

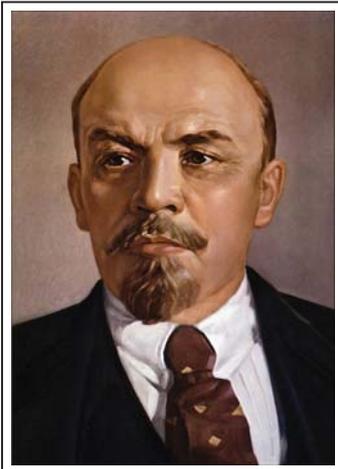
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LONG LIVE COMRADE LENIN

“The Scheidemanns and Kautskys speak about “pure democracy” and “democracy” in general for the purpose of deceiving the people and concealing from them the *bourgeois* character of *present-day* democracy. Let the bourgeoisie continue to keep the entire apparatus of state power in their hands, let a handful of exploiters continue to use the former, bourgeois, state machine! Elections held in such circumstances are lauded by the bourgeoisie, for very good reasons, as being “free”, “equal”, “democratic” and “universal”. These words are designed to conceal the truth, to conceal the fact that the means of production and political power remain in the hands of the exploiters, and that therefore real freedom and real equality for the exploited, that is, for the vast majority of the population, are out of the question. It is profitable and indispensable for the bourgeoisie to conceal from the people the *bourgeois* character of modern democracy, to picture it as democracy in general or “pure democracy”, and the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, repeating this, in practice abandon the standpoint of the proletariat and side with the bourgeoisie.... It is sheer mockery of the working and exploited people to speak of pure democracy, of democracy in general, of equality, freedom and universal rights when the workers and all working people are ill-fed, ill-clad, ruined and worn out not only as a result of capitalist wage-slavery, but as a consequence of four years of predatory war, while the capitalists and profiteers remain in

possession of the “property” usurped by them and the “ready-made” apparatus of state power.... The bourgeoisie are compelled to be hypocritical and to describe as “popular government” or democracy in general, or pure democracy, the (*bourgeois*) democratic republic which is, in practice, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the dictatorship of the exploiters over the working people.... But Marxists, Communists, expose this hypocrisy, and tell the workers and the working people in general this frank and straightforward truth: the democratic republic, the Constituent Assembly, general elections, etc., are, in practice, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and for the emancipation of labour from the yoke of capital there is no other way but to replace this dictatorship with the *dictatorship of the proletariat*.... The dictatorship of the proletariat alone can emancipate humanity from the oppression of capital, from the lies, falsehood and hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy — democracy *for the rich* — and establish democracy *for the poor*, that is, make the blessings of democracy *really* accessible to the workers and poor peasants, whereas now (even in the most democratic — *bourgeois* — republic) the blessings of democracy are, *in fact*, inaccessible to the vast majority of working people.” (Democracy and Dictatorship, CW, Vol. 28, p. 368-71)

Prime Minister’s New Year eve announcements

Sops or another dose of deception

In a public meeting at Dehradun on 27 December last, Prime Minister Narendra Modi informed the countrymen that his demonetization move has destroyed “in one stroke the worlds of terrorism, drug mafia, human trafficking and underworld.” But he gave no clue as to how could such an iconoclastic achievement be possible within 45 days simply by invalidating high denomination paper currency notes, nor did he provide any information as to how much of black money has been unearthed, how all the routes to stash black wealth abroad has been plugged, how many black money holders have been identified and booked and how has the utterly corrupt administration, hitherto aiding and abetting generation of black money been cleansed overnight. He has also not spelt out what reason he

would allude to in case the countrymen find his observation to be far from truth or another ‘electoral gimmick’. It is reported that when common people are unable to withdraw cash in new currency beyond stipulated minimum, huge quantities of new currencies are hoarded by unscrupulous persons including a few ruling party leaders. How credible is then the claim of having cleansed the system of corruption? Just a few days back a fresh terrorist attack was reported from Akhnoor in Jammu. How could it happen if terrorism is supposed to have vanquished following note ban drive? One would recollect that within weeks after the exhortative declaration about snuffing out black money, detecting fake notes, paralysing corruption and weeding out terrorism, the focus was shifted

to make India a digital, cashless economy. But in his address on the eve of New Year, the Prime Minister instead of giving any evidence as to what extent the much-trumpeted demonetization drive has purified the economy of corruption and black wealth chose to only announce a few sops to fight the sobs of people devastated by the sudden note ban decision and the complete anarchy that followed it. A bunch of high sounding phrases on self-eulogy and narratives that aligns with the urges, feelings and enagement of the people were purveyed in his speech so that the content, howsoever untrue, might win out embracing Goebbels model. But lest anyone should dare to question the efficacy of the note ban move, the Prime Minister said that those opposing demonetization are all black money holders. Besides

unleashing an economic blitzkrieg through demonetization, he has also wrapped his own version of ‘nationalism’ around it. ‘If you are pro-demonetization, you are patriotic; but if you are against it, you not only lack patriotism, but you have something to hide or you wish to promote corruption and criminality’—such is the implication of his insinuation. Given that failure is not an option, the government has no way but to have a vested interest in demonstrating success through surfeit of rigmarole and ludicrous patting on its own back. Thus, in place of ‘governance by argumentation’, it has been a classic display of ‘governance by rhetoric, suppressed threat and spectacle’. Let us have a quick review of the latest post-demonetization situation. Then we

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Prime Minister's Sops

People's plight continues to multiply after 65 days of demonetization

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shall dwell on the sops and their underlying objective.

Latest scorecard of note ban decision

The Prime Minister and his cabinet colleagues had stated earlier that following demonetization of currencies valuing around Rs 15.45 lakh crores, Rs 3 to 4 lakh crores of estimated cash held in black would stay away from deposition in the banks. What is the reality? 97% of the "old" cash in circulation Rs 14.97 lakh crore (1 lakh crore is 1 trillion) has been deposited into bank accounts. Does it not debunk the 'hypotheses of the Prime Minister *et al*? How the government has lost face over this fact can be made out from the Finance Minister's reaction. When asked to comment over return of entire banned currency, he said he was not aware of it—something that would make even a horse burst into laughter. Then, as a cover up, the government that accused because of double counting of banned notes on the part of the RBI, the figure has been pushed up. This is absurdity at its nadir! By making such a comment, the Finance minister has proved that the apex institution controlling money matters including printing and circulation of currency notes lacks elementary capability of counting notes. Next is about who took the decision of demonetization. The ministers and government spokespersons were hitherto claiming that the decision of demonetization was taken by the RBI. But the RBI in a seven-page note submitted on December 22 to the Parliament's Department Related Committee of Finance stated that the "Government, on 7th November, 2016, advised ... that ...the Central Board of the Reserve Bank may consider withdrawal of the legal tender status of the notes in high denominations of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000". In other words, there was a clear attempt to turn an autonomous key institution into an appendage of the Government. Does not this game of shifting onus and subversion of autonomy lay bare the stinking skeleton of obsolete and totally corrupt capitalist system?

The government has all along been arguing that the pain would be short-run and the Prime Minister had initially asked for 50 days to set things right. He said that after that period, things would become not only normal but better. Has it been so? Or, even after 65 days of declaring high value

notes as illegal tender, the toiling millions of the country are grappling with multi-pronged sufferings of enormous dimension? On January 15, 2017, oppressed Indians have been almost in the same state they had been for days after the 8 November announcement – in queues outside banks and at automated teller machines (ATMs) to withdraw their own money for use in an economy which is still largely cash-driven in terms of the everyday transactions that make up life. Limits to the cash they can withdraw are still in force and there seems little hope of respite in the foreseeable future. This is revealing of how the decision of currency invalidation was taken without any preparation and how the government and the RBI authorities were repeatedly bluffing the people about easing out of the situation after 50 days. No government having minimum concern for the plight and misery of the people can afford to do such things. Hence, all the 'averments' of the bourgeois government sound like hollow prattles or cruel jokes. The RBI has also been revising and reversing procedures and the threshold of fresh note withdrawals frequently, sometimes within a day, which makes a mockery of the economic principle that short-run monetary consistency is essential for financial trust. Does it not reiterate the fact that the RBI has become an arm of the political executive by forsaking its autonomy and hence is reduced to 'his master's voice'? Moreover, characterised by policy flip-flops and shoddy implementation, the decision to withdraw old notes and to replace them mostly with new Rs 2,000 notes, has multiplied the woes several times. The little cash that could be obtained through arduous exchange process also in Rs 2000 notes for which no one seemed to have change, is akin to having no cash at hand. Incidents have been reported that unable to use Rs 2000 note for buying essential food items, a sole earning member of a family had committed suicide after killing his wife and three children.

Peasants are in appalling plight and penury

The Union Finance Minister had earlier expressed optimism that increased sowing this year was an indicator of farmers' "support" for demonetization. But does the ground reality of rural India affirm this optimism or contradict it in every respect? After 65 days of

demonetization, farming remains hit by the twin blow of a continuing cash crunch. On the one hand, they find it difficult to procure crop inputs such as fertilizers, seeds and pesticides while on the other hand they are appalled at the nose-diving of sale price of their produce. Cash shortage had led to procurement prices of vegetable crashing, delay in wheat sowing and a fall in wages. Queues continue at many village banks, stoking worry among farmers for their winter crops. A dip of 30 to 40% in sale of inputs like seeds, fertilisers and pesticides or fungicides required for cultivation of *rabi* crop despite offering some credit facilities to the buying peasants show how the peasants are suffering in absence of cash. When asked, the farmers of a village in Mathura district, UP, said, "We used stored grain for sowing since there was no cash for buying. Other expenses are pending. Now the worry is how to water this crop and arrange for fertilisers?" Irrigation also is proved to be of serious concern because cash is required for buying diesel for operating the handset pumps which are used most by the poor peasants. Price of diesel is also rising at a galloping speed making the situation worsen further. For those who don't own a pump set, buying water at Rs 4,500 per acre is a major expense. Worse, the government has cut the import duties on wheat, which is likely to flood the market with foreign harvests. More than Rs. 3,000 crore of wages under MGREGA are also due. So, in place of appropriate steps to mitigate such hardships, all the government has offered the farmers is more loans to increase their debt burden. Thanks to demonetization, moneylenders are ruling the roost in rural areas. With cash crunch and hyperactivity of the unscrupulous middlemen out in the field to hold the hapless poor to ransom, the pecuniary situation is going to be much tougher if not beyond endurance for the peasant community. Do all these show any cogent reason for the peasants to bask in optimism? Or, are these all attestations to the immense damage caused to the peasants by the move? Fact is that the poor and marginalized farmers are simmering with anger.

Working people equally tormented

Is the situation any better for the working people? Much to the

discomfort of the ruling dispensation, it is not. As it is, major industries in India have been working much below the installed capacity because of recession. With decline in demand and reports of inventories building up, production would have already been curtailed and capacity utilisation would have dropped further. Unemployment is growing more and more. Migrant workers are already reported to be going back to their villages due to lack of work in urban areas. This aggravates the economic crisis of rural households. Many families depend on cash flow from migrants to urban areas. Not only would these remittances decline, the returning workers would add afresh to the family woes to lessen which they had once migrated out. Among the more marginalised sections hit most by cash shortage are the brick kiln workers, tea garden workers, jute mill workers, daily labourers at construction sites, casual workers in various industries, workers in the unorganised, small and cottage sectors. Along with them, effects of note ban have been magnified and severe for the small vendors, the unbanked and illiterate people who are dependent on cash transactions and that too in smaller denominations. A study conducted by the All India Manufacturers' Organisation (AIMO) showed that in the first 34 days since demonetization, micro and small scale industries suffered 35 % jobs losses and a 50% dip in sales. The study also stated that almost all industrial activities have come to a standstill, with the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) sector worst-hit. It has also projected a drop in employment of 60 % and loss in revenue of 55 % before March 2017. According to the study, the factors that contributed to such ruinous impact are, among others, zero cash inflow and rules curtailing cash withdrawals. The sprawling grain sheds where the peasants offload their produce are uncharacteristically clean and empty, say media reports. *Mandi* (village wholesale market) employees complain of non-receipt of salary. That India's economic momentum has slowed down is now beyond doubt. Advance GDP estimates and gross value added (GVA) for the current fiscal year by the Central Statistics Office clearly reveal the extent of the slowdown in the

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Lenin was a leader of the highest rank, a mountain eagle, who knew no fear in the struggle

[On the occasion of Lenin Memorial Day on 21 January as part of observance of November Revolution centenary, we are publishing the speech delivered by Comrade Stalin at a Memorial Meeting of the Kremlin Military School January 28, 1924, after demise of great Lenin.]

LENIN

Comrades, I am told that you have arranged a Lenin memorial meeting here this evening and that I have been invited as one of the speakers. I do not think there is any need for me to deliver a set speech on Lenin's activities. It would be better, I think, to confine myself to a few facts to bring out certain of Lenin's characteristics as a man and a leader. There may, perhaps, be no inherent connection between these facts, but that is not of vital importance as far as gaining a general idea of Lenin is concerned. At any rate, I am unable on this occasion to do more than what I have just promised.

THE MOUNTAIN EAGLE

I first became acquainted with Lenin in 1903. True, it was not a personal acquaintance, but was by correspondence. But it made an indelible impression upon me, one which has never left me throughout all my work in the Party. I was in exile in Siberia at the time. My knowledge of Lenin's revolutionary activities since the end of the nineties, and especially after 1901, after the appearance of *Iskra*, had convinced me that in Lenin we had a man of extraordinary calibre. At that time I did not regard him merely as a leader of the Party, but as its actual founder, for he alone understood the inner essence and urgent needs of our Party. When I compared him with the other leaders of our Party, it always seemed to me that he was head and shoulders above his colleagues — Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod and the others; that, compared with them, Lenin was not just one of the leaders, but a leader of the highest rank, a mountain eagle, who knew no fear in the struggle, and who boldly led the Party forward along the unexplored paths of the Russian revolutionary movement. This impression took such a deep hold of me that I felt impelled to write about it to a close friend of mine who was living as a political exile abroad, requesting him to give me his opinion. Sometime later, when I was already in exile in Siberia — this was at the end of 1903 — I received an enthusiastic reply from my friend and a simple, but profoundly expressive letter from Lenin, to whom, it turned out, my friend had shown my letter. Lenin's note was comparatively short, but it

contained a bold and fearless criticism of the practical work of our Party, and a remarkably clear and concise account of the entire plan of work of the Party in the immediate future. Only Lenin could write of the most intricate things so simply and clearly, so concisely and boldly, that every sentence did not so much speak as ring out like a rifle shot. This simple and bold letter still further strengthened me in my opinion that Lenin was the mountain eagle of our Party. I cannot forgive myself for having, from the habit of an old underground worker, consigned this letter of Lenin's, like many other letters, to the flames. My acquaintance with Lenin dates from that time.

MODESTY

I first met Lenin in December 1905 at the Bolshevik conference in Tammerfors (Finland). I was hoping to see the mountain eagle of our Party, the great man, great not only politically, but, if you will, physically, because in my imagination I had pictured Lenin as a giant, stately and imposing. What, then, was my disappointment to see a most ordinary-looking man, below average height, in no way, literally in no way, distinguishable from ordinary mortals. It is accepted as the usual thing for a "great man" to come late to meetings so that the assembly may await his appearance with bated breath; and then, just before the "great man" enters, the warning whisper goes up: "Hush! . . . Silence! . . . He's coming." This ritual did not seem to me superfluous, because it creates an impression, inspires respect. What, then, was my disappointment to learn that Lenin had arrived at the conference before the delegates, had settled himself somewhere in a corner, and was unassumingly carrying on a conversation, a most ordinary conversation with the most ordinary delegates at the conference. I will not conceal from you that at that time this seemed to me to be something of a violation of certain essential rules.

Only later did I realise that this simplicity and modesty, this striving to remain unobserved, or, at least, not to make himself conspicuous and not to emphasise his high position, this feature was one of Lenin's strongest points as the new leader of the new masses, of the

simple and ordinary masses of the "rank and file" of humanity.

FORCE OF LOGIC

The two speeches Lenin delivered at this conference were remarkable: one was on the current situation and the other on the agrarian question. Unfortunately, they have not been preserved. They inspired, and they roused the whole conference to a pitch of stormy enthusiasm. The extraordinary power of conviction, the simplicity and clarity of argument, the brief and easily understood sentences, the absence of affectation, of dizzying gestures and theatrical phrases aiming at effect — all this made Lenin's speeches a favourable contrast to the speeches of the usual "parliamentary" orators.

But what captivated me at the time was not this aspect of Lenin's speeches. I was captivated by that irresistible force of logic in them which, although somewhat terse, gained a firm hold on his audience, gradually electrified it, and then, as one might say, completely overpowered it. I remember that many of the delegates said: "The logic of Lenin's speeches is like a mighty tentacle which twines all round you and holds you as in a vice and from whose grip you are powerless to tear yourself away: you must either surrender or resign yourself to utter defeat."

I think that this characteristic of Lenin's speeches was the strongest feature of his art as an orator.

NO WHINING

The second time I met Lenin was in 1906 at the Stockholm Congress of our Party. You know that the Bolsheviks were in the minority at this congress and suffered defeat. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of the vanquished. But he was not in the least like those leaders who whine and lose heart after a defeat. On the contrary, defeat transformed Lenin into a spring of compressed energy which inspired his supporters for new battles and for future victory. I said that Lenin was defeated. But what sort of defeat was it? You had only to look at his opponents, the victors at the Stockholm Congress — Plekhanov, Axelrod, Martov and the rest. They had little of the appearance of real victors, for Lenin's merciless criticism of Menshevism had not left one whole bone in their body, so to speak. I remember that we, the Bolshevik delegates, huddled together in a

group, gazing at Lenin and asking his advice. The speeches of some of the delegates betrayed a note of weariness and dejection. I recall that to these speeches Lenin bitingly replied through clenched teeth: "Don't whine, comrades, we are bound to win, for we are right." Hatred of the whining intellectual, faith in our own strength, confidence in victory — that is what Lenin impressed upon us. It was felt that the Bolsheviks' defeat was temporary, that they were bound to win in the very near future.

"No whining over defeat" — this was the feature of Lenin's activities that helped him to rally around himself an army faithful to the end and confident in its strength.

NO BOASTING

At the next congress, held in 1907 in London, the Bolsheviks proved victorious. This was the first time I saw Lenin in the role of victor. Victory turns the heads of some leaders and makes them haughty and boastful. They begin in most cases to be triumphant, to rest on their laurels. But Lenin did not in the least resemble such leaders. On the contrary, it was precisely after a victory that he became especially vigilant and cautious. I recall that Lenin insistently impressed on the delegates: "The first thing is not to become intoxicated by victory and not to boast; the second thing is to consolidate the victory; the third is to give the enemy the finishing stroke, for he has been beaten, but by no means crushed." He poured withering scorn on those delegates who frivolously asserted: "It is all over with the Mensheviks now." He had no difficulty in showing that the Mensheviks still had roots in the working-class movement, that they had to be fought with skill, and that all overestimation of one's own strength and, especially, all underestimation of the strength of the enemy had to be avoided.

"No boasting in victory" — this was the feature of Lenin's character that helped him soberly to weigh the strength of the enemy and to insure the Party against possible surprises.

FIDELITY TO PRINCIPLE

Party leaders cannot but prize the opinion of the majority of their party. A majority is a power with which a leader cannot but reckon. Lenin understood this no less than any other party leader. But Lenin never became a captive of the majority, especially when that

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Lenin was genius of revolutionary outbreaks and greatest master of art of revolutionary leadership

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majority had no basis of principle. There have been times in the history of our Party when the opinion of the majority or the momentary interests of the Party conflicted with the fundamental interests of the proletariat. On such occasions Lenin would never hesitate and resolutely took his stand in support of principle as against the majority of the Party. Moreover, he did not fear on such occasions literally to stand alone against all, considering — as he would often say — that “a policy based on principle is the only correct policy.”

Particularly characteristic in this respect are the two following facts.

First fact. It was in the period 1909-11, when the Party, smashed by the counter-revolution, was in process of complete disintegration. It was a period of disbelief in the Party, of wholesale desertion from the Party, not only by the intellectuals, but partly even by the workers; a period when the necessity for illegal organisation was being denied, a period of Liquidationism and collapse. Not only the Mensheviks, but even the Bolsheviks then consisted of a number of factions and trends, for the most part severed from the working-class movement. You know that it was just at that period that the idea arose of completely liquidating the illegal organisation and organising the workers into a legal, liberal Stolypin party. Lenin at that time was the only one not to succumb to the widespread epidemic and to hold high the banner of Party principle, assembling the scattered and shattered forces of the Party with astonishing patience and extraordinary persistence, combating each and every anti-Party trend within the working-class movement and defending the Party principle with unusual courage and unparalleled perseverance.

We know that in this fight for the Party principle, Lenin later proved the victor.

Second fact. It was in the period 1914-17, when the imperialist war was in full swing, and when all, or nearly all, the Social-Democratic and Socialist parties had succumbed to the general patriotic frenzy and had placed themselves at the service of the imperialism of their respective countries. It was a period when the Second International had hauled down its colours to capitalism, when even people like Plekhanov, Kautsky, Guesde and the rest were unable to withstand the tide of chauvinism. Lenin at that time

was the only one, or almost the only one, to wage a determined struggle against social-chauvinism and social-pacifism, to denounce the treachery of the Guesdes and Kautskys, and to stigmatise the half-heartedness of the betwixt and between “revolutionaries.” Lenin knew that he was backed by only an insignificant minority, but to him this was not of decisive moment, for he knew that the only correct policy with a future before it was the policy of consistent internationalism, that a policy based on principle is the only correct policy.

We know that in this fight for a new International, too, Lenin proved the victor.

“A policy based on principle is the only correct policy” — this was the formula by means of which Lenin took new “impregnable” positions by assault and won over the best elements of the proletariat to revolutionary Marxism.

FAITH IN THE MASSES

Theoreticians and leaders of parties, men who are acquainted with the history of nations and who have studied the history of revolutions from beginning to end, are sometimes afflicted by a shameful disease. This disease is called fear of the masses, disbelief in the creative power of the masses. This sometimes gives rise in the leaders to a kind of aristocratic attitude towards the masses, who, although not versed in the history of revolutions, are destined to destroy the old order and build the new. This kind of aristocratic attitude is due to a fear that the elements may break loose, that the masses may “destroy too much”; it is due to a desire to play the part of a mentor who tries to teach the masses from books, but who is averse to learning from the masses.

Lenin was the very antithesis of such leaders. I do not know of any other revolutionary who had so profound a faith in the creative power of the proletariat and in the revolutionary efficacy of its class instinct as Lenin. I do not know of any other revolutionary who could scourge the smug critics of the “chaos of revolution” and the “riot of unauthorised actions of the masses” so ruthlessly as Lenin. I recall that when in the course of a conversation one comrade said that “the revolution should be followed by the normal order of things,” Lenin sarcastically remarked: “It is a pity that people who want to be revolutionaries forget that the most normal order of things in history is

the revolutionary order of things.”

Hence, Lenin’s contempt for all who superciliously looked down on the masses and tried to teach them from books. And hence, Lenin’s constant precept: learn from the masses, try to comprehend their actions, carefully study the practical experience of the struggle of the masses.

Faith in the creative power of the masses — this was the feature of Lenin’s activities which enabled him to comprehend the spontaneous process and to direct its movement into the channel of the proletarian revolution.

THE GENIUS OF REVOLUTION

Lenin was born for revolution. He was, in truth, the genius of revolutionary outbreaks and the greatest master of the art of revolutionary leadership. Never did he feel so free and happy as in a time of revolutionary upheavals. I do not mean by this that Lenin approved equally of all revolutionary upheavals, or that he was in favour of revolutionary outbreaks at all times and under all circumstances. Not at all. What I do mean is that never was the genius of Lenin’s insight displayed so fully and distinctly as in a time of revolutionary outbreaks. In times of revolution he literally blossomed forth, became a seer, divined the movement of classes and the probable zigzags of the revolution, seeing them as if they lay on the palm of his hand. It was with good reason that it used to be said in our Party circles: “Lenin swims in the tide of revolution like a fish in water.”

Hence the “amazing” clarity of Lenin’s tactical slogans and the “breath-taking” boldness of his revolutionary plans.

I recall two facts which are particularly characteristic of this feature of Lenin.

First fact. It was in the period just prior to the October Revolution, when millions of workers, peasants and soldiers, impelled by the crisis in the rear and at the front, were demanding peace and liberty; when the generals and the bourgeoisie were working for a military dictatorship for the sake of “war to a finish”; when the whole of so-called “public opinion” and all the so-called “Socialist parties” were hostile to the Bolsheviks and were branding them as “German spies”; when Kerensky was trying — already with some success — to drive the Bolshevik Party

underground; and when the still powerful and disciplined armies of the Austro-German coalition confronted our weary, disintegrating armies, while the West-European “Socialists” lived in blissful alliance with their governments for the sake of “war to complete victory.” . . .

What did starting an uprising at such a moment mean? Starting an uprising in such a situation meant staking everything. But Lenin did not fear the risk, for he knew, he saw with his prophetic eye, that an uprising was inevitable, that it would win; that an uprising in Russia would pave the way for ending the imperialist war, that it would rouse the war-weary masses of the West, that it would transform the imperialist war into a civil war; that the uprising would usher in a Republic of Soviets, and that the Republic of Soviets would serve as a bulwark for the revolutionary movement throughout the world.

We know that Lenin’s revolutionary foresight was subsequently confirmed with unparalleled exactness.

Second fact. It was in the first days of the October Revolution, when the Council of People’s Commissars was trying to compel General Dukhonin, the mutinous Commander-in-chief, to terminate hostilities and open negotiations for an armistice with the Germans. I recall that Lenin, Krylenko (the future Commander-in-Chief) and I went to General Staff Headquarters in Petrograd to negotiate with Dukhonin over the direct wire. It was a ghastly moment. Dukhonin and Field Headquarters categorically refused to obey the order of the Council of People’s Commissars. The army officers were completely under the sway of Field Headquarters. As for the soldiers, no one could tell what this army of fourteen million would say, subordinated as it was to the so-called army organisations, which were hostile to the Soviet power. In Petrograd itself, as we know, a mutiny of the military cadets was brewing. Furthermore, Kerensky was marching on Petrograd. I recall that after a pause at the direct wire, Lenin’s face suddenly shone with an extraordinary light. Clearly he had arrived at a decision. “Let’s go to the wireless station,” he said, “it will stand us in good stead. We shall issue a special order dismissing General Dukhonin, appoint Comrade Krylenko Commander-in-Chief in his place and appeal to the soldiers over the heads of the officers,

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Prime Minister's Sops

Deposition of 97% of banned currency notes debunks government's claim of immobilizing black cash

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backdrop of demonetization and short-run disruptions in economic activity in cash-intensive sectors such as retail trade, hotels, restaurants, transportation as well as aggregate demand compression.

Is not, therefore, the very claim of the government and ruling party leaders that 2017 is going to be a year of redeeming grace following demonetization just another delusion? Is it not going to be a year when a crusading capitalist state and its pliant government would unleash more excruciating economic onslaught on the common people under camouflage of deceptive overtures like fighting black money and eliminating corruption?

A word about black money recovery

In our previous two articles on demonetization (vide Proletarian Era dated 1 December, 2016 and 1 January, 2017), we had shown elaborately with facts and reason why it would not touch even the fringe of black money or corruption. Still, a few relevant points merit recapitulation. Initially, a good number of people seemed to have accepted that the government was serious about tackling 'black money' (synonymous in the public mind with the black economy) which is the scourge of the country. For 70 long years after independence, common Indians have been watching the 'influential and privileged' amassing huge black money through criminal acts and limitless corruption which have become components of the social fabric in capitalist India. They have experienced that bribes are sought and paid to navigate the cumbersome processes of an opaque corrupt administration, to secure government contracts, to avail undeserved tax sops and to overcome the intrusions of the policeman, the taxman and the alderman. They also find that most of the ministers and vote-based power-greedy politicians cutting across the ruling parties have been piling up enormous wealth through rampant misuse and abuse of power while the industrial tycoons, unscrupulous businessmen and affluent individuals despite enjoying a slew of uncalled for tax concessions and waivers skirt payment of due tax and adopt all foul means to buttress self-aggrandizement. But since these privileged few have both money and power at their disposal, they evade

punishment and circumvent law with ease. Rather, people find from experience that there is virtually an attempt on the part of the 'law and order' machinery to put a seal of approval to all the illegal, improper, corrupt and subversive activities of this unholy nexus of industrialists-unscrupulous businessmen-police-bureaucrats-ministers-ruling party leaders.

So, common toiling people have long been nurturing hatred towards this corrupt lot and longing for its stringent punishment. So, when the Prime Minister duped them with his 'tirade' against black money and corruption, a good section of the suffering masses tended to believe that. Some of them even expressed that they were ready to bear with the hardship caused by demonetization as that would deal a blow to the black money holders and corrupt. But, what they unfortunately missed out was that these promises were coming from persons whose credibility is equally questionable. For example, they failed to notice that the same Prime Minister before election had made false promise of bringing back all black wealth stashed in Swiss Banks and pay everyone a sum of Rs 15 lakhs within 100 days. This same Prime Minister under the smokescreen of 'development and positive reforms' is slapping one after another economic onslaught on them while handing out bountiful concessions and inexplicable amnesty to the rich, tax evaders, usurpers of bank loans and evildoers. So anti-people is this government that even in the name of meeting two of its most basic commitments – public sanitation and education – it levies a tax surcharge on all citizens. Can such a government be trusted by any means? In absence of necessary political consciousness, people are unable to recognize the fact that the very existing capitalist system is breeding black money. So, a section of the suffering people presumed that once black money alleged to have been held in cash is sucked out of the economy, it would get eliminated for good. As if, once oxygen is sucked out of a closed room, only the few bad sitting there would all die but the good would survive. But the fact was that the bad few had put on oxygen masks long back and secured themselves. Unaware of that, the good and innocent have ended up paying heavy price and allowed the cunning

bourgeois government to get away with such a deceptive act.

Contrary to the expectation that corruption would end after demonetization, the people found that the move itself had faltered at the very outset. Money meant for release to the public in exchange for the old notes was found to be siphoned off to the influential and powerful who have the capacity to pay for this. So, while the ordinary citizen queued for hours over days, India's rich and powerful have had the newly issued currency notes in multiples of crores delivered at their doorstep. Even many ruling party leaders were found to have amassed new notes in large quantity obviously in connivance with the utterly corrupt administration-bureaucracy-bank officials. Given the 'ingenuity' of the black money generators and the leakiness of our bureaucracy and banking system, they can easily find ways to subvert or give law the slip as per wish and go on accumulating black wealth.

Saga of 'evaporating' corruption and full transparency

The RBI Governor had announced on 8 November that it had "ramped up" production of the new notes to meet public need. But its officers were caught red-handed for abetting money laundering. Suffering people are witness to how a commodity in short supply is cornered by those in charge of its distribution and sold in black. In fact, reported bulk diversion of notes meant for the public is only a variation of the identical practice of hoarding and black marketing of essential goods. Next point is that if one Rs 1,000 note is being scrapped on grounds that it encourages illegal cash hoarding, what is the guarantee that Rs 2000 note would also not be hoarded, may be in a much more convenient way with the controlling as well scrutinizing authorities remaining as corrupt as ever? Then how has demonetization curbed corruption? It is noteworthy in this connection that in response to a Right to Information request, the RBI refused to disclose the reasons behind the decision to demonetize around Rs. 16 lakh crore of currency in the country. More surprisingly, RBI has refused to share "specific details" on the government's decision to recall high-value banknotes, citing threat to the country's sovereignty, integrity and security besides danger to life. (Hindustan Times 13-01-17) A good

number of people hitherto were of the view that the RBI was above the sectarian calculations of the political class and the brazen corruption associated with the government machinery. Now that myth is also shattered reconfirming the truth that no institution, no person subservient to the existing capitalist system can be free from corruption. The government is pretending to have activated the tax collecting machinery. But public perception is different. They know from experience that the taxmen officially entrusted to scrutinize all bank deposits above a threshold limit would be 'managed' (a charming Indian-English construct with myriad connotations) because tax officials are believed, for the most part, to be notoriously manageable with 'under the table operations'. So, now when the government is crying hoarse about hauling up those who have deposited substantial cash, presumably black, in their banks subsequent to demonetization or illegally funded *jan dhan* accounts of others either clandestinely or through arm twisting, people wonder if only some small fries without political patrons would be targeted and honest tax payers would be harassed and coerced to 'settle disputes' with underhand payments leaving out those too powerful or 'well connected'. Common people from their experience know and rightly so that the capitalist state would never investigate corrupt industrialists, bureaucrats and politicians, in general, and the big donors to the ruling party, in particular, to ascertain whether the donations were black. Can the administration in this age of decadent moribund capitalism be considered as 'Weberian' which acts according to neutral principles? For example, Nitin Gadkari, heavyweight union minister and former President of ruling BJP declared to the Election Commission that his total assets are Rs 3.87 crore. But it is alleged that around 50 chartered planes were hired for ferrying invitees to his daughter's marriage during demonetization period. Would any tax official or investigating agency dare to probe his source of funding? This is how law is blindfolded when it is a question of probing questionable dealings or conduct of the influential. That is why, black money holders are remaining unscathed notwithstanding all brag and bluster

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Prime Minister's Sops

Fallacy of overnight switch to cashless economy exposed

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by the governments irrespective of hue about fighting corruption and ill-gotten wealth.

Hoax of cashless economy

Without repeating the points we dwelt upon in our previous write-ups, it may be reiterated that with most of the Indians lacking elementary knowledge of online transaction, not having any bank accounts and barely any saving to transact online coupled with rising cybercrime (just six weeks before the demonetization, an estimated 3.2 million ATM cards were hacked), transition to cashless economy is nothing but another deceptive illusion. In advanced economies like Germany, cash is used for 80 percent by volume; Japan uses cash for 82 % of transactions by value and over 90 % by volume. In the US where plastic cards have been in wide use for many decades, use of cash continues parallel. Further, in spite of widespread use of plastic cards and electronic money in the US, the black economy flourishes there as well. So, trying to link cash transaction with 'black money' is not tenable. If money is in short supply, gold may be used or payment made abroad or in foreign exchange, etc. Thus, the demand for gold and foreign exchange would rise and this was seen soon after the demonetization was announced. So, a 'less cash' or 'cashless' economy does not imply that black income generation would stop. Only the circulation of black incomes would take place differently. For instance, if the unscrupulous and influential groups deposit Rs 10,000 per *jan dhan* account numbering 20 crores, Rs 2 lakh crores would be converted into new currency. Post-demonetization, many ways of converting the stashed black money in old currency into new currency have been devised. So, circulation of black money and convenient conversion of the same into white through various routes would continue as earlier. The argument that cashless transactions means that the payments to the poor would not be tampered with is a misnomer since they can be coerced in various ways to give back in cash the excess, if any, received through cashless mode. For example, if anyone receives correct amount of MGNREGA wage through bank account directly, one would be forced to pay back in cash the 'commission' or 'extortion sum' to the middlemen, unscrupulous contractors or touts lest they should

be removed from the roaster next time. Those conversant with reality will undoubtedly agree to this.

Sops or promotion of credit schemes

When demonetization is proved to be a big hoax that has put the common people to immense hardship and so called call of overnight switch to cashless economy viewed as impossibility, the Prime Minister in his address to the nation before commencement of New Year just banished any reference to either of them. Instead, he announced some sops like 3% interest exemption on home loans in villages up to Rs 2 lakh, conversion of 30 million Kisan credit cards into RuPay card, waiver of 60 days interest on farmer's loan from district cooperative banks and societies and providence of Rs 20,000 crore to the cooperatives for giving loans at low interest rates, interest subvention of 4% and 3% on home loans for the urban poor up to Rs. 9 lakh and up to Rs 12 lakhs respectively and doubling of the credit guarantee for micro, small and medium enterprises to Rs 2 crore and advising banks to raise cash credit limit (means extent of giving loan) to small businesses from 20% to 25%. He also spoke of granting onetime payment of Rs 6000 to expecting mothers.

A furtive glance reveals that most of the populist announcements are related to loans. Since people are losing purchasing power fast because of exacerbation of ruthless capitalist exploitation with every passing day, there is a clever allurements to augment their paying capacity through advancement of relatively cheap credit for housing. Having found no avenue for productive investment because of acute market crisis, real estate and speculation are two preferred destinations of piled up capital in the hands of the monopoly houses, big business and large corporates. So, the government is giving thrust on those two sectors through a slew of measures. Moreover, with 97% of the banned currency deposited with the banks and restriction on withdrawals, banks are awash with cash. There is also little off-take of loan by the industrial houses in view of market shrinkage. Even there is stagnation in the real estate sector also in absence of buyers. Hence, the Indian bourgeois government is trying to release the accumulated cash through cheaper lending to housing to take that sector out of present slump and enable banks to

earn through usury business. But would pecuniary distress of common individuals prompt them to avail housing loans?

The fact worth noting is that as per the Government source, over 77% Indians are languishing below poverty line. India is ranked 97 on the list of 118 countries as per Global Hunger Index. It is home to 194.6 million undernourished people, the highest in the world. 230 million Indians go hungry daily. Every 30 minutes a peasant commits suicide. Even the President of India admits that 650 million Indians are unemployed. Post-demonetization, penury and predicament of common people have immensely multiplied — a fact that a good section of mainstream media who hitherto either played second fiddle to demonetization drive or did not go beyond lamenting over poor preparation regarding note replacement, could not but admit now. In such a scenario, can the rural and urban poor, who are afflicted by boundless misery and penury, barely manage even one square meal a day and are increasingly losing their home and hearth, be expected to avail bank loans to build houses? Absurdity par excellence! Impoverishment among the lower middle class is also increasing at a rapid pace. In fact, the very category of middle class is fast being eliminated. So, as things stand today, most of these loans would be cornered by the real estate giants through various dubious means since pecuniary distress of the common people would hold them back from going for loan. Alongside, some activity might also be triggered in speculative capital market either through rise in share prices of real estate and construction companies or trading of packaged house mortgage loans (securitized loans). Even if a section of the lower middle class is enticed by the lure of lower interest, will they be able to repay the loan? If they become defaulters subsequently, what would be the consequence? Will not this loan entangle the poor into a long-lasting even life-long noose dragging them helplessly as debtors? What happened in sub-prime crisis that broke out in US in 2008 and pushed the entire global capitalist economy into tailspin? That crisis also originated from overzealousness to disburse housing loans randomly without caring for credit-worthiness of the loan takers and then indulging in massive speculation of securitized home

loans. So, when there was mass default of the original loan takers because of dwindling income, the entire edifice crumbled. Are we going to see a repeat in India? Moreover, if interest on housing or any loan including project loans are progressively lowered, it would entail drastic slash in the interest on bank deposits causing enormous hardship to common people, particularly senior citizens and retired people who keep their hard earned savings in banks. That would further dent their income causing further squeezing of market. This is how what looks as sops today would deliver severe blow in the days to come.

Lax on rich, leash on poor

There is more ditching as well. Of late, the government has been liberally granting tax reliefs and concessions to the top monopolists and dubious industrialists-businessmen as well as waiving bank loan defaults by them. In between 2003-04 and 2015-16, as high as over 45 lakh crores of rupees worth of tax concessions and waivers have reportedly been granted to the industrial houses and corporate sector. Every hour the government waives Rs 7 crores of corporate tax and every day exempts Rs 168 crores towards that. But when it comes to loan defaults by poor peasants, all liberalism and amnesty of the government and the Prime Minister vanish into the blue. There is no waiver of bank loans, even interest or deferment of repayment period for peasants. While the entire amount that the peasants, all together, need to pay as crop loans is Rs 72,000 crore, monopolist Gautam Adani Group itself owes to the banks more than that. Despite that, Adani has of late been granted fresh loan of Rs 3000 crores by State Bank of India. But no such leniency and impunity favours any peasant. According to National Crime Records Bureau's latest farmer-suicides data, 80% farmer-suicides are due to default of loans from banks, not moneylenders. All the new schemes announced under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana are simply loans, with obligation to repay.

So, has the Prime Minister been generous to the suffering peasants or urban poor even by an inch? For example, State Bank of India charges 15% interest on a 5-year agricultural loan. So, a loan of Rs 50,000 charges a simple interest of Rs 37,500. As per the announcement of

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Prime Minister's Sops

Camouflaged as pro-people steps, move is towards credit-driven economy and usury

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the Prime minister, waiving interest for just two months would give relief of just Rs 1250 to the indebted poor. Is it welfare or a mockery of it?

On the other hand, there is another danger. Even under the pretext of having announced these so called sops, there is every possibility that in the name of fiscal consolidation, the government may cut public investment. This is not mere speculation. In the year 2015-2016 capital expenditure had ended up at less than what had been budgeted.

Grant of Rs 6000 to expecting mother is no new a scheme since it was introduced in 2010. Only the amount has been increased. But nobody has any clue as to who are the targeted beneficiaries, how many of them have really received the grant and through what precise delivery mechanisms? Three years ago, the National Food Security Act promised maternity entitlements of Rs. 6,000 for each child. Is there any feedback on that? There is nothing new either in the proposal to convert 3 crore Kisan Credit Cards into RuPay Credit Cards (an Indian version of credit/debit card) as they were already linked.

Trampling underfoot basic tenets of Parliamentary Democracy

Most importantly, these economic and financial policies which as per procedure ought to be part of the annual budget have been announced by the Prime Minister in

a media broadcast bypassing parliament and thereby trampling underfoot the basic tenets of Parliamentary Democracy. Parliament set up during advent of capitalism as an institution which epitomized in it the concrete expression of bourgeois democracy and the parliamentary system of governance gave effect to the principle of rule of people as per bourgeois sense. It was considered to be the House of elected People's representatives and is sovereign contingent upon sovereignty of the people. This is the basis of Parliamentary Democracy. But with capitalism in decay, the ruling bourgeoisie which has turned utter despotic and reactionary is undermining the importance of parliament in all possible ways. Out of fear of losing their rule or power, capitalism or capitalist rulers have become more autocratic, more and more tilted towards systematic curtailment of democracy and democratic norms, codes, conventions and practices. The parliamentarian parties subservient to the ruling oppressive bourgeoisie are obviously no exception to that. For quite some time, the ruling party, whether Congress or BJP, has been on a spree of announcing important policy decisions like escalation of railway tariff etc., and then regularizing those policies through issue of ordinance or administrative fiat. In other words, all political powers are now concentrated in the hands of the Executive (i.e. ministers, bureaucrats) subservient

to the ruling class and parliament is being turned into an appendage of the ruling monopolists by stripping it of its essence which was once conceived by the founding fathers of bourgeois democracy. This is ringing the bell of impending fascism.

While the party in power is overriding parliament in enacting policies flaunting its brute political might, the opposition parties are equally guilty of reducing the parliament into a defunct or dysfunctional entity by continuously boycotting sessions over trivial personal agendas or disrupting the sessions with acrimonious trading of charges and counter-charges that have nothing to do with people's interest. What is disquieting is that not only marked bourgeois petty-bourgeois parties but even the pseudo-Marxists like CPI (M), CPI, hankering for pelf and power, are now involved in this nasty game of disrupting and boycotting parliament and instead staging mock-fights in and around the legislature. The objective is to keep people away from the path of extra-parliamentary movements and instead, with the backing of the bourgeois media, project all their parliamentary gymnastics as championing of people's cause.

In sum, capitalism and its agents of different hues are now taking recourse to all falsehoods, trickeries and camouflages to hold people to ransom. They feel they can do anything with the people's life, dictate any term they want, conduct themselves any way they like and

indulge in any kind of wrongdoing or mischiefs while people, back-broken by ruthless capitalist exploitation and handicapped in absence of proper political consciousness, would go on enduring everything. It is a well-woven conspiracy of decadent moribund corrupt reactionary capitalism.

What is to be done?

It is high time that the oppressed people understand this heinous conspiracy of the ruling class and its lackeys and stooges. Getting carried away by the sweet-coated words of the power-monger ministers and leaders adept in taking people for a ride, veering around this or that bourgeois petty-bourgeois party or combination in the elections and changing the baton of government by rotation would only beget deception and deprivation in gushes, mischievous tricks and trickeries in increasing doses. Nor would it prevent rampant subversion of all rules, norms and codes and providing safe passage to all anti-people policies like demonetization in multiplication to make life further suffocating. Till the time capitalism, which is the root of all evils, is overthrown by revolution, common people would have to launch prolonged powerful organized democratic mass movements based on higher culture and morality and under correct revolutionary leadership against all the burning problems of life and noxious policies of the bourgeois government to wrest some relief.

Anti-Demonetization rally

UP

A state-level protest day was observed on December 31, under the joint initiative of CPI, CPI (M), CPI (ML) and SUCI (C), when a day-long *Dharna* was staged at the office of the DM and also a meeting held in Allahabad against the demonitization move of Modi Government. The leaders present condemned the said move in one voice pointing out that it caused a lot of harassment to the common people with the industrialists, corporates and those dealing in black money having nothing to lose. The meeting was presided over by CPI(ML) District Secretary Comrade Radheshyam Mourya, while SUCI(C) District Secretary Comrade K. Singh was in

conduction. The leaders who addressed the meeting included Comrade Rajvendra Singh from SUCI(C), CPI(M) Allahabad District Secretary Comrade Ravi Misra and Comrade Akhil Vikalp and Comrade Dr.Kamal Sunill Mourya and Comrade Radheshyam Mourya from CPI(ML). A 5-point Charter of Demands was then submitted to the Honourable President of India through the DM.

Haryana

On January 6, a demonstration against demonetization was organized by our party SUCI(C) in the city of Rohtak, Haryana, where the programme included burning the effigy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Organisers had gathered in

the Chhoturam Park and took out a rally that went upto Manas Sarovar Park. Comrade Satyawar, Central Committee Member and Haryana State Secretary, SUCI(C) addressed the gathering.

Delhi and Madhya Pradesh

Similar protest meetings were organized in Kishanganj, Gulabi Bagh local committee, Delhi and in Guna, Madhya Pradesh.



Comrade Rabin Samajpati, Jharkhand State Secretary, SUCI(C) addressing a convention against demonetization in Patna on 7 January 2017

Lenin knew no fear in the struggle

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calling upon them to surround the generals, to cease hostilities, to establish contact with the Austro-German soldiers and take the cause of peace into their own hands."

This was "a leap in the dark." But Lenin did not shrink from this "leap"; on the contrary, he made it eagerly, for he knew that the army wanted peace and would win peace, sweeping every obstacle from its path; he knew that this method of establishing peace was bound to have its effect on the Austro-

German soldiers and would give full rein to the yearning for peace on every front without exception.

We know that here, too, Lenin's revolutionary foresight was subsequently confirmed with the utmost exactness.

The insight of genius, the ability rapidly to grasp and divine the inner meaning of impending events this was the quality of Lenin which enabled him to lay down the correct strategy and a clear line of conduct at turning points of the revolutionary movement. (SW, Vol. 6 p.54-66)

Birth Anniversary of Savitribai Phule

186th Birth Anniversary of *Krantiyoti* Savitribai Phule pioneer in spreading education among women in Maharashtra was organized with due honour at Pandhribodi, Rajiv Nagar, Shramik Nagar, Lashkaribag, Bahujan Nagar and Amar Nagar on January 3. A public meeting was organized on January 4, at SUCI(C) office, Pandhribodi, Ram Nagar, Nagpur by AIDYO, AIDSO and AIMSS. Comrade Ashish Lokhande, Convener AIDSO, Nagpur District presided over while Comrade Madhuri Nikure- AIDYO organizer and Srimati Rekha Bagde, Headmaster, Prateek Balwadi Padhribodi, addressed the gathering as the main speaker and the chief-guest respectively. Comrade Nilam Devi-Convener AIMSS- Nagpur district and Comrade Yogendra Kumar, member Maharashtra State Committee AIDYO, held discussions on the life-struggle of the revolutionary leader.

After the meeting a rally was organized against the spread of liquor, drugs as well as obscenity and against atrocities on women.

AIMSS, Vadodhara, Gujarat also observed Savitribai Phule Birth Anniversary, with due solemnity.

AIDSO Foundation

Day, Assam

The foundation day of AIDSO was observed with due importance throughout the state of Assam. A Barak Valley level students' gathering was organized at District Library auditorium, Silchar, on December 28. Comrades Angshuman Ray, Treasurer, AIDSO, Shyamdeo Kurmi, Cachar District Secretary, SUCI(C), Prajiwal Deb, Assam State Secretary, AIDSO, spoke on the occasion Comrade

Hillool Bhattacharya presided over. A spirited rally of students was also taken out on the occasion.

In Guwahati, a meeting was organized at Gauri Sadan, addressed by Comrade Jitendra Chaliha and presided over by Comrade Pallab Pegu-State Committee Member of AIDSO. Comrade Chaliha said AIDSO-imbued with the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh has been developing movements against chauvinistic and parochial ideas.

Similar meetings were also held at Goalpara, Dubri, Tejpur, Nalbari, Jorehat and Lakhimpur.

Observance of Kakori Kand martyrdom in Rajasthan

On the occasion of kakori kand martyrdom three different programs were organised by AIDYO Pilani unit, Rajasthan. Programs were held at balmiki basti, sains dharmasala, rajpura. Various cultural activities were performed by children.

Demonstration of AIKKMS, Odisha

On January 7, a massive demonstration was held in front of Patana Block office in Keonjhar, Odisha and a meeting was also held on the occasion. The meeting was presided over by Ghanashyam Mahanta-President, Patana Block AIKKMS. Comrade Raghunath Das, Secretary, AIKKMS addressed the gathering. In his speech Comrade Das highlighted demands including those of a monthly payment of Rs. 5000 to each peasant; setting up paddy *mondy* (market) in each panchayat; Rs. 5000 per quintal for paddy; ban of online registration system for selling paddy; withdrawal of fixing up limited paddy purchase order; supplying seeds, pesticides, fertilizers and agricultural implements at a subsidized rate; handing over

SUCI(C) vehemently opposes proposal to levy tax on every cash withdrawal from banks

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), issued the following statement on 14-01-17 :

SUCI(C) vehemently opposes the out and out anti-people proposal of the government to impose tax on cash withdrawal from one's own bank account which, as per media report, is under consideration in terms of recommendation by the Tax Administrative Reform Commission (TARC). Stating that this would be an important source of information to monitor transactions of unaccounted money is nothing but another hoodwinking of the people. As has been the practice of late, possibility of implementation of the proposal bypassing and subverting parliament cannot be ruled out either. If the proposal is implemented, it would mean that common people including the poor and downtrodden would have to shell out extra money, whether they transact in cash or cashless (which also is chargeable) thereby would be forced to bear additional expenditure even for dealing with their own money. One would recall that a similar Banking Cash Transaction Tax (BCTT) was imposed from 1 June, 2005 by erstwhile Congress government under the same plea of tracking unaccounted money and trace its source and destination. However, none of the stated objectives was achieved and finally the tax was withdrawn from 1 April, 2009 under public pressure.

The way burden of increased tax is being repeatedly thrust upon the common people under this or that fraudulent pretext makes one wonder whether the government who is extraordinarily liberal in providing tax waiver, concession and condoning bank loan defaults to the industrial houses and corporate sector as well as showing amnesty to the tax evaders and holders of black money, might now be prompted to levy stroll tax for walking down the streets or oxygen tax for breathing. In other words, with people made to pay tax while earning as well as spending and even for handling own money, it is virtually turning into a tax raj.

Our fervent appeal to the suffering people is to develop powerful protest movement round the country to compel the government to rescind the move.

cash in place of cheques to the peasants, etc. He also called upon the demonstrators to continue resistance movements against both BJP-led Modi Government and BJD-led State Government for realization of their demands. A 13-point Charter of Demands was handed over to the Chief Minister through BDO, Patana.

Protest against Dalit girl's murder in Bihar

AIDYO, AIDSO and AIMSS jointly protested rape and murder of a Dalit student Dika at a hostel in Ambedkar High School for girls in Hajipur, Bihar on 10 January. A big protest rally was organized at

Motijhil. The rally demanded immediate stopping of atrocities on women, exemplary punishment of the culprits, adequate compensation to the victim family etc.

Protest in Bellary, Karnataka

A protest was organized on January 11, in Bellary, Karnataka by local unit of SUCI(C), demanding that the government's decision of putting money into bank account for securing ration instead of supplying ration to the people through the Public Distribution System be withdrawn and also various discrepancies in PDS be resolved etc.



Observance of the day Azad Hind Government took over the governance of Andaman-Nicobar islands on 30 December, 1943, when Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose arrived at Port Blair. The observance programme was presided over by Shri A K Biswas, retired joint director of Andaman-Nicobar islands while Dr Tarun Mandal, vice-president of All India Medical Service Centre was the main speaker. Among special guests was Dr Halder. Balaram Manna conducted the proceedings.

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