

Proletarian Era

Volume 51 No. 17 Organ of the SOCIALIST UNITY CENTRE OF INDIA (COMMUNIST)
April 15, 2018 Founder Editor-in-Chief : COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

10 Pages
Price : Rs. 2.00

Spate of politically designed communal flare ups engineered by RSS-BJP

Reasons underlying, ways to thwart these brutal acts

Who in this country could ever think of such frenzied celebration of *Ram Navami* (birthday of *Rama*; the celebrated king of the epic *Ramayana* worshipped by the Hindus as Lord *Rama*), *Hanuman Jayanti* (another character in the epic, a devoted disciple of *Rama*) or even the New Year of a Hindu calendar, which hardly anybody knows of and follows? But believe it or not, suddenly (or not exactly suddenly!) there were huge, enthusiastic celebrations of the three occasions across a part of the country, with two states West Bengal and Bihar coming to the fore. And those celebrations were marked by aggressive public display of arms and equally haughty playing of music at a very high decibel in processions passing through areas of thick population evoking annoyance even anger among the people around. These were accompanied by brash raising of slogans which by their fury and pitch, if not words, were enough to excite and incite people for or against and so on. The administration was, to begin with, either non-responsive rather onlooker to passively indulgent, only letting the dangerous incidents escalate.

The results were as it could be apprehended. There were ugly communal flare-ups, rather brute violence over a wide region leading to loss of several innocent lives, clamping of prohibitory orders, deployment of added security forces, even para-militaries and their thumping route march, raids and arrests often of innocent residents, while the known triggering culprits mostly remained at large and so on.

Recent communal violence in West Bengal and Bihar was pre-planned

Thus, with this spate of communal violence centring round *Ram Navami* etc., another chapter was added to the unceasing efforts of the RSS-BJP combine now in the power of the central

government and as also several state governments. As one sees through it, the first point to note is that none of the more than three hundred versions of the *Ramayana* known across the country advocates mindless fanatic killing. Yet these RSS-BJP brand of *Hindutvavadis* did not care to end a few lives in the name of *Rama*. Some BJP leader, turncoat-from TMC, boasted of Bengal finally adopting Indian culture? What kind of culture is this where *Rama* is used for killing people? Then why is this sudden spate of these apparently religious killing feats? In the ultimate look-through, it proves to be nothing but designs to whip up communal frenzy throughout the country, thereby divide the population vertically into mutually hating parts and thereupon ensuring frenzied support of the majority community vote-bank to rise to or hold on to power and pelf in this bourgeois parliamentary system. At the same time, the cleavage disunites toiling people, working perfectly for the exploitative ruling capitalist class of the country, for otherwise the toiling people should have and would have fought united against the system that is fleecing them, irrespective of

the community they belong to.

It may be added here that in West Bengal the RSS-BJP, which triggered the fire, are aspiring for power and face stiff opposition from the ruling TMC, which instantaneously counteracted with the slogan 'Does Rama belong to the BJP only'. The latter came out with matching fury and frenzy, arranged processions with arms, though their own government had warned action against any open display of weapons and arms. The situation on the *Ram Navami* turned so vicious with violence in some localities that even the RSS-BJP and VHP felt it wiser to celebrate *Hanuman Jayanti* on a lower key, only with prayers at the temples, without bringing out processions. The TMC exploited the open field by arranging *Hanuman Jayanti* processions in different district towns. Those were also decorated with lethal arms. As the reports go, the TMC leaders plainly confessed that it was a rat race with the BJP for power. But does it mean that for power, in the name of fighting communalism of the BJP, they themselves should get into nasty practice of communal acts?

In Bihar, the BJP are sharing power, not since

Contd. on page 2

Latest revelations about Facebook-Cambridge Analytica Operation — an unbridled attack on people and blatant misuse of cybernetics

When the British newspaper The Observer and the US newspaper The New York Times first published an exposé on the company Cambridge Analytica (CA) which had wrongfully used the data of millions of Facebook users for political campaigns during elections, it created a furore

throughout the world. In today's world more and more people, particularly in the developing world, are coming to rely increasingly on online methods for their day-to-day work like, shopping, banking, education, entertainment, etc. Data leak is a serious problem in this area and it severely compromises the privacy and security of an individual. Privacy means that all personal information about an individual should not be available for all others. Appropriate data should be available to appropriate people only. Bourgeois democracy honours such privacy of an individual. Hence there was a big hue and cry. It became breaking news in the print and electronic media throughout the world. Close on the heels of the Observer-New York Times exposé the British Channel 4 News televised a programme based on a sting operation by two journalists who posed as agents of an election candidate in Sri Lanka; the video that was aired brought to light some of CA's dubious election strategies. The public outcry was so loud that two government agencies

Contd. on page 3



Protest demonstration in Ahmedabad against atrocities on women involving BJP leaders[News on page 5]

Despite dreaded attacks people come out for amity and harmony

Contd. from page 1

long and courtesy Nitish Kumar the chief minister. There the communal frenzy reportedly started as the son of a Union minister Aswini Kumar Choubey led a procession in Bhagalpur on 17 March and triggered communal frenzy and attack which soon, within and for a fortnight, spread across the state in at least 9 districts, with BJP leaders playing pivotal role. Even when situation was brought under control in one part, the frenzy was fanned up in another district of the state.

The entire pattern of the clashes in the two states showed almost simultaneous start of communal attack at different places in each of them, and attempts to escalate fresh trouble elsewhere. To add more, in West Bengal *Ram Navami* had never been any important festival. Rather it was observed along with several other festivals like Basanti or Annapurna pujas during the spring time and that too as family affair and mostly in private residences. Only in the recent years, the BJP are trying to whip up a craze on that. Do not all these point clearly that the flare up had nothing to do with religion or *parampara*? Rather, do the orchestrated ways in which the minority community people were chased, beaten up, killed and their houses or shops looted, ravaged and put to fire, leave any doubt on the motive of premeditated attack on them? Add to these the facts that in Bihar, the RSS chief Mohan Bhagbat made a visit of no less than 14 days just before *Ram Navami*. In West Bengal too, the party president Amit Shah made a visit and he himself and local BJP leaders spewed venoms in their speeches. Were not these enough to indicate drawing up of the entire plans of communal clashes for the local and district units of the BJP to follow up? In fact, a voluntary organization United Against Hate (UAH) corroborated this in a press conference in Delhi, from their fact-finders that the last communal violence in 9 districts of Bihar was 'not spontaneous, but pre-planned', orchestrated by BJP and Bajrang Dal.

Despite dreadful attack of communal forces, people are coming out in rejection of heinous communal acts and thoughts

Thus, this recent spurt centring round *Ram Navami* etc. was, as said, a new chapter added to the nefarious

design of the RSS-BJP which it is giving shape to particularly after coming to power. On the other hand, even from scanty reports in the media it was evident that in spite of frantic efforts of dreaded communal forces, common people of both the communities even in the affected areas did not approve of communal clashes. They were definitely for peace and harmony. Where, being unorganized, they could not prevent death and destruction, they tried for remedial measures at the earliest chance. Wherever possible, people raised funds for reconstructing properties destroyed by the miscreants. Even a Temple trust fund was used for rebuilding a Mazar. Overcoming the initial shock, the two communities came out for joint vigilance including night patrolling to prevent any further damage or destruction. So while communal design was pre-planned, people's response against it was spontaneous. And everywhere, people made clear two facts to the Press or any relevant authority. One, there were outsiders in large numbers brought in, openly or not, to ignite the communal frenzy; their sudden influx with lethal arms also picking up local miscreants in the process initially baffled and threw the local common people off guard. Incidentally, on earlier occasions of communal violence in West Bengal, there were also allegations of outsiders being brought in to create trouble. And two, with plain disapproval, people pointed to the press that the police which came in throngs for security of the Governor paying visit to the victims, were remarkably absent, sparse or looking the other way at the time of communal attacks. In Bihar too, common people's pressure against communal fury had clearly acted upon the government, as the chief minister was finally forced to announce release of funds to rebuild the properties including religious places destroyed during attacks.

Communal menace finds new lows in UP and elsewhere

Be that as it may, the RSS-BJP combine have been frantically carrying on its dreadful multipronged attack all over the country to a more or less extent. Thus, although there has not been any major incident so far reported from the state of UP centring round *Ram Navami*, the state remains a perpetual hot-bed as centre for communal flare-ups,

which are nothing less than grievous attacks on minorities and Dalits, including cruel lynching, murders and widespread riots, be it on the false hulla-bulloo of beef-eating or love jihad or any such concoctions. It is the state in which the recent infamous Muzaffarnagar carnage against the minorities were carried out, killing and evicting thousands from their home and hearth. Similar attacks are going on unabated in adjacent state of MP and Rajasthan, or in Gujarat. All these states are presently being ruled by the BJP on the stage and RSS on the wings. And without any effective opposition the deadly contingents of these rabid communal forces and their associate organizations are refining and sharpening their attacks creating a dreaded atmosphere of terror and insecurity for the minorities and Dalits. One of the most deplorable acts under this BJP rule in UP has been, as reports go, the fact that children are being taught to look at Muslims as born-enemies and are trained with lethal arms to attack, even kill them. As it appears from the recent incidents of West Bengal and Bihar, the RSS-BJP combine is trying to export this brand of dirty rabid communal culture to other states. Equally deplorable, if not more, is the phenomenal rise in custody death and so-called 'encounters', the CM of UP declaring openly that those would continue. Avowedly directed against criminals, the targets are anybody opposing the BJP and its government particularly from the minority community and the Dalits. The horrid design is evident from a single incident in a UP village, where the police went with the drummers to publicly announce and ostracize a family as a criminal family. As reported by the family members, they threatened the family 'not to pursue the encounter case or else' their 'other sons would meet the same fate'. (Times of India 1 April 2018) Locals submitted to the press that the members of the family are being unnecessarily harassed, because they have nothing to do with the crime record of other members of the family who are either behind bars or gunned down.

Capitalist exploitative system provides the background on which communalism is developing

These are all about what happened. But to seek answer to the question, why this celebration of

Ram Navami- Hanuman Jayanti-Hindu Calendar was chosen as an urgent new chapter in RSS-BJP design of communalizing the country, some background information may be relevant. Right now the country stands tottering from all-out socio-economic-political crisis with thousand and one problems to attend to. The governments are coming in and going out. But the usual maladies of the capitalist economy of the country go on for ever. Iconic image of development neatly built and attributed to Modi by the monopolists and corporate houses, has already faded out. Chased by unemployment, the youth run helter-skelter as migrant workers without semblance of security. With price rising and jobs becoming a rarity to get or hold on to, common people lose purchasing power every day every night. BJP's pledge of *acche din* or good days gave way to demonetization which failed to bring out black money, but robbed people of their pittance, even life. GST only added fuel to the fire. Ever-increasing NPA of banks in tens of thousands of crores of rupees stare at the hapless poor and middle class bank customers, who have been forced to open accounts and then fined for not maintaining minimum balance further to be greeted by the draconian FRDI Bill. Fraudsters like Vijaya Mallya, Nirav Modi or the likes, nonchalantly flee the country usurping thousands of crores of rupees, despite there being Vigilance Commission's alarm raised a year before. The PM-FM-heavy weight party bosses of the BJP avoid the cases of these fraudsters, instead gleefully pronounce and announce one scheme after another which the corporate houses welcome with wide embracing hands, while the common people count how far their belts can be tightened. Now and then there are fantastic words from this or that ministers-leaders which stun the nation, even the world around to think if we are living in an age of reason-analysis-science or in the dungeons of superstition-submission and obscurantism. Anybody from the common villager to well known radical thinkers-journalists, daring to differ-question-oppose, are put to threat, even exterminated, if necessary. The marginalized populations of Dalits and minorities are further pressed against wall with a signal: *submit to the upper caste Hindus or perish*, as indicated in the words of the UP family quoted

Contd. on page 9

Digital expertise now manipulates public opinion - political will

Contd from page 1

in UK, the Information Commissioner's Office and the Election Commission started an investigation into the affairs of CA and Facebook. In USA the Congress started an enquiry into the data leak and called Facebook owner Mark Zuckerberg to give testimony. The Congressmen wanted to investigate whether the CA affair had any role in the suspected Russian interference in the US Presidential election. Public criticism became so vocal that Mark Zuckerberg was forced to publicly apologize for Facebook's role in the data leak. The campaign "Delete Facebook" started as a fall-out from the incident and the value of Facebook shares in the stock market plummeted. The waves stirred the Indian political scene also.

How did Cambridge Analytica-Facebook combination function?

Cambridge Analytica (CA) is a London-based international political consultancy firm. It was started in 2013 as an offshoot of the Strategic Communications Laboratory (SCL) Group that calls itself a "global election management agency". SCL was involved in elections primarily in the developing world where its digital expertise was used by political parties to manipulate public opinion and political will. President Trump's former White House Advisor, Steve Bannon (incidentally an admirer of Narendra Modi and BJP) played an important role in setting up CA. He arranged a \$15 million donation from billionaire Robert Mercer, a Republican Party donor. CA allegedly worked for Ted Cruz's campaign for US Presidential Nomination. After Ted Cruz withdrew it worked for Trump's Presidential Campaign. CA's CEO Alexander Nix was heard boasting in a video aired by Channel 4 that CA played an "expansive role" in Trump's 2016 campaign, doing all its research, analytics as well as digital and television campaigns. CA's modus operandi in election campaigns came to light after whistle-blower Christopher Wylie, a former executive of CA, revealed to the British newspaper The Observer how CA worked. CA harvested millions of Facebook profiles of US voters and used them to build a powerful software program to predict and influence choices at the ballot box. The voter data were

collected through an app called *thisisyourdigitallife*, built by Cambridge University academic Aleksandr Kogan who had Russian connections. Through his company Global Science Research (GSR), in collaboration with Cambridge Analytica, hundreds of thousands of users were coaxed by offering money to take a personality test and to agree to have their data collected for academic use. About 305,000 Facebook users took the test, but the app also collected the information of the test-takers' Facebook friends, allowing the CA to accumulate data of 87 million Facebook users without their consent. From these data psychological profiles of the users were prepared. Information campaigns were then "microtargeted" at these users based on their preferences and vulnerabilities. Digital marketing, advertising, social media and YouTube were used to influence voters. In usual election campaigning candidates try to win voter support by listing the good deeds they did, by berating the opponents and by holding out promises for the future if elected. CA's scheme is diabolical in the sense that it psychologically assails an individual by exploiting his/her weaknesses, and attempts to mould his/her choice – all this is done in a devious and surreptitious manner. These go on behind the scene and the general public is not even aware how their choices are manipulated.

In the programme aired by Britain's Channel 4 News based on a sting operation by two journalists who posed as agents of a candidate in Sri Lanka, CA's CEO Alexander Nix (later suspended) described some of CA's dubious election strategies like, using women as lures to trap the targeted individual, blatant misinformation, fake news, offering super-attractive deals to politicians of the rival camp and video-recording these interactions to discredit the rival, and a host of other unethical online practices. He boasted that they have worked in more than 200 elections across the world, including Nigeria, India, Argentina, Czech Republic and Kenya. Another whistle-blower Brittany Kaiser disclosed that CA worked for political parties and corporate interests in Ethiopia, Lithuania, Romania, Nigeria and Zambia to influence elections and political processes.

"Cambridge Analytica was hired by a Nigerian billionaire to run a campaign in support

of Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian, and the video was targeted at his Muslim opponent, Muhammad Buhari, who went on to win the election" (*The Guardian*, 4 April, 2018). *The Guardian* further reported: CA "sought to influence the Nigerian presidential election in 2015 by using graphically violent imagery to portray a candidate as a supporter of sharia law who would brutally suppress dissenters and negotiate with militant Islamists....In testimony to the digital, culture, media and sport (DCMS) select committee last week, the whistleblower Christopher Wylie told [British] MPs: "[The video was distributed] in Nigeria with the sole intent of intimidating voters. It included content where people were being dismembered, where people were having their throats cut and bled to death in a ditch. They were being burned alive. There was incredibly anti-Islamic, threatening messages portraying Muslims as violent."

In Britain also CA's parent company SCL Group worked with both Conservative and Labour governments. It has emerged that SCL was given access by the Government to confidential documents when working for the Ministry of Defence. It was paid almost £200,000 for carrying out two separate projects. CA worked for the LEAVE EU campaign in the British referendum on leaving EU. The DCMS Committee of the British Parliament has started an investigation on the role of CA and Facebook on data breach.

Not just CA, Facebook was also guilty because by late 2015 the company had found out that information had been harvested on an unprecedented scale. However, at that time, though it was within its capability. It did not alert users and did not take any effective steps to recover and secure the private information of 87 million individuals. There have been allegations that Facebook was in collusion with CA for the data breach and that Facebook itself sold the data to CA. CA is just one company, but there are many others who harvest personal data using the Facebook platform and use them, often with dubious intentions and against the interest of the users. Before the CA affair became public Facebook used to pooh-pooh such apprehensions about breach of privacy.

Ramifications of Cambridge Analytica's operation in India

The revelations about CA in the foreign media stirred up a hornet's nest in India. It has been reported that 355 Indian Facebook users installed a Cambridge Analytica app, exposing the data of 562,455 users. The BJP and the Congress started to trade charges against one another about using CA's service. IT Minister of BJP Government, Ravi Shankar Prasad made threatening noises about taking actions against Facebook and Cambridge Analytica. However, it is clear that this was an empty bluster to hoodwink the people. Before the present hullabaloo started the BJP knew very well how the company operates, because CA has a long association with India. On its website it admits, "CA was contracted to undertake an in-depth electorate analysis for the Bihar Assembly Election in 2010. The core challenge was to identify the floating/swing voters for each of the parties and to measure their levels (of) electoral apathy, a result of the poor and unchanging condition of the state after 15 years of incumbent rule. In addition to the research phase, CA (was) tasked to organize the party base at the village level by creating a communication hierarchy to increase supporter motivation. Our client achieved a landslide victory, with over 90% of total seats targeted by CA being won." The client was obviously BJP, because, BJP-JD(U) combination was victorious in the 2010 election.

It has now become public that Ovlene Business Intelligence (OBI), CA's Indian partner, is owned by Amrish Tyagi, son of K C Tyagi, General Secretary of JD(U). Its website listed BJP, Congress and JD(U) as its clients. Interestingly the website was taken down soon after it drew public attention. About the company's methods Mr. Tyagi told the press, "We come to know from our poll research and poll history of a particular booth how many people voted for a particular ideology....then we make a profile of the booth." The "core challenge" was to "identify floating/swing voters and measure their level of electoral apathy". (*The Asian Age*, 22 March, 2018). The motive is clear: to swing the opinion of the unwilling or apathetic voters in favour of its client candidate and to offer

Contd. on page 4

Digital fraudulence adds new dimension to subversion of democratic process

Contd. from page 3

inducement to go to the booth and cast their vote in his favour.

The whistle-blower Christopher Wylie had disclosed in a tweet that the SCL Group has a database of over 600 districts and seven lakh villages in India. *"Our services help clients to identify and target key groups within the population to effectively influence their behaviour to realize the desired outcome."* The desired outcome, in this case, is to sway the election in the favour of the client (political party) by targeted and mischievous campaigning. Some of the elections in which SCL/CA was employed, according to Wylie's tweet are: 2009 Lok Sabha polls; Uttar Pradesh (2007, 2011, 2012); 2010 Bihar elections; 2007 Kerala, West Bengal, Assam, Jharkhand and UP polls; 2003 Madhya Pradesh elections; 2003 Rajasthan polls. Are not such devious means totally against the spirit of democracy and are these actions not out and out anti-people? Election rigging is made finer and more atrocious.

NDTV reported that the publicly available LinkedIn (professional network on the Internet) page of one of the directors of OBI, Himanshu Sharma, stated that he *"managed 4 election campaigns successfully for the ruling party BJP"* which was flush with money and *"achieved the target of Mission 272+"* (BJP's slogan in the 1914 Lok Sabha election). This has since been deleted from Sharma's LinkedIn profile.

NDTV televised an interview with Avneesh Rai, (<https://www.ndtv.com/topic/Avneesh-Rai>), cofounder of CA's Indian partner, and director of SCL Pvt. Ltd. founded in 2011 as an Indian wing of SCL UK; Alexander Nix, Alexander Oakes of SCL UK and Amrith Tyagi and Rai were the directors. Alexander Nix visited India in 2011, and began talks with Rai and Tyagi to extend SCL's operations into the Indian political scene. They registered SCL India *"to jointly prepare a database of Indian voters and manage the subsequent elections for potential political parties as clients."* Alexander Nix was keen to offer the firm's services almost solely to the Congress. Later, however, it appeared that Nix was veering away from the Congress, and in one meeting when Rai confronted a lady

of Indian origin in the committee about the anti-congress slant of the surveys undertaken, she commented, "we are here to defeat the Congress"; Rai claims that her identity was not divulged to him. When Rai queried Nix he replied, "I am here to make money". That was in 2012.

It is a fact that the BJP was the first Indian political party to extensively use the digital space and social media for campaigning. BJP's affinity with CA is suggested by the following tweet from Mr. Arvind Gupta, who was responsible for the highly effective digital campaign for BJP in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections and is now CEO of MyGov, a platform patronized by Narendra Modi to build a partnership between citizens and the Government: *"CA is a powerful tool and when used correctly, can provide deep insights and fine tune communication and outreach strategy."* Smriti Irani, a minister in Narendra Modi's cabinet, who trolled Rahul Gandhi over a poster containing the Congress election symbol in the CA office in London, follows CA on Twitter.

Both BJP and Congress have denied using the services of CA. However, from whatever documents have come to light it is clear that both BJP and Congress had interactions with CA or its associates, but the details of involvement and the degree of interference of CA in Indian elections are still hazy. The Cambridge Analytica episode highlights two important issues – the use and abuse of data and the scope for external or foreign influence in democratic processes.

Though the Cambridge Analytica incident has brought out many things in the open, the phenomenon of creating profiles based on individual data and using that to influence individual choices is happening everyday in the Internet. Propagation of targeted fake news, trolling and character assassination are frequently happening through chats and blogs. We must be alive to this menace.

The incidents of unauthorized data mining for election purposes has brought to the centre stage the issue of an individual's privacy, and archival security of personal data. The issue covers a much wider field than just elections. BJP government is aggressively pushing for compulsory Aadhaar enrolment and

linking it with bank accounts and all manner of services. The Government has access to personal data of every citizen of India, his economic status, his political choice, his movements etc. This is extremely dangerous and is giving rise to what has been referred to as *"surveillance society"*. The Prime Minister's NaMo app has collected personal data of millions of people. The recent breaches of Aadhaar data and leak of information related to bank accounts holders are causes of great concern, because India does not have a comprehensive data protection law with effective enforcement mechanism. Moreover, the recently amended laws making it easier for parties to accept foreign funding that will pave the way for unscrupulous foreign digital firms to meddle with our democratic processes. Democratic mass movements must raise the demand that the Government must enact legislations which protect the privacy of the citizens and prevent the mining of their personal data by the corporates for profit and by the political parties for electoral benefits. Any outfit guilty of data breach should be given exemplary punishment. The Government itself must not use digital personal data to harass citizens and implicate them in legal processes.

Bourgeois elections made a farce

All the ramifications of the activities of CA and its associates described above starkly bring home the fact that in this era of crisis-ridden moribund capitalism the bourgeois parliamentary elections have become a farce. When the bourgeoisie was a rising force fighting against feudal autocracy and absolutism it upheld the banner of liberty, equality, fraternity and championed democracy. The parliamentary system developed on the basis of bourgeois concept of democracy. It was thought that people's will would be reflected through free and fair elections. While campaigning for elections the candidates would outline their views on different issues and their contrasted visions of material, cultural and social progress. The voters would use their logical faculty and reasoning to arrive at the truth and to find out who represents that truth and vote accordingly. The role of the media as the Fourth Estate would be to inform the people about

the real issues and act as a check on misuse of power by the rulers. But the high ideals of democracy have long been thrown to the wind by the bourgeois class. The ruthless exploitation based on profit motive of capitalist production has today inexorably plunged the capitalist system into an all embracing crisis, economic, social and political. In its desperate bid to come out of crisis the bourgeoisie started to compromise with obscurantism and all types of reactionary forces. Under the cloak of democratic verbiage it is bringing in fascism. In all capitalist countries, developed and developing, the results of elections are decided by power of money, muscle and corporate controlled media by manoeuvring people's will. Even in the US Presidential election during the nomination of both Democratic and Republican candidates it is openly discussed who can mobilize the maximum funds.

The methods employed by Facebook, CA and other similar organizations add a new dimension to the subversion of democratic process and negate the very essence of democratic principles. Far from encouraging people to use their reasoning faculty to find out the truth and make an informed choice they use technological tools to exploit their weaknesses and vulnerabilities and manoeuvre their opinions. They have no compunction in using any dirty trick to discredit rival candidates and engineer support for the client candidate. They are ever inventing new designs for carrying out their nefarious work. The companies are absolutely amoral and work for the highest bidder. They would work for the party which pays them the maximum irrespective of whether the party's rule is beneficial for the country or not. They would engineer support for the most reactionary party if it pays them more. Thus the very essence of democracy is destroyed by these practices. Correct opinions, right thoughts are suppressed.

Worst misuse and abuse of spectacular inventions and wonderful innovations of science

A very important point to consider is that new inventions in science and technology are either blocked by today's moribund capitalism or are used by it against humanity. History has demonstrated that revolutionary changes in the

Contd. on page 6

SUCI(C) protests all-out terror in connection with the Panchayat election; calls for a protest week from 12 to 18 April

SUCI (C) West Bengal State Committee submitted two memorandums on 4 and 7 April respectively to the Election Commissioner, West Bengal State Election Commission bringing his attention to the all-out terror created during filing of nomination by the ruling party TMC and barbarous attacks on the candidates of our Party, despite clamping of 144 CrPC and presence of a huge contingent of the police force in the office premises of BDO and SDO. Even the candidates are being threatened at their residences. Police stations are refusing to accept complaints; even approaching higher officials is not bringing any result. All this together has made the Panchayat election a farce, which cannot be allowed in democracy.

In the second memorandum dated 7 April the Party mentioned, in addition, specific instances of such attacks in different districts including shameless heckling of the acclaimed leader of the Nandigram land movement Nanda Patra and molestation and attempt towards kidnapping of the female candidate of the Party in Coochbehar district, which stand out as among worst of the examples of hooliganism of the ruling party. The Party also expressed that the Election Commission has failed to take necessary and firm steps towards free, fair and impartial election. The extended time for withdrawal of nomination would only mean that the candidates of opposition parties, will be put further under pressure of the muscle power of the ruling party.

On the background of these memorandums Comrade Saumen Basu, West Bengal State Secretary issued a statement on 9 April 2018. In it he said :

The ruling TMC party making use of weapons-wielding hordes of hooligans under its fold, has turned the Panchayat election into a

farce, creating a climate of all-out terror around all the BDO- SDO- DM offices over the state except for a few BDO- SDO offices in 2 to 3 districts, from the very first day of filing nomination papers till the last, keeping the police and administration toothless. Even on 9 April the last day of submission of nomination papers, before the very nose of the police force, our candidates, the proposers and the accompanying party comrades were attacked with solid bamboo sticks and grievously injured, their nomination papers, voter cards, caste certificates and other papers were snatched away and torn and they themselves were thrown out of the administrative office compounds. Those who had been able to submit nomination papers at a few undisturbed BDO-SDO offices are being threatened of life with a warning that they will have to face unimaginable consequences and robbery in their house. Leaders of the present government, with a view to watering down such a serious issue, are cracking cruel jokes in the same manner as the leaders of the previous CPI(M) Front government, that this Panchayat will be almost opposition-free because none wants to contest, witnessing the development work performed by the present government.

Comrade Basu said that the Party was aware that the previous Panchayat Act, deemed police and general administration (DM, SDO, BDO, SP, SDPO, OC) to be under the Election Commission and not under the government, from the day election was declared. That Act was changed by the previous CPI (M) front government under Buddhadeb Bhattacharya, to be replaced by the present one which took away the control of the EC and brought administration and police totally into the grip of the government. The present government, like

its predecessor, is making full use of it. This way the TMC government has curtailed people's democratic rights making the police-administration miserably inactive, trampling laws and establishing the rule of goons. Comrade Basu called upon all the democratic-minded people to raise strong voice against these dangerous steps to throttle democracy and said that the Party has decided to observe a protest week from 12 to 18 April against making this farce of an election by curtailing democratic environment and rights.

Subsequently, on 13 April, in a third memorandum to the EC, the copies of which have also been sent to the Chief Secretary and Home Secretary of the state and all the District Magistrates and the Director General of Police, the West Bengal State Committee of the Party reiterated that farcical situation centring round the oncoming Panchayat election has been created from the all-out terror by the muscle-power with the police and administration made inactive, rather a pliant stooge of the Party. In most cases the attacks on activists and leaders of our Party as well as other opposition parties have been carried out in presence and indulgence of the police. Barring one or two police stations, none accepted complaints; even the higher officials did not respond or expressed their helplessness. Perhaps even the ministers were tipped not to receive any phone calls. In consequence a large number of our candidates could not file nomination papers. In the memorandum the Party submitted a districtwise list of number of candidates, at the all three levels of Panchayat, viz., Block, Panchayat Samity and Gram Panchayat, who could not file their nomination papers and urged the Election Commissioner to take immediate steps to bring an end to this farcical situation.

Joint movement in Delhi against attacks on education

On 3 April last Joint Forum for Movement on Education, formed at the initiative of All India Federation of College and University Teachers' Organisation (AIFCUTO) led a distinctive procession in New Delhi. Several organizations engaged in education movements like AISEC, FEDCUTA, ABUTA, DUTA, STEA, AIDSO, AIFS and others participated in the procession

that walked from the Mandi House to end at Jantar Mantar on Parliament Street where police blocked it. The Joint Forum condemned privatisation and commercialisation of education as well as saffronisation of it. It also condemned attacks on autonomy of educational institution, recently brought in a fresh move christened graded autonomy, as also attack on all-encompassing education in the name of CBCS. It criticized constant crunch of financial grants for education and called for comprehensive

scientific education with genuine academic autonomy which ensures a fearless enquiring mind and defeat of obscurantist fanaticism. There were brief meetings at the Mandi House and Jantar Mantar which were addressed by AIFCUTO Secretary, and other leaders of participating organizations, including Prof. Narendra Sharma, President Delhi AISEC, Prof Tarun Naskar, ABUTA, Prashant AIDSO. Besides, Comrade

Pran Sharma, Delhi State Secretary, SUCI (C), and leaders of CPI and CPI(M) also spoke. After the programme, the organisers sat together and decided to form central and state level joint committees to strengthen and sustain the movements.

Protest demonstration in Ahmedabad against atrocities on women involving BJP associates

On 13 April All India Mahila Sanskritik Sangathan (All India M.S.S.), Ahmedabad Women's Action Group (AWAG), Majoor Mahajan Sangh (Women's wing), Mansi Mahila Sewa Sakhi Mandal, Gujarat Mahila Manch and other organisations jointly demonstrated, along with students, youths and citizens to protest the incidents of Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir, Unnao in U.P., Naliya in Gujarat and other places where the ruling BJP is directly shielding the culprits of rape on women, who are associated with their party. They demanded immediate actions on the culprits, strict implementation of POCSO Law etc., and resolved to spread the movement. [Photo on page 1]



Capitalism blocks development of science

Contd. from page 4

development of science impact production system and bring about revolutionary changes in society. Marx and Engels in their different writings have detailed how advances in modern science and technology have revolutionized the capitalist production system. Indeed the Industrial Revolution of the 18th-19th centuries marks a gigantic leap of the capitalist productive forces and helped in the consolidation of the capitalist system. But in the bourgeois system the benefits of scientific advances revolutionizing production have been usurped by the capitalist class, because the motive of production is maximum profit for the capitalists and resultant intensification of exploitation of the working class.

Advances in science leading to technological developments play a decisive role in the advancement of productive forces. In addition, science promotes rational thinking in society and helps in bringing about a transformation of the mental world of mankind. But today in its moribund crisis-ridden stage capitalism is strangulating science and blocking its all-out development. It does not promote fundamental research which broadens human knowledge; it promotes only those technological developments which strengthens its exploitative machinery and consolidates its class rule. The bourgeoisie use advances in science and technology against humanity, as witnessed in the development of nuclear arsenal, chemical weapons, and deadly war machines. Its armed machinery is used not only against the external enemies but also to crush the movements of the toiling people inside their own countries. In its own class interest the bourgeoisie does not want the spread of scientific thinking among the people; it wants to keep the people in ignorance so that they cannot reason out the cause of their misery and pose no danger to their class rule.

Development of cybernetics in the second half of the 20th century is an important milestone in the history of advancement of science and technology. Advances in electronics and invention of the Internet have revolutionized the communication system. Based on the finest developments of software and hardware, texts, pictures and videos can now be sent within the blink of an eye to the farthest corner of the globe. The Internet has made it possible to set up

channels of fast communication to millions of people round the world. We have witnessed the positive side of this development of social media and other communication channels in effective mass mobilization during the so-called "Arab Spring", and in our country during the Nirbhaya episode. Cybernetics can play an important role in doing hazardous jobs in industry. It has use in medical sciences also and has tremendous scope in revolutionizing treatment of diseases. The technological developments in the field of cybernetics are fast changing and its farthest limits are not in sight. But as we have seen the bourgeois political system uses the developments for heinous purposes. Advanced communication technology is used as another tool by the bourgeois class to play their nefarious games and subvert the democratic process. Internet, social media and blogs etc. have become integral parts of the bourgeois election system. Fake news, vicious character assassination and trolling have become routine in the bourgeois political system, and these have a reach never before attained. The new developments have been misused as tools for propaganda by the bourgeoisie, and are utilized to suppress revolutionary force and revolutionary movement. Using devious means they are negating the truth and are hitting at the rational faculty of the people. They are bringing about a cultural degeneration in the society destroying the moral backbone of the people. The Cambridge Analytica affair is just one example of cyber attack on democracy, but it lifts a corner of the veil on the murky world of bourgeois parliamentary elections.

Today's moribund capitalism is blocking free development of science. Unfettered development of science and technology is not possible unless these are freed from the domination of capitalism, and this is to be linked with the general anti-capitalist revolutionary movement in the country. Powerful democratic movements have to be built with the demand to stop the misuse of advanced cybernetics for subverting the democratic process, to protect the legitimate privacy of the citizens and to enact and enforce effective data protection laws. We appeal to the people from all sections of society who aspire for unhindered development of science for serving humanity to come forward for building and participating in such democratic movements.

Comrade Sraboni Kundu passes away

Comrade Sraboni Kundu, member, Calcutta District Committee of the Party, SUCI (C) breathed her last on 28 March 2018, at the Calcutta Heart Clinic and Hospital at an early age of 51 years. She left back an instance of an exemplary courageous struggle, which she had been carrying on particularly during her last few years when she fought painful fatal disease of cancer with an ever-smiling face.



Born and brought up in a party centre at Durgapur, Comrade Kundu carried deep influence of revolutionary ideals of Marxism-Leninism- Shibdas Ghosh Thoughts in her character right from early childhood. Initiating as a member of the *Komsomol*, soon she joined student movement on one hand and mass movements on the other like resistance against bus fare hike, education movement against the abolition of English and pass-fail system from the school primary stage as also cultural movement with young boys and girls of her locality in remembrance of great personalities of our past. In course of these, she courageously faced the brute attacks from the forces in power, the police or the SFI or their hired goons. It was the bold resistance from Comrade Shraboni Kundu as also associated other AIDSIO leaders and activists that helped maintain against all onslaughts, the Union at the Jogmaya Devi College in Kolkata. Comrade Kundu, who was the General Secretary in that college in 1987, was also instrumental in developing AIDSIO union in Srirampur Girls' College and other institutions in Hooghly district. Ultimately she earned responsible position in the All India Council of AIDSIO.

Sociable and caring, particularly with children and youth, she would soon become their elder sister. To anybody visiting her centre, she was ever-vigilant host and for all around her, including the staff, doctors and nurses of the hospital she had to be admitted to repeatedly, she was a loving character with an ungrudging smiling face, yet purposive with consciousness to propagate Party thoughts and uphold its leadership. With even her failing health, her unflinching trust upon Marxism-Leninism- Shibdas Ghosh Thoughts, her thirst for knowledge, unbending zeal to present her views till she could be convinced otherwise, all led her to be included in the writing staff of the Party organ *Ganadabi*.

At the news of her demise Party comrades, leaders-supporters, former AIDSIO activists and others rushed to the Hospital, where Central Committee members Comrades Sankar Saha, Gopal Kundu and Saumen Basu who was also the West Bengal State Secretary, other members of the state secretariat, doctors, nurses and other members of staff, her teacher and others paid their respect to the departed comrade. Next day, her mortal remain having been brought to the Party Central Office, floral tribute was paid by Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, Comrade Ranjit Dhar, veteran Polit Bureau member as also on behalf of Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, PB member and Comrade Pranati Bhattacharyya, CC member. Besides, other CC members Comrades Gopal Kundu and Chhaya Mukherjee, State Secretariat and State and District Committee members, representatives of mass organizations and others paid floral tributes. With tearful eyes, comrades bade farewell to the departed Comrade at the crematorium. With her demise, the Party lost a highly potential revolutionary cadre!

A memorial meeting of Comrade Shraboni Kundu was held on 6 March, at Ashutosh College Hall, Kolkata. With deep emotion and solemnity, the meeting was held in presence of Polit Bureau members, Comrade Ranjit Dhar and Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, Central Committee members Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee and Comrade Gopal Kundu, West Bengal State Secretariat members Comrade Amitava Chatterjee, Comrade Chandidas Bhattacharya, and Comrade Debasish Roy, Secretary, Howrah District and member, West Bengal State Committee. Comrade Amitava Chatterjee, Secretary of Calcutta District Committee, presided over the meeting. Comrades Chandidas Bhattacharyya, main speaker, Amitava Chatterjee and Debasish Roy spoke on different aspects of Comrade Shraboni Kundu's character and struggle.

Red Salute Comrade Shraboni Kundu

Karnataka Assembly polls

Defeat all parties that stand by monopolists and corporate houses : Strengthen people's alternative

Elections to the Karnataka State Assembly are round the corner, to be held in the month of May 2018. All major bourgeois parties in the state viz., Congress, BJP, JD(S) and others have already jumped into the fray and are gearing up for the battle. The Congress, under the leadership of the Chief Minister Sri. Siddaramaiah is going to the people boasting about its 'achievements' in the last five years. BJP, under Mr. Yeddyurappa, in its campaign has targeted Congress for all the problems plaguing the people of the state. Even the national leaders of these parties are visiting the state repeatedly to woo the voters. The JD(S) which does not like to be left behind in this campaign is going to the people with their 'version' against the Congress and the BJP. In the wake of war of words taking centre-stage and the people at large only left to watch these developments, it is time for a dispassionate and objective analysis of the present situation obtaining at the state level.

Is there any fundamental difference between these parties of the ruling class?

The Indian capitalism, as an integral part of the world capitalist system, has consolidated itself during the seven decades of independence. All the governments by this or that bourgeois party have only acted as subservient forces to help the ruling monopolists consolidate its rule and power.

Differing in slogans and some cosmetic measures, the policies of these parties have really meant to fill the coffers of the monopoly houses while emptying the pockets of the working people. While one party speaks of 'secularism', leave aside practicing it, the other one speaks of 'Hindutva' using it for minority bashing and ensuring majority vote bank. But so far as economic policies are concerned all of them stand united behind the monopolists and corporate houses. This is the essential fact that working people of the country should grasp. They are all out to rob the working people and fill the coffers of the rich. No wonder that finally in India 1% of the population controls 58% of the wealth of the country.

Peasants faced with abject misery

For more than three years now Karnataka is facing severe drought situation affecting particularly the poor and the marginal farmers of more than 140 taluks. But the government has failed to tackle the situation on war footing mobilizing resources by curtailing all wasteful expenditure, including those on top-heavy administration as well as on ministers and the people's representatives. Again, to tackle yearly serious fall in the market prices of some or the other crop, the government should have

immediately announced reasonable minimum support prices. But the support prices announced by the central and state governments were not scientifically determined and were way below the recommendation of the Swaminathan committee, for support price at 1.5 times the cost of production. Even crop losses were not suitably compensated. This coupled with huge increase in costs of fertilisers, seeds and pesticides made life miserable for the poor farmers, forced them to borrow, and failing to paying back even commit suicides. According to government's own admission in the last four and a half years more than 3500 farmers have committed suicide, the real figure many times higher. Those surviving lead a life of penury. Scarcity of drinking water is another problem with multi-village projects, filling up of lakes and the likes falling flat as glaring testimony to the criminal neglect of the government towards farmers.

Government fails to protect interest of workers

Policies of globalisation – liberalisation – privatisation, have continuously diluted the concept of permanent employment reducing jobs to temporary, casual, outsourced, honorary, incentive based, etc. The organised sector is being reduced to unorganized sector. All the minimum rights, needs and facilities which were earned by the working people through hard won battles are being taken away one after another, labour laws being revised in favour of the owners, rendering workers protection-less. Regular wages, bonus, leave, medical leave, PF, etc are becoming privileges of the past. Workers in the unorganized sector are treated cruelly and are denied even minimum subsistence level

wages. With no proper education or shelter, no civic amenities and no medical facilities, they are pushed to lead a sub-human standard of life.

Scheme workers like ASHAs, Anganwadis and the mid day meal workers continue to remain the most exploited sections in society earning a pittance deprived of their dues by both the central and state governments.

Congress and BJP present two sides of the same coin

The long list of 'achievements' of the Congress government during their term, includes Anna Bhagya, a scheme to provide rice at Re. 1 per kg for the BPL families, Ksheera Bhagya, a scheme to provide free milk to all children in all government schools, Krishi Bhagya, a scheme to ensure irrigation water for poor farmers, schemes for workers so on and so forth. They claim, these have brought about drastic improvement in the socio-economic condition of all sections of the poor people. However, judged from people's perspective and people's experience during the last five years, the claim appears to be meeting an emphatic NIL. Barring a very small section, downtrodden poor people at large, however, continue to remain in abject poverty without a decent place to live in, without a job and without proper education and health facility etc. To claim otherwise is merely to befool the people which the Congress government is guilty of.

As usual, the BJP is engaged in criticising these claims of the Congress government. They claim to be exposing the most corrupt government the state has ever been ruled by! But how was the rule of BJP, just before this Congress government?. Showing little or no interest in welfare schemes, they all through pursued pro-corporate and anti-people policies. And corruption? Was not a former Chief Minister of Karnataka removed from his chair and dumped out of BJP? Did not he float his own party? Now he is being brought back and projected as the chief minister candidate. Were not several other ministers charge-sheeted on the same charge? Neither JD(S) has a moral right to speak against these issues. Be that as it may the five years of Congress rule has been a failure,

with problems of people's lives only aggravating.

The BJP-led Union government stands on the same deck

What about the dreams weaved out neatly to people of the country by the present PM? Where are the Rs 15 lakhs per head to all individuals? Or 2 crore jobs per year? Nearing the end of the tenure and faced with the ignominy of answering these questions; Mr. Modi declared that unemployed youth of the country are earning no less than Rs 200 per day by selling 'pakodas' on the street side! The PM asks in return: where's unemployment! Is it anything but a cruel joke on the unemployed youth of the country?

What has been people's experience with the major economic decisions taken by the Modi government? In the name of flushing out all the black money, the Modi government brought the demonetisation policy with a call to people for necessary sacrifice. But what happened finally? Hardly any black money was unearthed, though people made 'great sacrifice' as demanded by the PM, with no less than 200 lives lost, and hundreds of thousands losing livelihood. Fact is that the government and the bureaucracy are all aware of who own the black money, but would not touch them as it is the source which largely funds the election-expenditure of the vote-based parties. Similarly, have the prices come down in the GST regime, as claimed by the government? Why are consumers even the traders up in arms against the Modi government? Is it not because the GST is pushing them out of business?

Non performing assets (NPA) of the public sector banks, continued since long, have now reached the phenomenal figures of Rs 11 lakh crores under the BJP rule! Who does not know that most part of this amount has gone into the pockets of the industrialists? A number of these willful defaulters, Mallya or Modi, So how is Narendra Modi's government different from a government of Sri. Man Mohan Singh or such others in serving successfully as representatives of the ruling monopolists with their pro-capitalist

Contd. on page 8

Karnataka Assembly polls

Make SUCI(C) candidates victorious to raise people's demands in the Assembly

Contd. from page 7

anti people policies? Has a change in government brought about any fundamental change, or could it even?

Unemployment continues to haunt the youths!

Unemployment has remained the biggest problem facing the youth of our state, as elsewhere in the country. Notwithstanding the slowdown in country's economy, the state government, from simple lack of its political will, miserably failed to provide the hapless youth with the minimum relief, for instance through setting up labour-intensive industries, that it could and should have. Thus even engineering graduates are roaming in the streets without jobs or opting for lowly paid BPO and marketing jobs, that too for only 10% engineering graduates each year. Adding more to the woe, gone are the days of campus interviews of all engineering graduates for IT companies or of the IT sector jobs with highest pays among industries. During last elections the Congress promised 50 lakh jobs in 5 years. Till to date even the one-third mark is not reached.

Dismal scenes continue unabated in education, health and civic amenities

The education scene is characterized by total commercialization of professional education, consequent steep fall in the quality and poor and meritorious students denied admission. Neither the central government nor the state government have come forward to take any effective step. Rather many of the state ministers own several private engineering and medical colleges acting as bulwark for all out commercialization of professional education.

On the health front the state of affairs is no better. Vector borne diseases like Dengue and Chikungunya have been plaguing the state since long. WHO had stated that this problem has increased in India and Karnataka is the worst affected. But the civic agencies have failed to take any measure to contain recurrence of the problem through years. The government hospitals are few and those too lack basic facilities. Instead of improving them, there is a move to privatize health sector,

with umpteen numbers of private hospitals coming up even in semi urban cities, charging prohibitively even for middle class people. A Universal Health Coverage-UHC, insurance based health care delivery system is mooted, but that too with outsourcing to the private corporate sector.

Land sharks are operating everywhere, grabbing menacingly even lakes, parks, drainage canals etc. in cities like Bangalore. It is resulting in inundation even with the usual rainfall. Obviously this goes on based upon illegal deeds made in connivance with the party in power. The Sandur Taluk in Ballari is one of the worst instances which has turned into a mound of dust by the then BJP minister Janardhan Reddy with his mining mafia. The garbage mafia has taken hold of most of the cities in the state causing untold miseries to the public, especially to the people in the suburbs where it is dumped.

The danger of Communalism including intolerance

With elections round the corner BJP is back with its dirty tricks to communalize the situation to polarize Hindu votes in its favour. Just a few months back in Mangalore they whipped up communal frenzy leading to deaths of people belonging to both the communities. Distorting history and portraying Tippu sultan as a despot and a fanatic ruler are added means to this end. The Congress government too is guilty of playing vote-bank politics with the minority community. Its official initiation of Tippu Jayanti is a latest addition. At the same time, to play the soft Hindutva card, Mr.Rahul Gandhi along with CM and other ministers make frequent visits to the temples.

As elsewhere in the country, intolerance and violence are allowed to grow in Karnataka several fanatic and communal outfits. The attack by goons of a communal outfit against a few women in a pub in Mangalore is one such incident which created a national outrage. But despite there being necessary evidence including video footage of the incident, shockingly the court has recently acquitted the accused citing lack of evidence. Even on killings of eminent radical thinkers like Professor Kalburgi, Gowri Lankesh,

and others, the State Investigation Team has failed to make any concrete and conclusive effort.

Dirty bourgeois politics

The way the 2G scam which occurred during the previous Congress-led UPA government was buried, exposes the sad truth that the major bourgeois parties in the corridor of power remain united in burying the hatchet together, if it is in the interest of the ruling class, while otherwise they act fire-brand in opposing each other to keep their vote-banks charged and alive.

Mahadayi river dispute is a glaring case in point. For a year at least, farmers of Nalagunda and Navalagunda are agitating for a rightful demand of drinking water for the region. It requires central intervention as three state, Karnataka, Goa and Maharashtra are involved with the river flowing through them. Under the pressure of militant farmers movement, the Congress met the PM and wrote repeatedly to the CM of BJP led Goa government. The latter responded not to Congress, but to Mr. Yeddyurappa, the BJP leader and the party is playing dirty politics by obstructing settlement and keeping the issue alive to be used as an election plank.

Make candidates victorious to raise inside the legislature people's voice reflected in united democratic movement from outside

So the lessons are clear. It matters little to people which of the major bourgeois parties, BJP, Congress and JDS form the government. They must see through their experience and realize : Who other than tried and tested soldiers of class and mass struggles can reflect the voice of people inside the House, linking parliamentary struggle with extra-parliamentary

movement? Who else can really fight corruption other than those who practice based on higher proletarian culture and who fight capitalism and not capitulate to it? The need of the hour is then to develop a mighty united democratic mass movement forging unity of left and democratic forces against the anti-people policies of the bourgeois parties. It is as a part of this movement that election is to be fought.

For the purpose, a 'Mahamaitri' — a platform of struggle was formed under the initiation of Devanooru Mahadeva, a prominent writer, social activist and a man of integrity and also the state chief of 'Swaraj India' a party headed by Yogendra Yadav at all India level. Apart from Swaraj India and our party the SUCI(C), other parties and forces in the combination are Welfare Party of India, CPI (M-L) Red Flag, etc. Our role in this movement was widely appreciated. Though it is not a united front with a common minimum programme and a common manifesto we have developed a kind of understanding of mutual support in about 21 constituencies. Meanwhile the major left parties, SUCI(C), CPI, CPI(M), FB, CPI (ML) (Liberation) have decided to have a common understanding of supporting left candidates wherever possible. CPI(M) and CPI, true to their social democratic nature, are trying to strike a deal with JD(S) and Congress respectively, to gain some electoral advantage, but they are yet to receive any positive response from either.

As a part of this struggle we are contesting in elections from five constituencies. Our candidates, if elected, will raise people's voice inside the assembly and coordinate struggles within and outside the legislature and give a fillip to the people's ongoing legitimate struggles.

SUCI (C) candidates in Karnataka Assembly polls

Sl No.	Constituency	Candidate
1.	Gulbarga Rural (Dt. Gulbarga)	Comrade Ganapathi Rao Mane
2.	Gurmitkal (Dt Yadgir)	Comrade Somashekar Yadgir
3.	Sandoor (Dt. Ballari)	Comrade A Ramanjinappa
4.	Rajarajeswarinagar (Dt. Bangalore)	Comrade H P Shivaprakash
5.	Govindarajanagar (Dt Bangalore)	Comrade (Dr.) K S Gangadhar

People's movement on genuine leftism and higher culture, the bulwark against communalism

Contd. from page 2

above. Soft targets of women and children are shamelessly made easy commodities for human trafficking and perversion. All these go on with the tacit backing of the ruling class. BJP, presently the most aggressive subservient force of the monopolists in the rein, acts to the fullest pleasure of the monopolists and corporate of the land and abroad. Other parliamentary parties, bourgeois-petty bourgeois- social democratic, national or regional, stage mock fight with the BJP in the bourgeois Parliament. But the same parties, if and whenever coming to power tread the same footmarks to prove that serving monopolists is not BJP's birth-right. They are also apt in it, given a chance to. Naturally all this stirs up strong resentment and wrath among people; now and then they burst out in protest. But lest those nucleate into united sustained movements, or even lest those found expression in votes, the rulers always find out means to divide exploited, oppressed people and rule them. As their efficient subservient outfit, RSS-BJP combine chalk up their vote-agenda and tactics based on rabid inhuman communalism. Sudden celebration of *Ram Navami-Hanuman Jayanti*-Hindu Calendar brandishing arms, shedding blood of minorities, throwing them out of their home and hearth, parallelly inciting frenzied section of majority community with hatred and enmity towards religious minorities, all this makes an integral part of the complete package of this dirty brand of communal vote bank politics.

With elections round the corner RSS-BJP play their communal card to drive wedge between people

The Lok Sabha (Parliament) election is scheduled a year from now. Assembly elections are taking place in this or that state. West Bengal is going to the Panchayat (3-tier village administration) polls in a few weeks. Despite our utmost efforts to uphold it, the traditional and strong leftist heritage of the state has been adequately tarnished by the social democratic CPI(M), which from its governmental power had acted with anti-people policies like any other bourgeois party for more than three decades. At such a juncture, vitally necessary mass movements are at their ebb or have been gagged. Earlier the bourgeois nationalist leaders of the country, including those of the Congress, not

to speak of the predecessors of the BJP who were not involved in the nationalist movement, did not care to pay heed to Netaji Subhas Bose's warning about the trident-wielding saffron clad hermits' joining politics. Even then during independence struggle, communal forces failed to drive their roots into the masses, both in the country as a whole and in different states. After independence, so long as there were left and democratic movement alive to some extent at least, the RSS could not make much headway, though since its birth it had always tried to foment its vicious thoughts based on intense hatred towards the Muslims. But as the exploitative capitalist system consolidated, the RSS cunningly made use of people's increasing wrath and resentment against capitalist rule and exploitation to spread and strengthen itself. And then in course of that process, when at a stage, BJP, the political face of the RSS happened to get the chance to rise to power, the RSS-BJP combine found the wind on their sail. With renewed vigour they tried newer means and methods, be it the demolition of the historic Babri mosque or a most devastating pogrom in Gujarat or such others all with the singular means of fanning communalism. And now from their seats of power at the Centre or a number of states, they are digging out newer hellish methods of creating vote banks, based upon worst forms of ways and means, caring a fig for loot- arson-lynching- murder- fake encounters- vilification or hate campaign of a vast section of the country's population, namely the minorities and the Dalits. The brand of so-called *Hindutva* of the RSS-BJP combine which acts towards vertically cleaving the toiling masses into mutually hateful sections, fits well with the aggregate interest of the ruling monopolists in so far as it prevents exploited people from fighting united against the monopolists and the capitalist system. So with the overt and covert support of the state machineries, including an influential section of the fourth estate, the RSS-BJP design gains fillip to find out newer ways and means.

But even in such a murky political ambience, the BJP is not being able to drive their roots deep into the soil everywhere, for instance in West Bengal. In Bihar, too, though they have reached power by managing to bring the

chief minister Nitish Kumar into their fold, the BJP are yet to find a firm footing in that state too. So these were the exigencies to fulfil which the BJP drummed the Hindu communal tune of *Ram Navami-Hanuman Jayanti*- Hindu Calendar that only spewed venom of hatred and killing. So it did not matter to them if a number of innocent people died or their houses ravaged, shops put to fire. And as mentioned, the ruling party of West Bengal, the TMC led by their fiery supremo, did not hesitate to take up the same communal agenda of the BJP in the name of fighting it. Is it? Or is this move of the TMC a frantic attempt to counter the allegation, right or wrong, of appeasing the minority voters and instead woo the majority vote bank, contesting the BJP? Can communalism be fought out with the help of any brand of communalism? Certainly not. Rather it not only vitiates the ambience further, it really helps the communal force to drive its roots deeper by planting communal mind-set in the masses.

Capitalism breeds and nurtures communalism: the key lies with people to resist and thwart it

It goes without saying that so long as capitalism will continue to exist, these bourgeois-petty bourgeois-social democratic parties acting as the subservient agents of that exploitative system of capitalism will try to find out thousand and one tricks and ploys to divide people, disturb their unity and thereby thwart any effective genuine effort towards developing anti-capitalist people's movement centring round their burning problems. Spate of hateful communal politics is among the most heinous of these tricks and ploys. This is the truth that will have to be carried to the oppressed people. Through painstaking efforts, people should be made to identify the real intent of such tricks and ploys. Now communal disturbances or, then new price rise through enhancement of fuel price or any other novel economic attack, sometimes attack on history, at other times onslaught on freedom of expression or curbing journalists' rights in the name of controlling fake news that the BJP themselves cater most, on each and every of these burning issues people will have to raise their voice of protest and organize to stand together for struggle. Certainly the ugly display of communal politics simply to gain some advantage in creating or maintaining vote-banks in

parliamentary politics for power and pelf, as well to play the role of faithful subservient force in the aggregate interest of the ruling class, cannot be left to itself to run its own course and bring havoc to people's life. Neither this design of the RSS-BJP can be thwarted by forming a combination of a motley of political forces and parties of different hues, only with an eye to giving defeat to the RSS-BJP in elections.

Powerful democratic movement on genuine leftism and higher culture, the bulwark against communalism

It needs undisputed recognition that the key lies with the people, their unity and initiative. As in the recent case and with days on, it is coming out clearer that toiling people, cutting across the divides of religion or other divisive traits are coming out to reject this communal brand of heinous politics. They are identifying the menace of communalism as harmful to people's cause. But to effectively and genuinely contain and disarm communalism, it demands further ideological clarity and conviction. First, as discussed, it must be recognized that in a multi-religious, multi-linguistic country like ours, communalism of any sort or from any quarter causes division and disunity in people only to the advantage of the ruling capitalist class. Second, this realization cannot have a solid foundation unless it is based on class-conscious genuine leftism on the edifice of higher culture. Parliamentary vote-bank based politics cannot eradicate this menace from the social set-up, because such a politics do not specifically point at capitalism, the root. It can be fought out only by sustained united democratic movement accompanied by organized ideological campaign against communalism on the edifice of higher ideology and nobler culture. Such people's democratic movement made powerful from the unity of all sections of toiling oppressed people against the real enemy and cutting across all divisive traits like religion etc., as well fortified with sound ideological clarity and higher and nobler culture can work as the only bulwark against dangerous communalism, the only deterrent to this heinous politics. Every effort to maintain peace and communal harmony through united efforts of all sections of well-meaning people must be made as part and parcel of such democratic movements.

AIDSO- AIDYO - AIMSS protest against atrocities on women in Silchar, Assam

AIDSO, AIDYO and AIMSS jointly held a protest meeting against the increasing number of crime and atrocities on women in front of the office of the DM at Silchar, Assam on 28 March. Leaders of the three organizations spoke at the meeting highlighting the fact that despite electoral pledge, the present BJP has miserably failed to contain atrocities on women and children and ensure their security, while their own government data stand at no less than 29,223 cases of rape, murder, bride-killing and such other crimes, the most recent ones being rape and murder of a class IX student of Hailakandi and a class IV student of Nagaon. Only 76 arrests have so far been made .

Observance of Martyrs’ Day on 23 March

Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh along with his comrades-in-arms Sukhdev and Rajguru are alive till to date in the hearts of common people as well as revolutionaries of today who observed 23 March, the Martyrs’ Day, on or around the day throughout the country. Some news have been covered in the last issue of Proletarian Era. Some more reports are included here.

The Martyrs’ Day was observed at Bhopal, Gwalior and Sagar of MP as also at different places in Allahabad, UP. At Allapur in Allahabad there was a seminar on 25 March on Contemporary

challenges in the light of Bhagat Singh’s views and our tasks. At Shankargarh Block the programme was marked by wearing of 2000 badges among the masses.

At Chandigarh the great martyrs were recalled on 1 April in a mass meeting organised by AIDYO in culmination of a programme initiated on 23 March. Main speaker of the meeting Comrade Satyawar, Central Committee member, and Haryana State Secretary urged students and youths to absorb revolutionary inspiration from Bhagat Singh and other martyrs. Prof Aminder Pal Singh, from Punjab and AIDYO Delhi state secretary Amarjit Kumar also spoke in the meeting. AIDSO Punjab Chandigarh unit coordinator Bina Singha Chaudhury presided over the meeting.

School of politics held in UP and MP

A school of politics of leaders and workers of the Party was held at Bhopal on 8 April, on Marxism and development of human society and another at Ballia in UP from 31 March to 1 April . The latter organized by SUCI (Communist) Ballia District Committee was participated by comrades from Ballia and neighbouring Gazipur, Mau and Gorakhpur districts.

Demand for Lowering of Electricity Charge

On 23 March, a state-wide Protest Day was observed by SUCI(C) Bihar, to protest against the 5% electricity charge hike by Bihar Government. At Patna, effigy of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar was burnt at the meeting addressed by Patna District Secretary Comrade Sadhna Misra, and others.

SUCI (C) expresses solidarity with Dalits protesting dilution of SC/ST Act and criticizes Union government

On 3 April 2018, expressing total solidarity with Dalit people fighting against the dilution of provisions of SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI (Communist) strongly condemned the killing of at least 9 Dalit people and causing grave injury to hundreds of protesting Dalit people. Comrade Ghosh also demanded immediate constitution of a high powered enquiry commission to find out who are responsible for these ghastly killings and perpetrating severe atrocities upon them, adequate compensation to the families of the dead and those who had been injured. Comrade Provash Ghosh also strongly criticized BJP Government’s attitude of not reflecting strong opposition to the attempt to dilute the provisions of the SC/ST Acts. He therefore demanded immediate restoration of status quo ante.



Mid-day Meal Workers Union at a protest rally at Mahendragarh, Haryana held on 25 March

Observance of Martyrs’ Day on 23 March



Kanpur, UP



Gwalior, MP

To inaugurate celebration of **CENTENARY YEAR of JALIANWALA BAG KILLING**
Meeting to pay tribute to the people killed
Will be held at Martyrs’ Column, Lucknow
On 13 April 2018 Friday
By Jalianwala Bag Incident Centenary Celebration Organizing Committee



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : PROVASH GHOSH