

Country's Healthcare Threatened with total collapse

Over two years back, the BJP Prime Minister of the country said that the country was moving towards the "best healthcare system" in the world and stressed the importance of providing quality and affordable healthcare to all Indians, especially the poor. Anyone conversant with the existing healthcare system of the country knows nothing could be bigger a lie than this spurious claim. As per report of a government appointed committee, nearly 80% of the country's population is languishing below poverty line. Most of them are rural poor who in absence of any means to eke out a bare living suffer from acute malnutrition and hunger. Naturally, they are afflicted by various diseases. But this bulk of Indian citizens are deprived of rudimentary medical assistance because the government, irrespective of which party subservient to the class interest of the ruling capitalist class is in command, has been criminally negligent towards discharging the primary responsibility of providing that essential service to them. Primary and Secondary Health Centres which they can reach with difficulties are only for name's sake as not even a single doctor mans these centres in 90% of the cases. Denied any medical attention, these hapless poor die like cats and dogs. Among the rest 10% of population, a sizeable section falls in the category of middle-class, mostly urban dwellers. They are hardly better off as progressively dwindling income because of rising unemployment, job loss and spiralling price line do not allow them to avail of highly expensive treatment in sophisticated private hospitals. So, they knock at the few government hospitals where they find hassles, harassments, paucity of doctors, shortage of beds, dysfunctional medical equipments, folded up diagnostic facilities and crumbling infrastructure awaiting them in place of medical care. The hospitals even refuse to supply medicines free of cost as per rule. A vicious racket of middlemen roam around freely in the government hospitals and run a roaring extortion business by way of 'arranging' otherwise non-available beds as well as pathological or any other investigative requirement. Hygiene of the government hospitals is horrible on every count. Incidents of dogs dragging away new-born babies, ants eating away eyes of diabetic patients, dead lizard in patients' food, administration of expired drugs or saline, overflowing latrines, a small bed shared by three to four patients, including mothers with new born babies, and dumping of patients on the floor in absence of beds are the hallmark of the government hospitals meant for the majority of the countrymen. On the

other hand, it is only the few rich and affluent who buy modern treatment at exorbitant rates in super-speciality hospitals in big cities mostly owned by private houses. This is the harrowing and highly discriminatory spectacle of healthcare in modern India whose rulers claim that it is the 5th largest economy in the world.

Fact-finding missions attest to miserable objective reality

On 21 July 2017, the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) on healthcare was produced before the Parliament. The report presented a spectacle which miserably contradicted the claim of the Prime Minister on every count. CAG observed that there is an acute shortage of medicines and doctors in government hospitals. Shortage of specialist doctors are plaguing healthcare delivery in the country. Most of the government hospitals, let alone the Primary and Secondary Health centres, do not have required investigative and diagnostic facilities. In many government hospitals, high-end medical equipments like ultrasound, blood-storage units and X-ray machines are lying unused in absence of any trained staff to run the machines. At some outlets, there is no space to install these machines as well. In absence of qualified doctors, compounders, health assistants or even class IV staff attend patients in many health centres. In other words, the primary healthcare system comprising sub-centres, primary health centres and community health centres are in shambles. The Health Ministry like all other government departments always seeks to overstate or understate figures as is needed for hiding the reality. But even its official publication states that only 11% of the Primary Health Centres met the Indian Public Health Standards as on March 31, 2017. These centres are the only places the rural poor, constituting around 76% of Indian population, have some access to. It may be recalled that the 2016 WHO Report too offered appalling insights into India's healthcare crisis. India scored a meagre 42 (on a scale of 100). Earlier, a National Family Health Survey (NHFS) which came on the cusp of India's 70th year of independence, also bore testimony to this perilous healthcare scenario.

Pathetic fallout of absence of basic healthcare

Fallout of abject neglect of healthcare to the neediest impoverished citizens is obviously frightening. Nearly one million Indians, as per official findings, die every year due to inadequate

healthcare facilities. India registers the world's highest maternal mortality ratio at 178 out of 1,00,000. 47% of under-five children in India is malnourished, the highest in the world. As much as 58.4 per cent of children between the age of 6-59 months are found to be anaemic. Poverty caused by expenditure on health has doubled in India in the past 15 years. Out-of-pocket health expenditure as a percentage of household resources has also gone up substantially. According to a 2011 study in the Lancet medical journal, a full 37.6% of low-income urban residents and 43.3% of low-income rural residents who, when they had fallen sick, could not seek medical care because of financial hardship. While appalling poverty and perilous healthcare network in rural areas leave no alternative to the downtrodden village people but to reconcile to languish and die without medical treatment, those a little better-off including even a good number of middle class urban people find availing medical treatment in hospitals too expensive to afford and hence face the same fate.

Authorities are unfazed

But the governments of different hues and their bootlicking political agents and bureaucrats are unfazed. The health secretary of the country summarily dismissed the aforesaid CAG report and said, "These are stray incidents and shouldn't be generalised. We now have an absolutely robust quality control mechanism in place." And starting from the Prime Minister to all other cabinet ministers are busy suppressing truth, arraying their entire arsenal of means to deceive and hoodwink people since their objective is not to mitigate hardship of the suffering millions but allow the blood-sucking corporate giants and monopoly groups by seeking to pass utter falsehood as truth through a slew of manoeuvres, to make fortunes by dooming the common people to further distress and destitution.

For example, while the governments, irrespective of hues, have been excessively liberal in granting various tax concessions and waivers to the monopoly houses and corporate sector, condoning their wilful default of bank loans, its budgetary allocation towards health spending is abysmally low. As per the Economic Survey 2016-17, the combined expenditure on health by the central and state governments was merely 1.4 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) for 2016-17. This number too is based on revised calculation methodology which straightaway hiked the GDP figure by over 50%.

Contd. on page 2

Country's Healthcare

Rural Health Centres and Government Hospitals are in shambles

Contd. from page 1

Health spending as a proportion of total government recurrent spending is currently hovering around 5% which is highly insufficient. Poorest countries like Bhutan and Ethiopia spend more on health than India does. Every year, the pro-rich pro-capitalist government slashes the health budget to make the situation even worse. Even the allocated minimal is not spent. In a reply to a questionnaire on demand for grants (2017-18) pertaining to the much clamoured National Health Mission (NHM), the government accepted that the Plan allocation for the different components of the NHM was only Rs. 21,940.70 crores, much less than the projected requirement of Rs. 34,315.66 crores. The CAG also criticised the government for not being able to manage funds properly; the unspent amount was found to have increased by 30% between 2011 and 2016.

Privatization spree in healthcare

Thus, it is clear that the pathetic tale of healthcare-starved countrymen hardly makes any impact on the policy formulators in capitalist India whose sole aim is to find newer means to squeeze people more and more so as to ensure ceaseless swelling of the coffers of the corporate behemoths and giant monopolists, many of whom are now making forays in lucrative health business. Since capitalism-imperialism is ridden with a growing insoluble acute market crisis endemic of the system, there is hardly any scope left to the capitalist owners and business tycoons for maximizing profit through productive investment. So, the doctrine of capitalist globalization promoted with much fanfare in the 1990s prescribed opening of all essential public welfare sectors like healthcare, education, water, electricity, civic amenities, hitherto under the exclusive control of the government, to the private houses. Since people cannot live without these basic amenities and services, providing them on a commercial basis is a lucrative business proposition for the profit-hunters. So, privatization became the buzzword in healthcare in capitalist India.

It may be mentioned in this connection that immediately after independence, under public pressure, some initiative was taken to set up

hospitals and primary health centres under the aegis of the government. The historic recommendation of the Bhole Committee (1943-1946) to take all out measure to serve health for all "from womb to tomb"—which was framed on the eve of our independence reflecting dreams of our great martyrs and freedom fighters has been totally forgotten. As days rolled by, negligence on the part of the government towards providing necessary healthcare through government hospitals and health centres went on soaring. Side by side, there has been mushrooming growth of private hospitals most of which run on pure commercial basis, at times even glaringly and defiantly deviating from basic medical ethics. The trend simply got a spurt after adoption of the disastrous policy of globalization-liberalization in the 1990s since when there has been virtually a spree of privatization of healthcare. It has been a definite policy of the bourgeois governments no matter which party of the ruling class was and is in power to hand over the crucial healthcare sector to the profit-greedy private operators on a silver platter. All steps, economic or administrative, are taken with that end in mind, no matter if that means entailing further woes and abject neglect to the wretched people of this land—akin to slaying the slain. The whole design is to hand over the entire health sector to the domestic monopolists and multi-nationals reducing the role of the government to a mere, if not meek, supervisory one. The government knows that people would desperately make a last-ditch attempt to be cured of ailments and diseases even if that means utter ruin for them. So, every penny so squeezed out of their pocket must enter the coffer of the private monopolists and corporate houses in the form of profit. As a sequel to that, cost of medical care is becoming so expensive that even those who were hitherto trying to cure their near and dear ones putting everything at stake are also shunted out of the healthcare network. This is the devastating consequence of turning healthcare, like all other essential and crucial public services, into a commodity of capitalist market.

To make this heinous design operationalized flawlessly, the governments have also been offering a slew of financial

concessions like subsidized allocation of land, lowering direct taxes, allowing higher depreciation on medical equipment which also lowers tax liability, income tax exemptions for five years for rural hospitals and customs duty exemptions for life-saving equipment. By allowing 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) in the sector, the door is also opened to foreign monopolists to invade Indian healthcare. Already, the sector has attracted more than \$2 billion of FDI. In fact, the Indian private health care industry is the second biggest destination for global investments in health.

National Health Policy is a blueprint for total privatization

In fact, the seed of privatization-commercialization-commodification of healthcare was sown in the first National Health Policy (NHP) floated in 1983 under the Congress regime and the floodgate was opened in the second NHP in 2002 under the clout of capitalist globalization. Now the cycle is on the verge of completion once the National Health Policy (NHP) of 2017 floated by the BJP government is implemented. This Policy clearly indicates that instead of addressing the deficiency in healthcare delivery by bettering the government facilities on both the counts, there will be more dependence on private or non-government hospitals to cater to the need for a hefty profit. In order to ensure more traffic to the private hospitals, even full-fledged efforts are on to further dilute the standard of whatever scanty healthcare is available under the government network. While the landmark proposition of Bhole Committee was to post highly skilled doctors at the grassroots level, the NHP, contrarily, talks of posting only AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) practitioners, nursing personnel, persons with B. Sc degree, Auxiliary nurse midwives (ANM), Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) etc. at the very ground level of healthcare. The Policy further proposes that alongside government facilities, healthcare services to all citizens will be made available through contracted private facilities (including NGOs and non-profit organisations) as well as through the PPP (Private Public Participation), a

euphemism for back-door privatization. In keeping with that, the private sectors have already started either using all government facilities to buttress their commercial interest or even providing diagnostic and investigative services within the government hospital premises at substantial costs which often prove unaffordable to the patients who somehow manage to reach a government hospital for treatment. In other words, there is only the signboard of 'government hospital' outside. With doors of highly expensive private hospitals closed to people languishing in abject poverty and misery and planned exit of the government from whatever little presence it has in healthcare, the much-hyped "health for all" policy is reduced to a cruel joke.

Hoax of Health Insurance

But the devil is never starved of subterfuge. The ruling capitalist class and its slave governments know that it would be difficult to keep this dirty game of eventual privatization and commercialization health shielded from public eye for a longer time. So, they need newer ploys to bluff the tormented countrymen. It is in this context that much hype is created centered around health insurance as if 'Boost to Universal Insurance' is guarantee of 'Universal Healthcare'. And in course of this hoodwinking also the profit-motive and class interest of the private monopolists and corporate behemoths have been given primacy. Let us go into a bit more of explanations.

The BJP Finance Minister in his last budget speech mentioned that the government would "bring healthcare system closer to the homes of people" by way of covering "over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) up to five lakh rupees per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation" under "a flagship National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS)". NHPS, now rechristened as "Ayushman Bharat National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM)", would be, he boasted, "the world's largest government-funded healthcare programme". Since then, this line has been very emphatically articulated and repeated by the BJP Prime Minister. This centrally-sponsored scheme

Contd. on page 6

71st Party Foundation Day observed across the country

The 71st Party Foundation Day was observed throughout the country by different state committees through a variety of programmes. Prime importance was naturally on addresses by the Party leaders, as available, from the Polit Bureau, Central Committee or Staff member or speakers deputed centrally from the Party headquarters, in the meetings attended by party comrades—supporters-sympathisers and common people. The programmes were initiated paying floral tributes to the portrait of the great leader Comrade Shibdas Ghosh by the main speaker and other leaders, along with the rendering of the song on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the founder General Secretary of the Party, while the *Communist Internationale* marked the end. At several places KOMSOMOL unit of the Party paid Guard of Honour to the great leader Comrade Shibdas Ghosh.

Below we publish the relevant reports with slight and necessary editing.

Kerala

On 24 April 2018 the 71st Party Foundation Day was scheduled at in **Chengannur**, Kerala by the Kerala State Committee to be presided over by Comrade C K Lukose, Member, Central Committee and Kerala State Secretary, SUCI (C), Kerala. As Comrade Lukose could not attend the meeting owing to the physical ailments he has been suffering from, he sent his speech in writing which was read out as a message by Comrade V. Venugopal, Member

genuine proletarian revolutionary party of India came into being on April 24, 1948. What made their intense struggle unique is that their effort did not confine to political - economic sphere alone but incorporated all spheres of life. As a result, the country received a genuine communist party, while the international communist movement earned a noble Marxist philosopher. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought has become the highest understanding of Marxism-Leninism today.



Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, Member, Polit Bureau, SUCI(C) addressing

Kerala State Secretariat who presided over the meeting. The English translation of the Malayalam speech of Comrade Lukose is given below. However, the meeting had to be stopped for inclement weather soon after Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, Polit Bureau member of our party, started his address.

Comrade C K Lukose on 71st Party Foundation Day

Comrade V Venugopal, President of the meeting, and Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, Member, Polit Bureau of the party, who will deliver the main speech and other leaders on the dais, Comrades,



It was the result of an unprecedented, unique and intense struggle of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and a few compatriots that the

Marxism is a scientific approach to the world. For the first time, it was through Marx and Engels that humanity acquired this outlook. This is very relevant to all spheres in the world including aspects of our private life. One cannot become a communist unless one breaks one's old notions and imbibes Marxism which upholds scientific concepts in life. This requires a collective philosophical struggle. A communist party attains its form only when there is a collective of revolutionaries created through a unity in aim, approach and thought process and through the principle of democratic centralism, leading to the formation of collective leadership. Through historical analysis, Marx pointed out that it is the working class which is the revolutionary class of this historical age, because the foundation of proletarian culture is collectivism. Capitalism based on individualism has become outdated. Today, even those who desire a social change but have not yet assimilated proletarian culture cannot become revolutionaries.

Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought is rooted in a struggle based on higher ethics and morality.

The situation today is deplorable. All the Marxist authorities have given enough precautions in this regard. Degradation of capitalist culture has reached extreme depths. Lenin, by pointing out that imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism, said that this is the era of decadent and moribund capitalism, that is the imperialism, war and proletarian revolution. He also made it clear that bourgeois democracy is extremely fraudulent and deceptive. Today, the condition is worse than ever before. Firstly, the socialist camp led by the Soviet Union is shattered as a result of deception of revisionists from within the camp. The stunted capitalism, casting aside even the act of democracy, is promulgating anti-people policies one after the other. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had pointed out much earlier that, fascism can be executed even under the false garb of parliamentary democracy and elections. Not only this, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh also pointed out that fascism has already become a form of governance in big and small capitalist countries alike. He has given a comprehensive analysis regarding fascism. Fascism, in the simplest term, is a counter revolution conspired to prevent the inevitable proletarian revolution that is so dreaded by the crisis-ridden capitalism-imperialism. If fascism completely manifests itself in the cultural sphere, there will be no one left befitting the name 'human'. The gruesome scenes happening in India and other countries at present prove how true the analysis has been.

The incident in Kathua, where an eight year old girl has been raped and brutally murdered, shows that there does not remain even a scintilla of human essence. Communal bigotry has led to people being slaughtered in public. The fundamental right to place a dissident opinion in democracy is vanishing. People who voice an opinion different from the rulers are being killed. The very idea of permanent jobs have been replaced through a bill advocating all jobs to be temporary thereby trampling the very concept of security in life for the working class. Ours was a land where contract jobs were unseen in the permanent job sector. The impunity the ruling class has shown in throwing all cautions to the wind!

We can only put an end to this dangerous condition by developing democratic movements beyond all considerations of caste - religion and other narrow-minded differences.

SUCI (Communist) is the only genuine party which strives to reach such an end. This has become the landmark of democratic movement everywhere. Our party leads the movements against the denial of the rights of workers, against the policies which force the peasants to take their lives, against the malpractices which have plagued CBSE examinations, and for protecting the rights of education across the country.

We are in such a battlefield in Kerala too. We are leading movements against the National Highway policy which forces people to hand over their land to BOT private owners, whereby they will be allowed to establish toll booths everywhere for throwing the people into untold misery, against the liquor policy of government, and against the atrocities committed against women and children. We are leading these movements everywhere with firm conviction of Shibdas Ghosh Thought. Despite the many crises of the modern world we are moving forward ideologically and organizationally. It is the responsibility of the masses, who believe in democracy, to strengthen the party.

Lal Salam Comrade Shibdas Ghosh

Telangana

The Party Foundation Day meeting at Khairatabad Library, in **Hyderabad**, Telangana, was presided over by Comrade Ch. Murahari, Telangana State Secretary and was also addressed by Comrade K Sridhar, Staff member. Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, Polit bureau member, in his speech as main speaker pointed out that observing Party Foundation Day was not a ritual for us, but a day to take pledge to rededicate ourselves to the cause of revolution. Drawing attention to the dangers cropping up with the communal politics of the BJP- RSS combine, as also from the pro-monopoly, pro-capitalist policies pursued by them Comrade Bhattacharyya added that some of the gravest attacks today were coming on the hard-earned democratic rights of people as well as minimum trade union rights of the working class. The situation thus urgently demanded emergence of real left movement, as it had been there during the independence movement under the leadership of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Today the so-called left parties like CPI, CPI (M) are working totally in the

Contd. on page 4

71st Party Foundation Day observed across the country

Contd. from page 3

interest of the ruling class and that is why wherever they are in power the arch communal and fascist forces are gaining ground and even coming to governmental power also. Even in their recently held party congresses their main issue of discussion was on whether to align with the Congress or not, only to fetch some more seats in the next elections. In conclusion Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya made fervent appeal to comrades and people to study and understand the Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought, the highest understanding of Marxism-Leninism in today's changed conditions and strengthen SUCI(C) for re-emergence of the leftist movement. Along with that he called upon people to develop mighty democratic mass movements which alone can pave the path for successful anti-capitalist socialist revolution.

Referring to killings and ghastly incidents that are taking place particularly involving atrocities on girl children and women, Comrade Sridhar, Staff member, expressed the hope that people will not keep quiet but step out firmly to develop movements, as it happened in cases of Nirbhaya and Asifa.

Assam

Party Foundation Day meeting in Assam was held on 30 April at Lakhiram Barua Sadan in **Guwahati**. Comrade Chandralekha Das, Assam state Secretary, presided over while Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya was the main speaker. The gathering at the meeting was very impressive. The speech of Comrade Bhattacharyya will be published later.

Odisha

Party Foundation Day meeting was organized by the Odisha State Committee at Shaheed Bhavan, **Cuttack**, Odisha on 24 April. It was presided over by Comrade Dhurjati Das, Odisha State Secretary and was addressed by Comrade Saumen Basu, Central Committee Member and West Bengal State Secretary as the main speaker. Comrade Basu dealt elaborately on the present international and national situations and emphasized the historic necessity of strengthening the SUCI (C) for accomplishing the task of anti-capitalist socialist revolution in our country. For this, he said, we will have to arm ourselves with the scientific teachings of Marxism-Leninism- Shibdas Ghosh thoughts. He also called upon the party comrades to lead mass life in order

to organize powerful mass movements on each and every burning issue of people's life, as may be possible.

Delhi and Haryana

The Party Foundation Day meeting was held at Chhoturam Park in **Rohtak**, Haryana on 24 April and in **Delhi** on 25 April. Both were addressed by Comrade Sankar Saha, Member, Central Committee and General Secretary AIUTUC as the main speaker. Comrade Satyawan, Member, Central Committee and Haryana State Secretary was the President in the Rohtak meeting and Comrade Pran Kumar Sharma, Delhi State Secretary, presided over in Delhi. Rohtak meeting was also addressed by Comrades Anup Singh, Comrades Rajender Singh and Ramphal, all State Committee members.

Analysing the situation today Comrade Saha held that capitalism is using the technical aspects of science to reap maximum profit and in the process the people's life is fraught with problems of unemployment, price-rise, poverty, communal strife, oppression and assault. Human values, democracy and secularism are being destroyed and fascism is being established. The ruling party is curtailing the labour rights and terribly oppressing the workers-employees. Agricultural and forest lands are being handed over to the capitalists and corporates. A powerful united peoples' movement is the only way to the solution of these problems, which can also protect from divisive forces. With that task ahead, Comrade Saha gave the call to pledge ourselves to strengthen our Party on the basis of the revolutionary ideology of Marxism-Leninism- Shibdas Ghosh Thoughts and lofty culture with the arduous life-struggle of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh as beacon to us.

Karnataka and Tamilnadu

At **Bangalore** the Party Foundation Day was observed in a meeting with Comrade K Radhakrishna, Member, Central Committee and Karnataka State Secretary addressing it as the main speaker. Comrade K Radhakrishna also addressed the Party Foundation Day meeting at Tana Street in **Purasaiwakkam, Chennai, Tamilnadu**, held on 27 April. Comrade A Rengasamy, Secretary Tamilnadu Organizing Committee presided over and Comrade A Anavarathan translated the address



Comrade Satyawan addressing in Gujarat

of Comrade Radhakrishna into Tamil. Comrade Radhakrishna dealt on the prevailing critical situation in the country, all-pervading cultural degeneration including incessant atrocities on children and women and called for building up powerful united left movement.

Bihar and Gujarat

The Party Foundation Day meetings were organized in Patna, Bihar on 25 April and in **Vadodara, Gujarat** on 29 April. Both the meetings were addressed by Comrade Satyawan, Member, Central Committee and Haryana State Secretary as the main speaker. In Patna, Comrade Arun Kumar Singh, Bihar State Secretary, was the President. In his speech, Comrade Arun Kumar Singh pointed out that the Bihar NDA government of JDU-BJP combine speaks loud of social justice and good governance and in practice follows the anti-people pro-monopolists policies of the BJP-led Union government.

In Vadodara, Gujarat State Organising Committee Members Comrade Tapan Dasgupta, presented the introductory welcome speech while Comrade Meenakshi Joshi, talked about the plight of the women in the country in the backdrop of the recent incidents of Kathua, Unnao, Surat, Naliya, Vadodara and other places of the country. Comrade Dwarikanath Rath, Gujarat State Secretary and President of the meeting thanked all for participating and expressing deep concern over the growing fascist menace and reiterated the resolve to build up a strong people's movement.

In his two addresses, Comrade Satyawan, elaborately outlined the situation of the entire country. None of the governments since independence, he said, did go for making people free from exploitation. Rather plight of the common people, workers, peasants,

women, youths, students is increasing day by day. Massive unemployment, anti-worker anti-people pro-monopolist policies of the governments are plaguing people's life. The hard earned rights of the workers and common people are being snatched away on one or the other pretext. Education is not only commercialized, but is moulded in a manner to create such a breed of generation which cannot raise the voice of protest against anti-people policies of the system rather fall victim to rampant cultural degeneration. An atmosphere of rape-epidemic is created in the entire country. Administration is continually consolidating power tending towards fascism. Recalling the life-long arduous struggle of the great leader Comrade Shibdas Ghosh for building up SUCI(C) as a genuine communist party on the Indian soil, Comrade Satyawan called upon all the participants to carry forward the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh to every nook and corner of the country, build up people's movement on people's day to day problems and culminate them towards anti capitalist socialist revolution. This is the call of the hour.

Rajasthan

Party Foundation Day meeting was organized on 29 April, at Luniawas, **Jaipur**, Rajasthan. After Comrade Rajmal Sharma, Member, Rajasthan State Organizing Committee gave the welcome speech, Comrade Gopal Kundu, Member, Central Committee of the Party and the main speaker emphasized the need for initiating a cultural revolution in India to combat the vitiating cultural degeneration being fomented by the ruling class. Comrade Kundu also discussed on the failure of BJP-led Rajasthan government and appealed to build up SUCI (C) on the strength of

Contd. on page 5

71st Party Foundation Day observed across the country

Contd. from page 4

Marxism- Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought. Comrade Prativa Nayak, General Secretary of AIDYO, was also present.

Tripura

On 24 April, the 71st Foundation Day meeting of SUCI(Communist) was held at Rabindra Satabarshiki Bhawan, **Agartala**, Tripura. State Komsomol paid Guard of Honour. In his brief speech, Comrade Arun Bhaumik, Tripura State Secretary, dwelt on the backdrop in which the anti-left, pro-capitalist, corrupt, sectarian politics of the CPI (M) frustrated people and made room for the arch communal BJP to form government in the state. Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee, Member Central Committee, and the main speaker elaborately discussed the arduous struggle Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had conducted to build up SUCI (C) as the genuine communist party based on Leninist model and in the process developed and enriched Marxism-Leninism. Comrade Mukherjee explained how the RSS-BJP, subservient to bourgeois class interest, besides adopting a slew of anti-people policies, is on a spree to spread unscientific obscurantist thoughts and beliefs among the people to blunt the thinking process. She exposed how instead of building necessary left movement to prevent the onslaught from the BJP, the pseudo-Marxist CPI and CPI(M) have been making frantic effort to tie up with the Congress, another trusted political representative of the monopoly houses, for deriving petty electoral benefits. She appealed to the comrades and supporters to come forward to strengthen SUCI(C) for intensifying class and mass struggles conducive to anti-capitalist socialist revolution, which alone can bring about cherished emancipation.

Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh

Jharkhand State Organizing Committee, SUCI(C) observed the Party Foundation Day through a public meeting at Buddha Smriti Bhawan in **Ranchi**, Jharkhand on 24 April. Comrade Arun Kumar Singh, Bihar State Secretary, was the main speaker. In his address he pointed out how in capitalist rule, irrespective of whether Congress or BJP or Jharkhand Mukti Morcha saddled in the government, condition of the toiling people of Jharkhand state has worsened in every respect. All these parties serve the ruling bourgeoisie and hence can bring no solution to the burning problems of the people

stemming from rotten capitalism. It is only through overthrow of capitalism that a solution can be brought about. He called upon all left and democratic forces to unite and develop united movement against the anti-people policies and measures of the government which in due course would pave way for accomplishing anti-capitalist socialist revolution. Comrade Rabin Samajpati, Jharkhand State Secretary, presided over the meeting. Comrade Arun Singh also addressed the Party Foundation Day meeting in **Lucknow**, UP on 29 April which was presided over by Comrade Pushpendra Vishwakarma, UP State Secretary.

Madhya Pradesh

In Bhopal, MP, the Party Foundation Day was observed on 27 April with Comrade Rabin Samajpati, Jharkhand State Secretary as the main speaker, Comrade Lokesh Sharma presiding over. Comrade Pratap Samal, MP State Secretary also addressed. The speakers brought out the present vicious attacks brought down by the ruling RSS-BJP at the behest of and to serve the interest of the ruling monopolists. They called for developing a powerful united left movement to thwart these monstrous attacks.

West Bengal

In West Bengal, the Party Foundation Day was observed in a decentralized manner at district level in view of the Panchayat election. The Kolkata District Committee organized a meeting at the Ashutosh Memorial Hall, **Kolkata**. It was presided over by Comrade Rabi Bose, Member, West Bengal State committee while Comrade Amitava Chatterjee, WB State Secretariat member and Kolkata District Secretary addressed as the main speaker. In his speech, Comrade Chatterjee elaborately dealt with the present socio-political scenario and showed why it is imperative to follow Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Thought in order to bring about emancipation from the yoke of capitalist oppression.

Alipore Central Jail unit of the Party also organized a meeting within Jail premises in Kolkata on 24 April to observe Party Foundation Day. Comrade Yusuf Gayen presided over and Comrades Banshi Gayen and Anirudha Halder spoke on the occasion.

Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry

Comrade K Sridhar Staff Member addressed Foundation Day meeting in **Puducherry** held on 24 April. Comrade Lenindurai, Secretary, State Preparatory Committee presided over the meeting. Comrades U Muthu and J Mohamed Bilal, both members of the Preparatory Committee, also addressed the gathering.

Comrade K Sridhar condemned the cruel onslaughts of the imperialists headed by the US imperialists throughout the world, the latest being he missile attack on Syria. In our country too, a hate politics coupled with planned criminal attacks on minority community people, *dalits*, children and women have become the order of the day aided and abetted by the ruling BJP-RSS combine in their bid to divide people. Even in the Cauvery issue, instead of forming a board for solution, the ruling class and the central government irrespective of the party in power, are dragging the matter causing mistrust and disunity among people. People of the four states involved in the issue must fight united for a just solution. Against the economic-political- social- cultural attacks including spewing of communal virus, a mighty united people's movement along correct track and based on correct ideology is necessary. He also appealed to strengthen SUCI (Communist) in Puducherry. Comrade Anavarathan, Member Tamilnadu State Organizing Committee, translated the speech of Comrade Sridhar in Tamil. The meeting was preceded by a cultural programme by Jayamoorthy musical team which included progressive songs on people's life. It being a new venture, people of Puducherry were impressed with the decoration with flags, banners and posters in many important junctions of the city.

Comrade Sridhar also addressed the Party Foundation Day meeting on 30 April in **Guntur**, Andhra Pradesh, where Comrade S Govindrajalu, Member, AP state Organizing Committee, presided over and Comrade BS Amarnath, A P State Secretary also spoke.

Mumbai

Party Foundation Day meeting was held in **Mumbai** at Mahatma Phule Vyayamshala Hall Chinchpokhali West Mumbai with Comrade Anil Tyagi, Secretary, Mumbai Organizing Committee, as the President and Comrade Dwarikanath Rath, Gujarat State Secretary as the main speaker. While dwelling on the present political situation, Comrade Rath pointed out how the ruling RSS-BJP and Sangh Parivar stood so low

May Day observed throughout the country

Under the banner of the militant organization of the working people, AIUTUC, reared by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat, workers have observed May Day with solemnity in different parts of the country.



Comrade Sankar Saha, member, SUCI(C) and General Secretary, AIUTUC is hoisting Red Flag in front of AIUTUC Central Office in Kolkata.

to support the rapists of Kathua and Unnao. Crisis-ridden capitalist system needs cultural degradation of society for holding onto its mutilated existence. He appealed to strengthen SUCI (C) so that people could be organized to make anti-capitalist socialist revolution victorious. Comrades Jayram Vishwakarma and Yogendra Kumar Kulshrestha, both members of Mumbai Organizing Committee, also spoke.

Punjab

71st foundation day of SUCI(C) was solemnly observed on 29 April at Pravat-Parvana Trade Union Centre, **Patiala**, Punjab. Comrade Aminderpal Singh, In-charge, Punjab State Unit of SUCI(C) presided over the meeting and Comrade Partap Samal, MP State Secretary, SUCI(C), addressed it as the main speaker. Comrade Samal observed that the burning problems of people's life with their roots in the capitalist system cannot be solved without the anti-capitalist socialist revolution. He also stressed the need for strengthening SUCI(C), the only genuine communist party on the soil of India. Comrade Aminderpal Singh explained the differences between SUCI(C) and other so-called Marxist and left parties.

Country's Healthcare

Criminal negligence on the part of bourgeois governments to reach out minimal healthcare to over 90% of the citizens

Contd. from page 2

stipulates that the government would pay the premium to the insurance agencies for providing each family with a cover of Rs 5 lakhs per annum. And then, the enrolled hospitals would be providing necessary medicare to the policy holders under the scheme and claim reimbursement of the cost from the insurance companies. The government claims that this would benefit more than 10 crore families belonging to the poor and vulnerable sections of the society for secondary (district hospitals and community health centres) and tertiary cares (like admission in a super-speciality hospital). Outwardly, it looks so great and an emblem of the benevolence of the government and its concern for the downtrodden. But is this a glitter of gold or mirage?

First of all, in last few years, a good number of health insurance schemes like the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) etc. have been introduced. But, the neediest impoverished countrymen have hardly derived even a figment of any benefit from that. The RSBY is for in-patients. But the Primary Health Centres enrolled in the RSBY have no facility for admitting the patients. If any of these rural poor manage to go to a district hospital, they find those hospitals enormously starved of infrastructure system and above all empathy for the patients. When this is the ground reality, how can then the promised benefits be delivered? So, instead of strengthening the Primary Health Centres with the requisite facilities, how prudent is it to talk of people availing benefits of insurance in tertiary healthcare? But, the government is silent on that and talks only of setting up sophisticated hospitals like AIIMS. So, all such claims are bunkums. When there is wanton lack of minimal health infrastructure and delivery mechanism, clamour over insurance cover is a hoax.

Thirdly, which hospitals would be enrolled and how? As per official figure, nearly 75% of out-patient department care and 55% of in-patient department care at present is exclusively from the private sector. With the current trend of increasing privatization of healthcare, this number would shoot up much more. In other words, private hospitals and clinics would

mostly be empanelled to provide medical treatment to the penury-stricken common citizens. Does this mean that common people who do not have access to even primary healthcare would now go all the way at their own expenses to these private hospitals and receive medical attention against the insurance policy? Absurdity par excellence! Anyone conversant with the ongoing state of affairs knows that poor people, even a section of the middle class people, are virtually looked down upon as beggars by the super-speciality hospitals since they cater to the super-rich and affluent. Is it not futile to expect that these hospitals would overnight be overwhelmed by concern for the common impoverished people and come forward to offer them due medical attention? Moreover, as is the common experience, the large hospitals merrily inflate bills through various dishonest methods if the patient admitted is covered by any individual or group insurance schemes. A CT scan is recommended where an X-ray would suffice. The monitoring authority often in connivance with the hospital authorities remains totally defunct and allows this malpractice to go on unhindered. What is the guarantee that the proposed AB-NHPM would be insulated from this ongoing corruption?

There is another anomaly. As per the budget allocation of just about Rs 2000 crores towards this proposed insurance scheme, premium amount for a sum assured of Rs 5 lakhs would be Rs 1,082. But the average premium paid in the existing state-run health schemes is around Rs 3,000 per household. This would mean that to operationalize the scheme, an outlay of minimum Rs 30,000 crores, if not more, is needed. So, wherefrom the balance Rs 28,000 crore would come from? The government is silent over the question raising doubt about the practicality of the scheme. Even if the insurance companies agree to receive the lower premium, there is every likelihood that they would drastically curtail the entitled benefits. This is the inside story of 'world's largest government-funded insurance policy' which is nothing but a gimmick and a cruel joke on

the misery of the vast sections of toiling Indians in absence of least of healthcare facility.

Why then is this clamour for insurance?

But then why this clamour about insurance? Because, this is another convenient conduit to siphon out public money to fatten the purse of the private operators slowly grabbing the insurance sector. Even the state-run General Insurance Companies would be gradually handed over to the private monopolists through the notorious disinvestment route. Already the government has given in-principle approval to divesting 25 per cent stake in each of five fully-owned public sector general insurance firms. So, floating of this insurance scheme is not for benefitting the masses but to fool and fleece them. Because, the premium would be paid from the public exchequer, whereas stated health benefits would remain elusive as ever. Available facts in regard to the existing schemes prove that undisputedly. Since common people are deliberately kept in the dark about the extremely complicated procedures of insurance claim, either there is no claim, or the claims lodged are dishonoured citing procedural mistake. Large scale corruption and nepotism in claim settlement are also reported. Thus private insurers are reported to have pocketed a 97 % of the premium income amount while claim-payment ratio has dipped to just 6.61%. What is more chilling is that public-funded healthcare insurance schemes in India, like the RSBY, give more than 80 per cent of their reimbursements to the private sector hospitals whose share in healthcare in India is an astonishing 78 per cent in urban areas and 71 per cent in rural areas. Large scale corruption and nepotism has also been reported in settlement of claims from various parts of the country. So, this much-hyped insurance scheme is a part of the spree of privatization with the government acting as a facilitator. It is, so to say, a 'public' policy for 'private' care.

If the government is so concerned about people's health, what prevents it from offering proper healthcare under its aegis and control, as was the initiative taken immediately after

independence? Why is this deception of insurance?

National Medical Commission Bill 2017

Another sinister move on the part of the BJP government has been to moot of late a National Medical Bill 2017 (NMB) following the footsteps of the erstwhile Congress. The NMB aimed at giving final seal of approval to total privatization of entire healthcare and trigger further dilution of standard of medical care, is now on the ready for enactment. NMB has several disastrous propositions. First, it is to replace existing Medical Council of India (MCI), a statutory body comprising elected members and entrusted with the task of establishing uniform and high standards of medical education, grant recognition of medical qualifications, give accreditation to medical schools, grant registration to medical practitioners, and monitors medical practice in the country, by a nominated National Medical Commission (NMC). It means as against the job of regulating the healthcare sector by an elected autonomous body, the government would now establish *de facto* control through NMC which will have complete jurisdiction over the country's healthcare. Next proposition is that in order to meet the shortfall of qualified doctors at primary healthcare level, AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) practitioners, nursing personnel, persons with B. Sc degree, Auxiliary nurse midwives (ANM), Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) etc. would be posted to give medical service at the very ground level. When the few rich are getting superclass scientific treatment in sophisticated hospitals, this is the prescription for the poor and have-nots. That means that the government thinks that the countrymen at large do not deserve modern treatment. Whose government it is then? Of the few rich or the myriads of common citizens? Also, in course of this, instead of utilizing and absorbing the AYUSH practitioners in the best way by making them work under the leadership of at least an MBBS doctor with proper knowledge of scientific concepts of disease-host

Contd. on page 7

Country's Healthcare

All pervading corruption in dying capitalism is also eating into the vitals of medical ethics

Contd. from page 6

environment, as is the case with China, Vietnam, North Korea, Cuba and a few other countries, and thus be important members of the integrated team, NMB prescribes the role of AYUSH doctors to be of substitution instead of supplementary which is most unscientific and preposterous. In the process, the AYUSH doctors are also denied the scope for practising in their respective streams based on different philosophies.

Third, NMB states that the government would frame guidelines for determining tuition fees for only 40% of the seats in private medical colleges while the management of those colleges would have unfettered right to decide fee structure for the remaining 60% of the seats. The management of private colleges would have the right to increase the seats in both Under-graduate and Post-graduate courses without seeking NMC approval. In other words, licence is granted for unbridled commercialization by way of obtaining a medical degree based on money and not merit.

There is also a provision to hire third party agency for inspection, accreditation, providing ranking and ensuring quality and standard of medical institutions. The pliability of these private agencies to the owners of the institutions can never be ruled out and as a consequence to that, there would be manipulation and compromise in certifying standards, bringing in its wake drastic fall in the standard of medical education which further imperil the healthcare system, particularly in primary and secondary tiers. Thus, proposed NMC effectively ratifies making healthcare a 100% profit-making venture with the role of the government reduced to a humble supervisor.

So called claim of curbing corruption

Incidentally, one of strong arguments put forth by the government in favour of the NMC is that MCI was found to be utterly corrupt. This is the height of deception! Unfolding of various mega-scams and mega-frauds in recent years has revealed how rampant institutionalized corruption is being protected by horrific crime masterminded by a powerful nexus of the ruling parties, ministers, bureaucrats and mafias. This has

also exposed the hideous underbelly of the brazenly reactionary capitalist system that is not only devastating people's life economically, politically and culturally but also polluting every noble profession including healthcare. Right from pilferage from the government stores to non-transparency and decontrolling of drug pricing, over-pricing of medical equipment, granting licence to nursing homes and diagnostic centres overlooking non-compliance with prescribed standards, black-marketing of stents, artificial limbs and implants even within the hospital premises, non-disclosure of death of the patients till hefty false bills are raised and settled—the list can go longer and longer. In such a milieu, which sorcery would protect the government nominees to the NMC from corruption and nepotism?

Not only that. Even the policies of the government trigger large scale corruption. For example, drugs and investigations form the bulk of health care costs. On drug pricing, the policy is ambivalent. There is no transparency in drug pricing. In fact, the pharmaceutical companies in the public sector have been made sick by design and the field opened to private operators who even dare to ignore the DPCO (Drug Price Control Order) and keep prices of most of medicines higher. Almost all the bulk drugs and many essential life-saving drugs are out of price control measures at present. The Prime Minister recently announced that the doctors would mandatorily prescribe the generic name and not the brand name of the medicine. Would it cleanse the drug policy or dilute it further? If implemented properly, the probability is that pharmacists will fill in the prescription with the cheapest generic drug in the market when all generic drugs are not certified to be therapeutically equal to the innovator drug.

NMC to catalyse total privatization

Another argument put forth by the ruling quarters is that since public healthcare is mired in corruption, the private operators need to be entrusted with the responsibility. As if, the private sector is free from all-pervasive corruption and malpractice. A few months ago, the National Pricing Authority of India, based on an audit of some private hospitals,

published a report of how crores of rupees were being squeezed out people's pocket by the private hospitals by massively inflating the costs of medicines and other consumables supplied. Allegations of wrong treatment, fleecing the patients by way of performing unnecessary investigations, raising false bill of consumables and medicines etc. are reported everyday. Some of the private nursing homes are reported to be appointing either an Ayurvedic or Unani doctor to practise in allopathy. But, regulators remain blind-folded. It is also learnt that the regulatory bodies are mostly composed of people who are loyal to private operators. Hence, they seek to give primacy to commercial interest of the private players over patients' interest. It also proves 'remunerative' in different ways. A former health secretary was reported to have joined a giant Pharmaceutical MNC as a non-official director immediately after retirement. How can then privatization be the panacea?

What is the cause of this rot in healthcare?

Obvious question is why is this rot in healthcare? Answer cannot be obtained estranged from the prevailing socio-political order. As a doctor diagnoses a disease not in isolation but in keeping with the entire anatomy and inter-relation of various body organs and uses scientific methodology of medical examination, similarly the rot in healthcare has to be understood not in isolation but in inter-relation with the prevailing socio-political system and analysed on the anvil of the proven scientific law governing social change and development. Otherwise, the root of the problem would remain ever elusive and so also the correct process of resolving the problem. As there is a cycle of birth, growth, decay and death of a living species, a social system too has that. Capitalism once appeared as a progressive system against obsolete feudal-monarchy. In that rising period, the emerging capitalist class created a new socio-political order known as bourgeois democracy which, among other things, declared that people would be entitled to basic requirements like food, clothing shelter and health. Accordingly, healthcare was viewed as an essential service which the

democratic government ought to provide to the citizens efficiently, either free or at least of cost. But today, when capitalism is gasping in its death bed, it itself is trampling underfoot all the principles, norms, codes, ethics and morality it itself once brought in. Otherwise, it cannot sustain its decadent moribund ruthlessly oppressive class rule. Hence, decrepit capitalism today has nothing to offer to people other than deception, privation and growing misery. Hence, the concept of so called welfare state is done away with and the bourgeois democracy is stripped of its essence and reduced to a façade. Corruption has occupied the centrestage and is eating into the very vitals of every sphere of governance and life. Pollution has gripped all spheres—economic-political-social-cultural. Rot has penetrated all professions including medical care. As per prognosis of great Karl Marx 175 years back, money has become omnipotent in exploitative capitalist system. Everything is now subordinate to money including people's health and survival in this class-divided capitalist society where all benefits, privileges, facilities and wealth are skewed to a handful of capitalist owners and their servitors by denying and depriving the exploited myriads their legitimate dues. Hence this society abounds in degeneration, degradation, injustice, unfairness, crimes and depravities. All evils, aberrations, maladies and malaises are bred by the outmoded reactionary capitalist system.

Fast erosion of medical ethics

It is capitalism which is snatching the right to health from people, turning healthcare into a roaring business and eating into the very vitals of medical ethics as well. Unfortunately, lure of money is afflicting many medical practitioners as well. Medical Ethics Manual stipulates that people come to the doctors for help with their most pressing needs – relief from pain and suffering and restoration of health and well-being. A doctor has to have way more empathy and understanding than in any other profession. There is no denying the fact that a good number of medical practitioners do uphold true values and ethics even today. Unfortunately, their voices and ideas have been drowned by a

Contd. on page 8

Country's Healthcare

In absence of a powerful health movement under correct leadership, people's wrath against flawed delivery system is expressed through violence, vandalism and manhandling

Contd. from page 7

more vociferous group who believe that success is determined by profit margins, or rather profiteering by healthcare delivery organisations, rather than by high quality ethical care. So often the doctors become a part of the fleecing process. It is also alleged that taking advantage of the infrastructural constraints many unscrupulous persons in the healthcare system refer the patients to private diagnostic centres of their 'choice'. Unnecessary diagnostic tests are prescribed. Unless one is conscious about this objective reality and musters the courage to rise against this oppressive system being imbued by higher ideology-morality, one cannot remain insulated from the pervading murk.

As is observed of late, being denied necessary medical attention and immensely harassed by flawed delivery system, wrath accumulates among the suffering people who give vent to that by manhandling attending doctors and nurses and resorting to vandalism and violence. Because, the force which can channelize such justified rage and

grievances along right track to crystallize into a powerful organized conscious health movement is yet to gain necessary strength.

Healthcare in socialism

It is relevant to mention here that in socialism, that is, in the system where the working class is in the state power and where maximum satisfaction of the need of the people at large and not maximization of profit by appropriating the fruits of other's labour is the motive of production, healthcare is given supreme importance and ensured to all. In Soviet Union, socialist China and other socialist states, healthcare controlled by the socialist state was free and universal based on centrally-planned socialist economy. With rapid increase in the number of qualified doctors, nursing staff and hospital beds coupled with speediest development of medical infrastructure, the healthcare system of the Soviet Union was held in high esteem by all medical specialists throughout the world. As a result, life expectancy in Soviet

Union reached one of the highest in the world in no time. Similar was the case with socialist China and other socialist states. Worth-noting is also the fact that once socialism was dismantled because of revisionist conspiracy and capitalism restored, healthcare began to deteriorate fast, as borne out by all available facts and data. The health system of socialist Cuba is today recognized worldwide for its excellence and its efficiency. Imagine your doctor knocking at your door to give not just you, but your whole family, an annual health check-up as prevention and not just cure is the pivot of Cuban healthcare. Socialist North Korea also provides universal free health care to all the citizens notwithstanding draconian sanction imposed on it by the US imperialists and their associates for several decades. Today, when the bourgeois world has been unleashing a malicious propaganda that socialism is an unworkable system, spectacular achievement of the socialist countries in the field of healthcare would be an eye-opener.

Only a powerful conscious health movement can stem the rot

So, there is no reason for despair. Right-thinking people, conscientious doctors, nursing and ancillary staff and health activists have to find out correct way to stem the rot to some extent within the prevailing system till the time the oppressive order is overthrown on fulfilment of necessary socio-political conditions. It is only by spearheading and continuously strengthening a powerful organized conscious health movement right from the grass-roots level involving all and mobilizing public opinion that some relief for people can be wrested from the unwilling capitalist rulers and their compliant governments. In course of that, utmost efforts need to be made to spread the movement to higher levels and thus be elevated to a countrywide massive movement in demand for health under correct revolutionary leadership to thwart the attack on healthcare. There is no other way.

Justice Rajinder Sachar, the relentless fighter remembered in Kolkata Memorial meeting

Justice Rajinder Sachar, former Chief Justice of Delhi High Court and a leading personality of the Human Rights movement of the country, breathed his last on 20 April 2018 in Delhi at an age of 94. Under the joint auspices of the Centre for Protection of Democratic Rights and Secularism (CPDRS) and the Legal Service Centre, a memorial meeting was held in Kolkata on 7 May 2018 to pay tribute to the untiring fighter for human and civil rights, an upright unbending proponent of bringing justice to the oppressed and deprived from his leading position in the country's judicial system and a veteran socialist. With befitting solemnity and regards, a host of eminent intellectuals recollected the commendable role of Justice Sachar in the history of Indian Judiciary and Human Rights movement, particularly recalling his unique

contribution towards giving exposure to and suggesting ways and means to make amend for the miserable plight of the minority community through his well-known Sachar Committee Report which remained unattended to by all governments, his no less significant report on Kashmir, his bold and uncompromising attitude against the repressive Emergency which caused disruption and deprivation in his glorious career and many such other enviable achievements of this great personality. Among those who paid tributes, were Justice Chittatosh Mookherjee, former Chief Justice of Bombay High Court and former Chairperson West Bengal Human Rights Commission, Shri Bimal Kumar Chatterjee Bar-at-Law and former Advocate General, Government of West Bengal, Parthasarathi Sengupta, distinguished Senior Advocate,

Calcutta High Court, Prof. Miratun Nahar, eminent educationist and Human Rights campaigner, Dr. Tarun Mandal, Vice-President, Medical Service Centre and former Member of Parliament of India, Justice Malay Sengupta, former Acting Justice of Sikkim High Court and President Legal Service Centre, Dr. Subhash Dasgupta, President and Prof. Pranab Dasgupta, Secretary, CPDRS, Bhages Ganguly, Advocate, Calcutta High Court and Secretary Legal Service Centre. Justice Malay Sengupta

presided over the meeting. Shri Bibhas Chakraborty, distinguished theatre personality and President, Forum of Artistes, Cultural Activists and Intellectuals had sent a message regretting his absence because of indisposition and offering his tribute to Justice Sachar. The packed reverent auditorium of several hundred capacity experienced a solemn evening which brought back many faded out chapters of courageous and relentless fight of an uncompromising character.



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : PROVASH GHOSH