concern for that. To them, interest of the top monopolists and business tycoons—most of whom are black money holders and dealers—are much more important than the toiling millions.

Boost to monopoly-owned e-banking and e-commerce companies

Next point is about insistence of the government to switch over towards cashless economy like the big imperialist countries of the West. It means people are asked to use plastic money i.e. use of their debit or credit cards for most of the transactions, resort to net-banking (operation of bank accounts through internet) or avail of e-commerce (buying goods by placing orders and making payment online). With sudden cash drought, there is obviously a tilt towards cashless transactions using electronic 'payment gateways' and 'mobile-based wallets like Paytm (a nascent company who advertised launch with Prime Minister's photo) or Jiomoney owned by Mukesh Ambani, the richest Indian industrialist. In fact, Jiomoney has already tied up with a good number of popular product bands. Through 24 x7 advertisements, these products are offered at hefty discounts if ordered online and payment made through Jiomoney. Quantum of such online purchases has jumped from 17% to 26% in just a fortnight after demonetization announcement. Obviously, this demonetization drive is a boon to these monopoly houses owning such electronic companies. Through such sustained promotion of e-commerce, there is a glaring attempt to bring retail sales under monopoly control and phase out the small retailers who are already badly affected because of currency invalidation. This seemingly is a step towards complete monopolization of retail sector and clearing door for infusion of FDI. And in course of time, through this cashless e-commerce e-banking mode, more centralized control of the Indian capitalist state over the country's economy would be attempted in the interest of the

monopolists. On the other hand, with spurt in cybercrime like hacking of internet banking code and ATM passwords to pilfer money, people pushed to e-commerce like 'mobile wallet' and 'payment gateway' would be in grave risk. Secondly, such services which are advertised to be very cheap, if not completely free at the outset (like Jiomoney), to attract customers would soon be found to be substantially costly (just like rising bill of cell phone packages) once the process of bringing a good number of people within the e-network is over. This is the traditional strategy of monopoly takeover. Finally, what percentage of the total population is so e-savvy

later through their current accounts and savings accounts in the names of family members within acceptable limit of Rs 2, 50,000. In the absence of valid currency, these informal measures would provide a cushion to small traders and ordinary people who have limited or no access to electronic money transfers. Ultimately, this non-legal tenders may find permanent acceptability (of course at a permanently lower value) within the black economy.

Capitalism generates and abets black money

So, it is obvious that the real beneficiaries of this much-trumpeted demonetization drive are

Demonetization: SUCI(C) calls

All India Protest Day on 28th November

Comrade Provas Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), issued the following statement on 23-11-16:

It is evidently clear that the demonetization policy of central government is not to unearth black money but to shield the real black money holders by hoodwinking people. It is causing immense hardship to common men including death of many. We demand immediate withdrawal of this anti-people policy and adequate compensation to the families of the dead.

With these demands we call upon the people of the whole country to observe 28th November as 'All India Protest Day' by holding demonstrations, meetings, etc.

as to transact in this manner? Over 30% of Indian poor do not have a bank account even after the present government's high-voltage campaign for opening zero-balance account. So, this drum-beating about cashless economy is a cruel joke on the half-fed semi-clad hapless illiterate downtrodden.

Emergence of new parallel black money market

Finally, the move by the government in a bid to curb black money as the high value notes have become the basis of a new form of corruption and illicit deals. A group of vendors are in the field to buy out old notes at hefty discount (as low as Rs 300 for a Rs 500 note, Rs 600 for a Rs 1000 note and even aggregate offer of Rs 13,000 for Rs 20,000—source-Financial Express 10-11-16) so that when they deposit the notes in the bank, they get some profit. Surely this profit margin would not be disclosed and remain as black income.

There is another possibility of a parallel black money market. If the present chaos continues for some more time, many small and medium businesses would start accepting old currency instead of closing their shops and hope to get it exchanged

the top monopolists, unscrupulous businessmen and a section of ever-sprouting middlemen who trade in the plight and misery of the common masses. There would hardly be a scratch on the black money holders. Why? That is the moot point. Is black money generated outside the prevailing capitalist economic system or within it? Surely, it is within. Then what is the driving force? Obviously, it is the avid greed for money, more and more money by any means. Long back, in Communist Manifesto, Karl Marx had shown that in capitalism, money is supreme, omnipotent. Everything in life including social relations is now subordinate to money. He explained that under the capitalist system, the basis of production relations is labour and capital. The capitalist ownership over means of production is used for exploiting wage workers or labour. So, in capitalism, money does not only remain as a medium of exchange. Money becomes capital when it is used to exploit the labour power of others through appropriation of surplus labour as profit. Capital advanced by a capitalist i.e. put in circulation by him, returns to him

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Not even a scratch is on black money holders

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with a certain increment (expressed by the formula M-C-M'). So, money or money making assumes primacy over everything. Now, when capitalism is in its death throes, turned utterly corrupt and reactionary, money has become 'only potent'. The life philosophy fostered by capitalism (bourgeois outlook) has also become rotten in every respect. In hot pursuit of multiplying wealth through maximization of profit by usurpation of surplus labour power of the working class, the ruling capitalists have pushed the society into thinking that 'money-making is the sole object of life'. It is this greed for money which is to be satiated through avid pursuit of money making, no matter what the means or source of earning is, what low of degradation, deception, deceit, derision or defalcation is to be stooped to for that. This debased mentality is giving birth to and egging on generation of black money. More privileged one is in the system, more apt one is towards accumulating ill-gotten wealth. Obviously capitalism not only breeds but also nurtures black wealth. No imperialist-capitalist country is free from black money. Sources indicate that in US 18 to 19 % of income nationwide is not reported to the Internal Revenue Service. The estimated \$2 trillion of unreported income gives rise to an annual tax gap of \$450 billion to \$500 billion. UK, Germany, Italy, France Japan, Russia, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Australia—everyone features on the list of black money. (Rediff.com 23-06-14) So, if anyone talks of fighting black money but stays away from raising crusade against the decrepit capitalist system, he is either ignorant or motivated. Is the BJP talking against capitalism? Is any other ruling or mainstream political party starting from Congress, Socialist Party, TMC, AIADMK to pseudo-Marxists like CPI (M) uttering a single word against capitalism? They cannot because all are, overtly or covertly, serving bourgeois class interest and capitulating to the ruling class for pelf and power. So, none of them has guts to say anything against capitalism. This is where a genuine revolutionary party is distinguished from others. While others keep their

politics strictly within the precincts of bourgeois parliamentarism which has also lost all its sheen in dying capitalism, the revolutionary party in its effort to acquaint people with truth always seeks to expose the murky face of capitalism, the root of all evils.

Fighting corruption

In this perspective, how far credible could be BJP's claim of fighting corruption either? To put it simply, corruption is deliberate indulgence in malpractices and flouting of norms, principles and practices through abuse of power, malfeasance, cheating, depriving or defrauding others etc. for netting narrow sectarian personal gains, not only monetary but also non-monetary like power and status. Over and above the ruthless economic assault and concomitant on-going pauperization, there is further dent into the depleting pockets of the people because corruption at highest level is either siphoning out accruals in public exchequer or depriving the exchequer of due revenue. Besides these large-scale larcenies, people's day to day life is imperiled by severity of corruption. That "Police takes bribe" is already an adage. Nowadays, it is rather defended with a counter-posing question: who does not. In any government office, municipality or panchayat, nothing moves unless under the table payment takes place. Has the government apprehended a single black marketer, hoarder or price manipulator till today? What about the very Income Tax or Commercial Tax departments? Are they not dens of corruption? If the Tax authorities know the quantum of unpaid tax or black income, are we to believe that they do not know who these culprits are? But they would not dare to touch the fraudsters either because the latter belong to the category of big industrialist or social high up or their 'connections' at high level. Are not due taxes lowered or waived by corrupt IT officials against payment of "consideration"? So, people find with annoyance and anger that while an honest tax payer is often harassed unnecessarily, tax laws are blindfolded towards 'powerful

and influential'. In one or two cases, some of the 'high level' scamsters or fraudsters are taken into custody for a few days or months just for hoodwinking people. But, then with intervention of their "connections", "mentors" and "godfathers" perching atop the towers of power, their detention is temporary and punishment ever elusive. Just the other day, this very government waived Rs1,200 crores of tax to Vijaya Mallya, who fled abroad without paying almost Rs 9000 crores to various banks. Even in the last budget, the government itself launched a voluntary

fulcrum of the whole capitalist system today. Hence, anyone who is wedded to dying stinking capitalist system or is its avid servitor, cannot remain insulated from corruption. Is not therefore BJP's tirade against corruption anything but hollow shouting only for playing to the gallery?

Cleansing the system of fake notes

The BJP government's third objective behind demonetization drive is stated to be immobilising fake currencies. It is admitted that demonetization invalidates fake



Protest against demonetization on 28 November in Trivandrum, Kerala

disclosure window with a clear assurance that those who respond would neither be punished nor asked any question. Announcement a couple of days back that those depositing black money can get away by paying 50% as tax and penalty is also akin to pardoning a formidable crime. Why is this amnesty to the wrongdoers?

So, it can be seen that the capitalist system not only abets but gives indulgence to rampant corruption. Why? Because it itself is corrupt. As dying capitalism has become reactionary, it does not nurture any ideology today. Rather, in order to prolong its decayed existence, it is killing all noble ideals, morals, values, finer senses and other human qualities and at the same time systematically breaking all rules and regulations, flouting all norms and practices. The arena of financial activity in moribund capitalism has been transformed into a punters' den where all operations veer around the sole objective of fattening individual purses by cheating others through crafty manipulations, circumventing laws and evading tax. Things have come to such a pass that kickbacks, graft and bribery are being regularized in the financial statements under the newly coined terms like 'facilitation fees', 'infrastructure installation amounts', etc.. That makes it further evident that corruption is the

currencies. But the question is how notes can be forged unless the security devices are leaked in connivance with corrupt administration? Astonishingly, while issuing new notes, the government authorities said that "the security features remain the same as the old notes." (The Hindu-12-11-16) In other words, the hacking agencies have virtually been signalled to be in business again. In fact, counterfeit Rs 2000 notes have already been detected in many areas like Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, etc. This only is expected of a worm-eaten administration in corrupt capitalism. The government quarter alleges that huge fake notes have been pumped in the country through Western border for funding terrorist organizations. If this information is known, how come our highly sophisticated intelligence network does not know who are doing this and how? And if our highly expensive vigilance mechanism is so inefficient, it ought to be heyday for the fake note racket. By the by, what is the quantum of fake notes? According to Shri Kiren Eijium, Minister of State, Home, only Rs 400 crores of fake currency notes is in circulation and terror funding is in the range of 700 to 800 crores. (Times of India 19-11-16) compared to total cash in circulation, it would at best be 0.00007%.

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CORRIGENDUM

Please read 3rd line of the 2nd para of the lead article on p. 1 in P Era dated 15-11-16 as "**foremost Marxist thinkers of the era**" in place of 'foremost Marxist thinkers of the country'. The mistake due to oversight is sincerely regretted.

US Presidential election

Aggrieved people tricked into choosing candidate of monopolists' choice

After a nearly two-year-long campaign, the US presidential election is over. During this period, an ambience seething with tension-speculation-expectation was created not just in USA, even throughout the world. Rulers of different countries, even a large section of their people, were drawn towards what was going on and what was going to be in the supposedly world's wealthiest and most belligerent country that, at the same time, claims to be the champion of democracy. Yes, it has the legacy. It is the country which once proudly pronounced adherence to the cherished concept of bourgeois parliamentary democracy: *Of the people, for the people and by the people*. But today, even its own countrymen painfully admit that it has become a rich country ruled *by the rich, for the rich*. Nevertheless, now that the election is over, with the result shocking some and encouraging some others, it may be worthwhile to take a stock of what happened with what forebodings.

Rich funding of rich campaign

First thing first. Why is the USA now being marked as a country ruled by the rich, for the rich? As the facts go, a staggering \$7 billion was spent in the 2012 election cycle, including \$2.6 billion on the presidential election campaign. Quite likely that the amount has doubled in 2016 with every cost everywhere in the capitalist world going wild upwards. Obviously poor cannot invest or spend this lot. And in fact, these days 68% of all these election funding together is met with contributions from super-rich- rich who make 1% of the USA people. In the early 1980s, interest groups spent \$200 million for direct lobbying of American politicians; in 2002 they spent \$1.8 billion and in 2012 they spent \$3.3 billion. Adjusted for inflation, it is a seven-fold increase in 30 years.

And in this rat race of funding and spending, none of the two major parties, the Republicans and the Democrats, can claim any distinction. Typical bourgeois parties of these days of moribund capitalism, that is imperialism, as they are, both of them put up the same face in this regard. And their master, the ruling monopolists and MNCs, the 'interest groups', are never miserly in showering their blessings on either of them.

Rich thrives, poor shattered

But even then, is the USA now really a country of the rich though it is ruled by the rich for the rich? Let us scan a few facts. Earnings of middle-class, meaning working people in the USA earning and spending decently, have been stagnant since 1996 as percentage of decent-paying jobs has been declining steadily. And when — not if — the financial markets go through another crisis, just as they have gone through a few years back, the pressure on jobs and wages is sure to

grow even more acute. 'The average two-income family in America is far worse off than a one-income family in just a generation ago. One in three Americans is reportedly a creditor to one or to loan providing institutions; 70 per cent of college students are in debt by the time they turn 18. Falling income often make them defaulters. Last year, 8,20,000 American families were declared bankrupt.' This is what a Harvard academic and Democrat Senator has stated. She questioned and answered: Why did people get so squeezed, so hard? What has changed is the policy. 'We went from being a country that strengthened its middle class to one that bets on its wealthiest'. Result? 'From 1935 to 1980, 70 per cent of all the new wealth that was created went to the lower 90 per cent of the population and the top 10 per cent of the population took 30 per cent. From 1980 to 2016, the top 10 per cent took almost all of the new wealth created, and the 90 per cent got almost nothing.' So the inequality is growing and chasm between rich and poor widening.

Nowadays common Americans are stated to be spending 13 per cent less on food, 46 per cent less on clothing, 48 per cent less on appliances, including fancy gadgets. Compared to 30 years earlier, they spend 11 per cent more on transportation, 57 per cent more on shelter, 104 per cent more on health insurance, 275 per cent more on college education and 953 per cent more on child care. Fixed costs are going through the roof. Detroit, once a famous industrial, rather car manufacturing hub of US, is a pathetic case in point. Some time back it declared bankruptcy. Once every worker employed in the automobile sector had a car, health care provided by company, security etc.: there was prosperity all around. Now, every sixth house is deserted, rotting. Unemployment is galore, social security is cut, town/district is

unable to pay even the pensioners. People have been living from hand to mouth.

And the picture is not just town specific, it is countrywide. Across the country, jobs in manufacturing industries are outsourced or, to be specific, being moved to lower-wage countries for cheaper labour, less environmental restrictions and other cost-cutting advantages. Besides outsourcing, regular jobs are also 'disappearing' due to recession. Instead are introduced contract jobs, partial employment, squeeze on social security, wage cuts, longer working hours for less pay. Added was the burst of bubble economy with sub-prime loan crisis in 2008, causing further spurt in unemployment. Concomitantly, besides falling living standard of people especially toiling people, there is growing destitution and insecurity of toiling people, homelessness, beggary and rise in crime as well as social aberrations like racial conflicts. As per UNICEF report, USA is a 'Leader' in child poverty in the world. Things have come to such a pass that a woman offers to sell sex for \$ 60 and some sundry food (nachos). Yet, stories of economic recovery are penned by pliant economists and commentators. Whatever little recovery has been made in the economy, even bourgeois economists admit, has benefitted only the 1 per cent rich and affluent. 'The American economy may look great from the outside, but for the families living inside, this economy is very different,' concluded the same Harvard academic and Democrat Senator.

Choice restricted between most trusted of the ruling monopolists

So the central question before the American toiling people was: In the Presidential elections can the 99% of Americans defeat the 1% rich trying to maintain the status quo for self-aggrandizement? The candidates, too, were all aware of this public mind, candidly or not. They were pitted in a vote-battle for the two-party parliamentary system that the American monopolists have thrust upon the people, with choice virtually restricted between the Republicans and the Democrats, both of which have proved their unstinted subservience to the ruling monopolists. The three candidates who figured out prospective were Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton from the Democratic Party and

Donald Trump from the Republicans, fondly called GOP, Grand Old Party. All the three, initially, spoke about the economic frustrations of large sections of the population, albeit in their respective own ways, to elicit popular support in their favour. However, in course of the campaign hard facts took their toll. Among them, Bernie Sanders was more vocal and reportedly garnered a massive enthusiastic support of a large section of young progressive minded people, including young activists of 'Occupy Wall Street' movement. Tens of thousands of common, poorer Americans are stated to have financed his campaign with small contributions of \$5 and \$10 bills. Sanders pointed finger at the structures of finance and the power of the big business lobby to suffocate any opportunity for workers. He called for making it harder for US multi-nationals to move their manufacturing and assembly operations outside. Vying with Hillary Clinton for presidential candidature, Sanders had repeatedly attacked the former first lady over her close ties with Wall Street, the speculative hub of US. But inside his own Democratic Party, the super delegates could not digest his radical approach and preferred Hillary as their fond choice since they feared Sanders might not be backed by the US MNCs and large corporates. So, Sanders was thrown off the race mid-way and people were left with two candidates about whom commoners remarked "I don't like either of them," "Whoever wins will do little for us."

History sheet of Hillary Clinton

Hillary Clinton, a former first lady courtesy ex-President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State in the Barrack Obama regime, is the apple of the eye of American monopolists. Popular support behind Sanders forced Hillary to pick up some left rhetoric. She, like Sanders, addressed massive, outrageous student debt, as well as reforms in regard to financing of election campaigns. She even asked for a solution to growing inequality. The righteous 'Black Lives Matter' movement, which heroically disrupted some of her events, and the rebellions going on in the streets against police murders, compelled Hillary to invite mothers of victims of police terror to appear by her side during campaign trail. Yet, these could not erase her records or stop

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US Presidential election

Pauperisation, inequality and deprivation continuously mounting in America

Contd from page 5

her veering to the right.

It was under Bill Clinton that the welfare system, which provided a minimum income to people living on the edge, was dismantled in 1996. This affected most the poor women with children most of whom belonged to the Black community and are predominantly down the rungs because of this country's abominable racist history. And it was Hillary Clinton who had admitted in her autobiography, "Hard Choices," that she used her power as the then US Secretary of State to support the coup in Honduras to oust democratically elected Honduran President and bring pro-U.S. "stability" to Central America, even if it meant forgetting about democracy. Hillary also confessed having endorsed destruction of Iraq promoting counter-revolution in Libya and destabilizing Syria causing death and destruction to millions. People who were aggrieved with the establishment for anti-people policies and war economy, thus could not see a credible alternative to their sufferings in Hillary's candidature. Rather she was perceived to be identified with the establishment.

Donald Trump and his craftily planned rhetoric

Now about Donald Trump, fondly called Don by the media. A shrewd and unscrupulous business tycoon relatively new-comer to politics, he is also a reality showbiz man adept in using rhetoric and slogans right to tap into people's sentiment, their sense of economic insecurity and grievances that globalization and monopolist rule have brought down upon them. So he also pointed his finger firmly at banks. At the same time with a gingerly racist note he put immigrants on the dock, stoking up hatred for immigrants alleging they take away jobs from the US white people while the latter had to pay for the social welfare of the immigrants. He designated the Mexican immigrants as "criminals, rapists and drug peddlers" proposing, as a policy, building a wall at Mexico's cost between that country and the US and called for deporting all of America's undocumented immigrants. His use of the adjective 'undocumented' proved ornamental, as his pungency against immigrants had by that time been transmitted as wrath in the mind-set of a section of confused American people who always tended

to gulp the cheap but dubious theory of immigrants blocking their jobs. Similarly, his another important slogan of ending the H-1B visa programme that has brought so many foreign workers to the US, not excluding the Indians, created the same hateful mindset in some people. Another instigating pivot of Donald's rhetoric was ban of entry to Muslims designating all of them as terrorists. He had started a campaign against first black American President Obama holding that he was Muslim and was not really an American, not being born there, etc. etc. The fact, however, is otherwise. Obama, a Christian, was born in the US with a valid American birth certificate shown years earlier. On economy too, his harping on the slogan of making America great again smacked of racist protectionism, with high tariff bar raised around the US.

Linking corporations, media, Ms. Hillary and Mr. Obama in one vast conspiracy, Trump's campaign was characteristically defined as an unapologetic endorsement of American jingoism matching perfectly with the trait with which the ruling American monopolists are carrying on their brigandage over the entire world. Besides, it was enough to unleash an angry, paranoid population that no longer trusts American institutions.

These gave birth to two kinds of response. A Republican Senator forebode, 'If we nominate Trump, we will get destroyed and we will deserve it'. It was feared that no matter how high the tariffs Mr. Trump wanted to raise to insulate US economy from intrusion of foreign players, he would not be able to revive domestic manufacturing industry. On the other hand, a mentor of the rabid white supremacist group Ku Klux Klan cautioned his white radio listeners that voting for anyone besides Donald Trump would 'be treason to (their) heritage'. Even Trump's pronouncements like 'Globalisation has made the financial elite who donate to politicians very, very wealthy, but it has left millions of our workers with nothing but poverty and heartache' fitted with feelings that echo in the homes of former steel workers and former farmers. America's institutions, including highly discriminatory election laws have never been fair, especially to America's black population. Today, according to official statistics, black males are five times more likely to be jailed than white males, one in eight voting-age

black males made ineligible to vote in 2014. So even a section among the black who had already been disgusted with the institutionalized discrimination and deprivation meted out to them by the imperialist US state and its organs, were, in absence of adequate political consciousness of theirs, bemused with and misled by this campaign. To them, Trump appeared as one who has, at least, spoken up for the victims of globalisation—the industrial workers, the farmers, and the people who either cannot find a job or who must work more than one job to survive.

To sum up, Trump worked on a few issues in his campaign: (i) He played upon the anti-establishment sentiment of the common American masses. (ii) In course of that he built up his image as a critic of globalization, corporate exploitation, 'Washington Swamp' i.e. the US administration. (iii) At the same time pointing fingers at the immigrants and Muslims and fanning up anti-black racist mentality, Trump sowed the seed of mistrust, hatred, even enmity among the various sections of toiling American masses with a view to disrupting people's unity against the ruthless capitalist exploitation. But, unfortunately, starved of proper political consciousness to unravel the sinister motive behind such gaudy utterances, a large section of the American people was swayed by these malicious pep-talks, simply to the advantage of the ruling monopolists.

Mockery of debate

While the people of US have been plagued with so many problems—economic, political and social—not a single of that featured prominently during the face-to-face debates between the two principal contestants, Hillary and Trump. Rather what was witnessed was a worst example of personal attack, mud-slinging and character assassination stooping to abysmal low. It once again brought to the fore how bankrupt is bourgeois politics today and how degraded culture, abusive language and slang vocabulary are being institutionalized as base of political debate and that too by the personalities seeking to occupy the highest chair of governance.

Hideous underbelly of shrewd campaign

That many of Trump's pronouncements were election gimmicks to confuse and drag people

towards him is coming out as after his victory he is making a U-turn on his electoral pledges one by one. How far he would go and how far would he mellow down on the question of immigrants and Muslims is to be seen in near future. After all, as trusted representative of the ruling American monopolists, his would be an attempt to sustain, if not widen, the divide among the American masses over all these issues. Some analysts are expecting Trump to change on these. Even if they are proved right, the hatred, distrust and enmity that Trump had already fanned up will persist, if not go deeper, in the society. Frequent attacks, scattered as yet, on racial, communal or colour grounds amply attest this sad reality. Interviews with some of the white supremacist elements revealed that their brigands were already getting ready to defend their "way of life" comprising racism, denying women the right to abortion and attacking immigrants.

How fair was the election process?

Such was the US Presidential election with the candidate fomenting worst base mindsets coming though successfully. Added to it, there were inherent fraudulence and fallacies of the election system and processes. In the past, as also in the present case, there were charges of rigging through electronic voting machine; a set of top US computer scientists have urged Hillary's campaign staff to seek a recount of vote in some crucial states of Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania. They allege manipulation or hacking in these three swing states where Trump has won. Besides there have been frequent allegations of manipulating voters' list, elimination of genuine voters of a particular community from the list, preventing voters from reaching the polling centres etc. Even at some advanced stage of his campaign, Trump had alleged attempts at rigging thereby making it clear that the electoral process was not free from being tampered with. All these prove one thing certain. The election was not at all free from some underhand 'calibration' of the administration subservient to the ruling monopolists, obviously with the intention of pushing through the candidate of their choice. This, in fact, has been the common feature of all elections in all capitalist-imperialist countries.

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US Presidential election

Capitalism is the enemy of American people, neither immigrants nor Muslims

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Insight into the outcome

So the US presidential election presented some glaring traits. One, people were resentful against the ruling order. Two, the candidates sensed the mood. Three, the candidate whom people tended to support as representing their choice was simply thrown out of the fray. Four, of the two candidates one who with his shrewd business acumen (which was reportedly fraught with charges of blatant tax evasion) could smell the people's mood well and making use of it could so mesmerize a sizeable section of the American people with his rhetoric, slogan and showbiz experience and skill as to come out successful. Five, despite all his individuality, it will be naive to think that the president-elect got through simply on his own, without the blessings of the master, the ruling monopolists, the multi-national corporations, the servitor administration and a section of the media (Trump's post-election fury against some media house may well be a move to distract people's attention from the fact of his getting media support say from the massive coverage of Clinton's e-mail scam etc.). Six, persisting allegations of election results being 'over-monitored' clearly indicate the role of the ruling clique in ensuring the return of the candidate of their choice. Seven, aggrieved people may tend to think that Trump's victory is a victory of theirs. If people do so without going deep into the game, they, like earlier occasions, will once again fall prey to the sinister design of the ruling imperialists to cunningly channelize people's resentment along wrong track and eventually find that through hoodwinking, the rulers have managed to get their most trusted candidate emerge victorious to serve their vile class interest. And hence the oppression and repression of ruling imperialism would go on unabated.

People burst out in protest against President-elect

But the story does not end here. That the American people, on the whole, were not ready to see Trump as their President was evident immediately after the result was known. The result also included the fact that Trump lagged behind Hillary in terms of total votes polled. But, in US it is an Electoral College system in which each state gets a certain number of electors

based on its total number of representatives in Congress. Each elector casts one electoral vote following the general election; there are a total of 538 electoral votes. The candidate that gets more than half (270) wins the election. Trump managed his victory by virtue of his getting ahead in votes as per the Electoral College system providing leeway to bypass popular mandate. Such a result immediately brought out protests on streets by young people for days together and in every major city like Miami, Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, Buffalo, Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles and many more from east to west, north to south. In hundreds and thousands of mostly young people, white, black and immigrants hand in hand tied up highways, marched through the streets and chanted their abhorrence of racism, sexism, homophobia and immigrant bashing. They raised the slogans "Trump is not my president", "Build a wall around Trump". Despite many arrests, the demonstrations continued over the days, even as leaders of both the ruling-class parties, Democrats and Republicans, urged everyone to accept a Trump administration and "heal the wounds" of a bitter election. This appeal did not quell the spirit of resistance among the youth, many of whom were personally threatened by the racists, anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant violent elements which the Trump victory has encouraged. On the contrary, they are planning for more in January when Trump would formally take over as President.

Notable features of the protest stir

Protests ranged against all social issues that Trump represents. And protestors included different sections of people from students, school teachers, college and university professors, scientists as well as common men including workers. Notably absent in these demonstrations were signs of support for the Democratic Party. At this point one cannot also miss that during 'Occupy Wall Street' movement, commenting on the slogan of "We are 99%, they 1%", Washington Post commented that it was specifically the global capitalist system that these demonstrators had in their sights. A recent survey (April 2016) by the Harvard University, which polled young adults between ages 18 and 29,

found that 51 percent of respondents do not support capitalism. Two plus two, it indicated that people's resentment against the establishment was not going to be quelled simply by election tricks and rhetoric. However, the protests also showed that those needed a helmsman, individual or collective, to steer the boat in the right direction. The survey referred to revealed that critics of capitalism were also critics of the free market. But it appears that the American people may have to realize still deeper truths, may have to know the ugly face of capitalism in still greater details.

What is breeding all evils including unemployment?

A host of questions loom large before them. Why do the Americans, their youth face such menacing crunch of jobs? What makes jobs disappear? Is it for the immigrants? Is it not a fact that employment, particularly in manufacturing is going down all across the globe? Europe, America, Asia everywhere generating surges of protests across those continents, particularly Europe. Why? While phenomenally grown technology has increased productivity to any extent, does not that productivity exceed increase in demand for manufactured products by a significant amount? Why this mismatch? Why this over-production? Is it not because capitalism continuously fleeces people, impoverishes them, robs them of purchasing power and hence tells upon demand levels that capitalism itself needs to keep high for market? Facts mentioned above in this write-up show that the Americans are continually earning less and spending less. So there is market crisis, there is over-production, shutters are downed in industries. Industrial recession sets in, employment is sliced down. These are truths now being discovered and admitted by even the bourgeois pundits. But they stop here. They dare not admit that nor do the common people who are victim of capitalist exploitation realize that. This is the truth that the Marxist authorities, from Marx onwards, have repeatedly brought out. This is the crisis of capitalism. Productivity increase outpaces increase in demand; it leads to the crisis of overproduction.

Then again, with newer technologies available, the profit hungry monopolists that have the

means to introduce labour-saving devices on a massive scale, like robots, computer-driven assembly lines, GPS tracking devices, etc., seek to undercut their competitors by shedding labour. At the same time, to reduce labour costs and thereby pile up maximum profit, they outsource manufacturing. How can immigrants enter US unless the administration indulges that at the behest of the US rulers? These immigrants provide cheap labour to the US monopolists and thereby help keeping production cost down. Or else the US monopolists prefer to outsource production to countries having cheap raw materials and labour power. The goods so manufactured at lower cost fetch them profit at high rates. Such rate of profit would not accrue to them if manufacturing takes place in US at higher cost. So it is never a question of immigrants taking away jobs of native Americans. It is ruling capitalism which is wiping out their jobs. If unsighted of this fact, one would be vulnerable to misleading propaganda directed against the immigrants.

Nor it is that the Muslims breed terror. In fact, the US imperialists who pose themselves as champions of democracy and forerunners in fight against terrorism are the most belligerent war-monger imperialist force of the present world. They are the creator-mentor-sponsor-trainer-arms supplier and what not of almost every dreaded terror outfits of the recent past, be that Al-Qaeda, Talibans or the recent IS. They are also the most active and most dreadful perpetrators of state terrors, be that in Iraq or Kosovo or Libya or elsewhere. So blanket designation of the Muslims as terrorists and imposing ban on their entry in the USA, may be an election gimmick of Trump stinking with a counter-fundamentalist approach. But it is nothing more than an offshoot of the imperialist design to seed disunity in people.

Only Marxism-Leninism can show path of desired change

With the gruelling yoke of exploitation and oppression of the US imperialist rulers placed heavily on their shoulder, the Americans are frantically trying for the way out. The 'Occupy Wall Street' was a vivid example. Now the US Presidential election, the support for Bernie Sanders, the widespread militant protest at the victory of

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Red Salute Comrade Shiv Shankar



Comrade Shiv Shankar, Secretary, Bihar State Committee, Staff Member of the Party and a lifelong revolutionary breathed his last on 16 November at 6.15 pm after prolonged suffering from throat cancer. He was 74. Comrade Shiv Shankar was born in a middle class family of Rasulpur village of the district of Muzaffarpur. He received his primary education in a village school. He was sent to Muzaffarpur town for further education where his teacher

Rupnarayan Prasad became his guardian too. Rupnarayanbabu had a leftist mindset and it was through him that Comrade Shiv Shankar was attracted towards Marxism- Leninism. In the later years he joined a leftist student organization and led a movement in 1965 against the anti-people policies of the then Congress government. In 1968 he got associated with the Naxalite Movement and was implicated in many false cases for which he had to abscond for a long time. After attending a political class organized by our Party in Patna in August, 1969 and conducted by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our leader, teacher and guide, he could realize that the SUCI(C) is the genuine communist party on the soil. Once he imbibed this truth based on reason, there was no looking back. He joined the Party in 1969, started living in the Party office leaving everything behind and dedicated himself wholly towards growth and development of the Party organization in Bihar.

Guided by Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought, Comrade Shiv Shankar led many movements of the poor agricultural workers in the district of Muzaffarpur and its surroundings. More than two dozens of false cases were framed against him by the landed gentry. He went to jail many a times while organizing class and mass struggles. A life imprisonment was also slapped on him by the district court. But later he was declared innocent by the High Court. In 1969 he guided the movement of the workers of Janta Aluminium factory. He played a leading role in the movements for increasing wages of agricultural workers in the districts of Muzaffarpur and Vaishali. Comrade Shiv Shankar played a significant role in organizing All India Peasants and Agricultural Workers Conference in Muzaffarpur in 1984 under the aegis of AIKMS. During the RJD regime, he was attacked by ruling party goons when he was leading a peasants and workers demonstration. But he was undeterred by that and went on conducting the struggle which inspired all. In spite of his failing health, he gave leadership to the famous

movement of the peasants and workers against setting up of carcinogenic Asbestos factories in the vicinity of densely populated areas at Marwan in Muzaffarpur district and Mahua in Vaishali district. That movement which stirred the entire state achieved significant victory. It is through organizing class and mass struggles that he emerged as an endearing mass leader of Bihar commanding respect even from the opposition camp. His simple life style, reticent nature but profundity of knowledge attracted each and everyone who came in his contact. In course of his struggle for identification with the class, Party and revolution through application of Marxism-Leninism in every aspect of life, he could elevate himself to the standard of a good communist leader and received Staff Membership of the Party in the second Party Congress in 2009. Till his last breadth, he only lived for the Party and revolution. Today when the ruling capitalist class is out to divide people centring on religion, language, region and caste and engineering communal-casteist riots to disrupt unity of the toiling masses, demise of a leader like Comrade Shiv Shankar has been a great loss to the class and mass struggles.

As soon as the news of his demise reached Party's central office, the Central Committee which was in session was profoundly grieved and observed one minute silence in deep respect to the departed leader. A message was also sent out to Bihar State office conveying Central Committee's homage. In his demise, Party has lost a valuable leader of exemplary revolutionary commitment and rare mettle.

Memorial Meeting of Comrade Shiv Shankar



Comrade Ranjit Dhar, veteran member, Polit Bureau, SUCI(C) along with other leaders at the memorial meeting of Comrade Shiv Shankar in Patna on 30 November

Observance of All India Protest Day against demonetization on 28 November, 2016



Ahmedabad, Gujarat



Guna, MP



Jamshedpur, Jharkhand



Bhubaneswar, Odisha



Chennai, Tamilnadu



Agartala, Tripura

Demonetization

Assertion of a conscious mass action is only deterrent

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What then worked behind this demonetization?

Obvious question, therefore, is what prompted the BJP government to resort to demonetization? The answer is not far to seek for any thinking person. With capitalist oppression becoming yet more ruthless with every passing day, there is mounting discontent among the people. Life's compulsion is forcing them to often burst forth in anger. The situation is fast turning towards a volcanic eruption of this accumulated wrath. If this impending eruption is channelled along right direction under correct revolutionary leadership, it could spell danger for ruling capitalism. Moreover, with full backing of the ruling class, Narendra Modi and the BJP rode to power capitalizing on popular opinion against the misrule of the Congress and giving lots of promises. But, within no time, people have found that they have been fooled. The BJP is not honouring but reneging on the pre-election promises. Rather it is not just treading along the path of erstwhile Congress in every respect but tending to go further and much worse. Lest the anti-BJP mood turns into anti-capitalism, the class needed something 'startling' to stir the country so that people's attention could be diverted. The BJP and Narendra Modi also could sense that their so-called popularity gauged in terms of electoral performance and created by way of a high-voltage sophisticated deceptive campaign costing Rs 21,300 crores (Outlook-26-05-14) is appreciably dented. With assembly elections in UP, Punjab, Gujarat and some other state assemblies in the offing, it is a pressing need for them to do a stunt that could be projected as 'spectacular'. Initial effort was by way of fomenting pent up national feeling through boasting of a 'surgical strike' on Pakistan. But desired creation of war-psychosis to rake up 'patriotism' and deflect people's attention from the real issues did not rise to the height as expected by the BJP. Moreover, the bubble created over pre-election undertaking of unearthing black money within 100 days burst in no time proving that to be election gimmick, a lie. Hence, it was decided to go for demonetization with a big-bang as this would in no way disturb the class, bother the black money dealers or rein the corrupt but could well be highlighted as a 'bold step'. The calculation

was that this would confuse people profusely and help regain the lost ground for both BJP and Shri Modi. The class was indeed taken into confidence. And the ruling bourgeoisie has nothing to lose in it. Rather, it would gain if the real possessors of black wealth are shielded and the party it trusts most at this moment can spruce up its tarnished image. So, its directive to the government ought to be to handle the situation riding on falsehood, deceptions, confusing utterances and fabricated stories. If after all these, the ruling class finds the experiment to have backfired, it would immediately put the whole blame on the BJP and pull strings from behind to project another servitor party like the Congress, or any other outfit or combination as alternative with full support from its subservient media. And people would find that the bourgeois media which were hitherto heaping praise on Shri Modi and his government for taking such a 'brave' decision notwithstanding the 'temporary inconvenience' of the people owing to certain procedural lapses, would shift gear overnight and begin blaming Shri Modi for his abortive adventurist step. Also, with small production and retail traders virtually on the brink of being marginalized because of currency drought coupled with increased switch to e-commerce and e-banking, the process of gradual fascisizing of economy through increased centralization in the hands of the monopolists would receive a boost.

Capitalism today is not only corrupt but utterly inhuman

This is the 'behind the curtain' story. Capitalism today is not only corrupt but utterly inhuman. It has not even an iota of concern for people's plight, hardship or tears. Whether a man is dying of starvation or committing suicide after killing his wife and children cause no unease to it. Its sole objective is to cheat people, squeeze their pocket up to the last pie and trade in their misery and destitution. On the other hand, its pliant governments irrespective of hue are busy in propagating with the help of the bourgeois propaganda machine how 'kind-hearted pro-people' this heartless, merciless, blood-sucking ruthlessly exploitative system is. Every brazenly anti-people pro-capitalist move or policy is highlighted as heavenly bliss poised to free people from the gaol of distress by one stroke. The current demonetization drive is also one of such cunning deceptive

exercises of the knavish rulers. With passage of time, people are gradually coming to know that from their experience and getting aggrieved.

Task imperative and betrayal by the parliamentarian parties

Finally, the question is what is needed to be done? It is true that unless capitalism is overthrown, black money and all-pervading corruption cannot be eradicated. But even within the capitalist system, amelioration of the problems like the dislocation of life and economy presently caused by this demonetization move could to some extent be possible if there was assertion of a conscious mass action in the form of a united powerful democratic movement which through intensification could be elevated to a strong resistance movement to throw challenge to the government and force it withdraw this ruinous policy. Such was possible if the opposition parties would have taken such initiative in right earnest. Particularly it was expected that those parties calling themselves big leftists like CPI (M), CPI would take the lead in this regard. But it was found that none of them intended to do so. Betraying the cause of the people, all of them nurturing parliamentary ambitions have ensured that in no case, their opposition mostly for public consumption keeping election in mind does not go beyond certain show of movement like deputation to the President, shouting inside the legislature, boycotting parliament sessions or staging walk-outs, a day's dharna before parliament in media glare or at best taking out a procession with anti-Modi slogan. In fact, repeated boycott of parliament is giving a safe passage to the government for enacting anti-people legislations without opposition. Even the government is spared of facing any serious debate on important issues like demonetization policy that seriously affect people's interest. It is found that even the regional bourgeois parties in power are not having unanimity over the demonetization issue. JD (U) and its ally RJD have already supported demonetization drive. Immediately, the BJP through its coalition partner Ram Vilas Paswan is advancing olive branch to JD (U) for joining the ruling coalition. AIADMK superno is conspicuously silent making everyone to guess which stand she would take. On the other hand, TMC, AAP, Samajwadi Party, BSP, BJD, DMK are busy weighing option as to who should tie up with

whom for electoral gain capitalizing on people's plight because of currency invalidation and crystallizing anti-incumbency mindset. They have virtually no concern for people's predicament.

When the need was to raise correct voice by a united left consolidation involving the suffering people within the fold of an intensified long-drawn leftist mass movement and throw challenge to the government, the CPI (M) has not even demanded abolition of the policy but only said that "till all alternative arrangements like the availability of required currency notes and the recalibration of the ATM machines are completed, people should be allowed to transact in rupees 500 and 1000 notes till the time limit set by the government of December 30, 2016." [CPI (M) Polit Bureau Communiqué dated 15-11-16] Thus, it is clear that like other bourgeois petty-bourgeois parties they also do not dare to do anything that might irk ruling capitalist class nor do they like to transgress the precincts of bourgeois vote-politics since they consider that to be their only anchor. So, after some dilly dally and observing the moves of other parties including the Congress, the CPI (M) and its associates suddenly called a bandh in West Bengal on 28 November without caring for any groundwork whatsoever. Our Party relentlessly trying to build up a struggling unity of the left parties clearly said that it was imperative that such a bandh was called with necessary preparation. As expected, the bandh was a total flop — a fact even the CPI (M) leaders could not deny while briefing the media. By this, they cause more damage to people's cause and provided handle to the quarters of reaction to raise their anti-bandh propaganda to the peak. It is only SUC(C) which right from day one has been trying to develop a conscious people's movement unfolding the conspiracy of the ruling class and party behind this demonetization policy and observed All India Protest Day on 28 November through various programmes. Boldly upholding the banner of struggling leftism, we are pledge-bound to develop with all our might a powerful organized movement in demand for immediate withdrawal of this anti-people policy. We call upon the suffering people not to tolerate this killing economic assault on them by lying low and instead come forward to join that movement pending which there is no other way open before them to save life and livelihood.

Comrade Subodh Banerjee with Comrade Fidel Castro



Comrade Subodh Banerjee, Member of the first Polit Bureau, SUCI(C), welcoming Comrade Fidel Castro alongwith other left leaders in Kolkata in 1973

Joint rally in Kolkata in memory of Comrade Fidel Castro



Comrades Debaprosad Sarkar and Saumen Basu, both members of Central Committee, SUCI(C) alongwith leaders of other left parties leading the silent procession in memory of Comrade Fidel Castro in Kolkata on 26 November, 2016

NEW SECRETARY OF BIHAR STATE COMMITTEE

At the demise of the State Secretary Comrade Shiv Shankar, Comrade Arun Singh has been elected new Secretary of Bihar State Committee in a meeting of the Bihar State Committee held on 30 November last.

US Presidential election

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Trump, a typical representative of shrewdness, deception and arrogance of imperialist rulers, once again reveal American people's growing wrath against their prevailing order. The demonstrations were not merely protest against an election result. It really echoed a call for a radical change. Only as it had been in the case of the Occupy Wall Street, this present surge of protests reiterates that the American people need to have a genuine Marxist leadership, a genuine communist

party with adequate strength derived from the grass-roots base and steel-strong organization at the helm of their ardent desire for the change. Because, it is only Marxism-Leninism, the ideology based on a scientific philosophy, enriched with experiences of myriads of struggles, successful or otherwise, which can lead people to their cherished goal. In that case people would not have to step backwards with a heavy heart after each of their sincerest move against the exploitative, oppressive social order.

Observe 6 December as Anti-Communal Day

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : PROVASH GHOSH

SUCI (C) flays Government for too frequent Railway accidents and its policy of privatization of Railway

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), issued the following statement on 21 November, 2016:

The horrific accident of Indore-Patna Express on 20 November near Kanpur in which the death toll has already reported to be over 150 besides grievous injury to many, once again brings to the fore how insecure train travel in the country has been of late. Railway accidents have become too frequent today. All these indicate total collapse of the Railway administration. Again handing over the entire work of maintenance of the tracks and bogies and overseeing safety devices to private operators has proved to be ominous. There being no caring a fig for the security and minimal convenience of the passengers, the people of the country who are forced to pay higher fare regularly on this or that count are undertaking enormous risk in travelling by train. It is to be realised that such accidents are no freak but inevitable outcome of total collapse of the Railway administration and policy of planned privatization of the railways.

While demanding adequate compensation to the families of the dead and injured, we call upon the suffering people to understand the gravity of the situation and build up a powerful movement demanding full safety and security of passengers and withdrawal of policy of indiscriminate privatization.

Observance of All India Protest Day against demonetization on 28 November, 2016



New Delhi



Jhajjar, Haryana



Hyderabad AP-Telangana

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